

O P I N I O N



**It's time for the 24th Annual Country Fair & Art Show!**  
**Sat., Aug. 10, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**  
**68825 Brooks Camp Rd., Sisters**

PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

## 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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

I sat through the town hall meeting on Monday held by Sen. Bentz and Rep. Bonham on HB 2020. First let me say it was good to see that people of different opinions can still be civil – unlike what we have seen from other town halls, in other cities. Kudos to Sisters Country people!

We should all be thankful that our elected representatives have clearly studied the subject of cap and trade, and are well versed on the topic. Their level of knowledge was impressive, and their concern about doing something (the right thing) was evident.

My suggestion is that we contact Speaker Kotek and Governor Brown and remind them of how history views major legislation that is rammed thru on party lines. LBJ knew he had

to have bi-partisan support for Medicare for it to become a fixture in our society. Sadly, President Obama failed to learn that lesson and instead of passing bi-partisan healthcare reform, he rammed thru Obamacare on a party line vote and it is slowly being dismantled.

Cap and Trade can work if done properly, and if it is done on a bi-partisan basis. This is an important step for Oregonians, and we will all be better off if we do it together.

Carey Tosello



To the Editor:

Monday, July 29, there was a Town Hall called by our State Representative D. Bonham

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### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly Sunny 92/58	Mostly Sunny 86/55	PM Thunderstorms 80/52	Scattered T-storms 67/48	Mostly Sunny 77/47	Mostly Sunny 83/51

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Member

Postmaster: Send address changes to

The Nugget Newspaper,

P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.

Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

**Editor in Chief:** Jim Cornelius

**Production Manager:** Leith Easterling

**Graphic Design:** Jess Draper

**Community Marketing Partners:**

Patti Jo Beal & Vicki Curlett

**Classifieds & Circulation:** Lisa May

**Proofreader:** Pete Rathbun

**Owner:** J. Louis Mullen

## Domestic terrorism

By Jim Cornelius

Editor in Chief

*“...mania feeds upon itself and becomes hysterical.”*

— Christopher Hitchens

Anyone who attends a music festival in Sisters, or goes shopping in a big-box store in Bend, or maybe goes out for an evening downtown might pause in the wake of the past week's events and consider that they might just be a target.

Active shooters attacked crowds at a festival in Gilroy, California; shoppers in a Wal-Mart in El Paso, Texas; and downtown diners in Dayton, Ohio. It can happen anywhere, and anyone could be a target.

That's terrorism.

The El Paso shooter appears to have been ideologically driven by hatred of immigrants. The motivations of the other two are murkier. The Gilroy shooter may or may not have been driven by white supremacist ideology, but he reportedly imbibed the same spew of late-19th-century racialist bile that fueled fascism and National Socialism. He told a witness that he was “really angry.” The Dayton shooter reportedly kept a “rape list” and a “kill list” when he was in high school, and seems to have had extreme left leanings. Among the first he killed was his own sister.

Ideology matters, but it is not a sufficient explanation for why mass shootings keep happening. Any mechanistic explanation — it's guns; it's video games; it's mental illness; it's racism; it's.... is bound to be reductive and inadequate. History shows us that.

The U.S. has experienced bouts of domestic terrorism before.

Legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin bids us:

“Think about one fact, one fact alone: 1,000 political bombings a year in '72, '73, '74. Almost inconceivable. That was what the world was like. Skyjackings were epidemic. You had an actual revolutionary movement in this country that, while never likely to succeed, was disrupting the country, especially Northern California, in a way that's... it's just hard to believe.”

Those bombings, it must

be noted, were for the most part low- or no-casualty affairs, but there were other acts of intense criminal violence purportedly supporting leftist “revolution.”

In the 1980s and '90s, there was a spate of right-wing terrorism, culminating in the horrific bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995, an attack that took 168 lives.

Explaining such acts as the products of warped ideology — or the belief that such mad acts must require a mad perpetrator — obscure a simple, horrifying truth: Some people just want to watch the world burn. Some people want to set it on fire. The end doesn't justify the means — the means ARE the end. It's all about the blaze of glory. And, as the philosopher Eric Hoffer wrote in his brilliant treatise “The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements”:

“Glory is largely a theatrical concept. There is no striving for glory without a vivid awareness of an audience... The desire to escape or camouflage their unsatisfactory selves develops in the frustrated a facility for pretending — for making a show — and also a readiness to identify themselves wholly with an imposing spectacle.”

The spectacle itself drives these events. It's no accident that they cluster; each terrible act feeds the next. The Internet is full of fever swamps where perpetrators of mass shootings are fetishized and glorified as heroes. As Hitchens says, “mania feeds upon itself and becomes hysterical.”

That's not mental illness; that's evil.

We have gone a long way down a dark path, with no easy fix to get us out. Tinkering with systems won't avail us much. As Patrick J. Deneen writes with a nod to Czech dissident Vaclav Havel, a better system won't ensure us a better life — in fact, only creating a better life can build a better system. That, Deneen says, requires “the patient encouragement of new forms of community that can serve as havens in our depersonalized political and economic order.”

And a sense of honor and code wouldn't hurt.

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