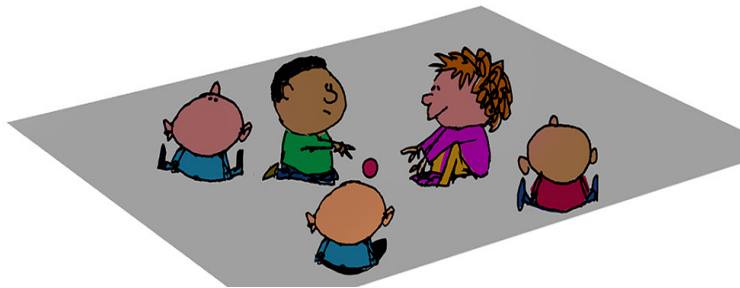
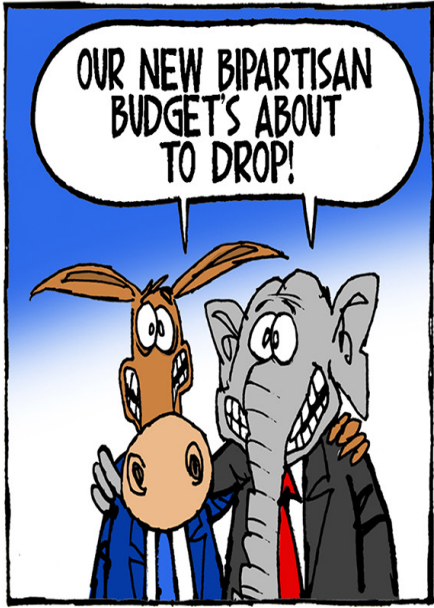


O P I N I O N



VARTAN AVAKIAN  
THE TIMES-PIGAYNE  
THE INDEPENDENT  
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## Letters to the Editor...

*The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.*

To the Editor:

A sheriff's deputy came to my house July 24 with the remains of three bills I'd put into the outgoing mail slot.

What was returned was the envelopes of the three, one of the checks and two of the payment vouchers. Two checks are missing and one voucher which also contained my SSN. Whoever did this now has my name, address, SNN and bank information.

This is not a petty crime; this is a federal offense as well as a state felony. My cluster mail unit is across the street from the new Ponderosa Heights apartment complex on Brooks Camp Road. There has been an increase in crime since these apartments have been occupied, the deputy had another stolen

envelope besides the three mentioned above, the club house property for the Pines adjacent to this cluster mail unit was vandalized in May, there has been other instances as well.

Is this the new face of Sisters? Can we no longer feel safe about putting our mail into the outgoing mail slot? What's next? This cluster mail unit is used by the Pines community which includes 50 homes in the 55 and over section known as Brooks Camp Village, most of the residents of BCV are well into their 70s and many in their 90s, are we putting our senior community at risk when they simply want to collect and send mail?

This is a sad state when one can no longer feel safe in a small town such as Sisters.

Chris Carr

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

| Wednesday      | Thursday       | Friday                | Saturday       | Sunday                | Monday         |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Sunny<br>88/55 | Sunny<br>88/53 | Mostly Sunny<br>83/51 | Sunny<br>88/56 | Mostly Sunny<br>91/56 | Sunny<br>91/55 |

# The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

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**Proofreader:** Pete Rathbun  
**Owner:** J. Louis Mullen

Postmaster: Send address changes to  
 The Nugget Newspaper,  
 P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.  
 Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.



Member

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area. Third-class postage: one year, \$45; six months (or less), \$25. First-class postage: one year, \$85; six months, \$55.

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## Jonah Goldberg

I want to put in a good word for partisanship.

This might sound strange to some readers. I've written a lot about our problem with tribalism, including hyper-partisanship and political polarization. It was a major theme of my cheerily titled book "Suicide of the West." So I'm happy to concede that too much partisanship — or partisanship of the wrong kind — can be very bad.

But unity can be bad too. Excessive unity cultivates groupthink and breeds contempt for dissent. It tends to ride roughshod over minorities, and not just in the sense of racial, religious or sexual groups. Ideological minorities — including the smallest minority, the individual — can get trampled by the unity stampede.

Self-described nationalists insist the country needs more unity — around their ideas. Self-described socialists also crave unity, but only around their agenda. At various times and places, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Hindus have all strived for unity, but only on their terms. In any large society, the demand for unity is usually the demand for power in a winner-take-all contest between different groups.

Our Constitution is set up around the idea that unity is scarier than disunity. The founders designed a system that prevented any one group, or "faction," from imposing its one-size-fits-all unity on everybody.

Ironically, the founders never envisioned political parties as a major component of this system. James Madison eventually embraced parties, but most of the founders were closer to Thomas Jefferson's view that if the only way he could get into heaven was by joining a party, he wouldn't go.

Think of it this way: Courtrooms are partisan battlefields. The defense attorney is a zealous

advocate for acquittal. The prosecutor is equally passionate about conviction. Both sides must deal honestly, but it is the competition between the two sides, the questioning of evidence, the inquiry into motives and methods, that produces a just outcome. Of course, sometimes it goes wrong. But it's the best system we've got.

This is how the good kind of partisanship is supposed to work. Partisans have all manner of incentives to poke holes in the opposition's arguments and proposals — some patriotic and principled, some more base and selfish. But the process of political combat, which is supposed to take place in Congress, not on cable TV or Twitter, should get us closer to both the truth and a consensus about the way forward. The public is supposed to be the jury. Unfortunately, too many jurors only want to hear arguments from either the defense or the prosecution.

It's a cliché to note that the party out of power only cares about deficits and debt when it is out of power. This hypocrisy is annoying and at times dishonorable. But it's better than the alternative. If it's true that unlimited borrowing, mostly from China, to pay for things we can't afford is bad, better to have someone saying so, even if they're doing it for cynical purposes. Such complaints at least serve to check runaway deficit spending.

Last week we crossed a Rubicon with the new bipartisan budget deal proposed by President Donald Trump and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. It marks the end of either party even pretending to care about such things. It's a victory of the sort of bipartisanship and unity so many claim this country needs. And it is a perfect example of how unity around a bad thing is worse than disunity over what constitutes a good thing.

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