

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Free speech and civility

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America is the bed-rock on which our political, social and cultural discourse rests. In the coming weeks, readers of *The Nugget* will find in these pages commentary on the nature and meaning of these 45 crucial words, starting in this edition with some challenging thoughts from retired attorney Pete Shepherd of Sisters (page 21). Should robocalls be considered “free speech” under First Amendment protection? The implications of how we look at that everyday question are... interesting.

Shepherd is one of four panelists who will

lead a lively — and entertaining — discussion of the First Amendment on Thursday, October 24, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Sisters Fire Hall.

Freedom of expression, freedom of conscience — how do these play out in law? How do they play out in a culture where some attempt to silence or “cancel” expression they don’t like? How do we promote civility in our discourse without shackling free speech?

These questions are trickier than they might first appear. The forthcoming columns and the community discussion will wrestle with them — and the Sisters community is invited to participate. After all, it’s OUR right.


Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

There is something fundamentally wrong with our police protection in Sisters.

When we need volunteer vigilante neighbors to patrol our streets at night due to break-ins and vandalism, and when it takes 20 minutes for the police to respond to a major break-in crisis where the intruder was only a step or two away from being shot, such has what happened on Monday, September 9, on W. Carson Ave. at 2 a.m. here in the Hayden subdivision (see full story in the September 18 edition of *The Nugget*), basic and adequate protection of our city is not happening via the contract with Deschutes County Sheriff’s Department.

A 20-minute response indicates there was NO police officer in Sisters city limits at the time the 911 call was placed. We have our own fire and EMT department, our own planning department, our own public works department.

Why do we not have our own police department that assures that residents can get emergency help in the middle of the night?

This is unacceptable!

The City just approved another 160 homes to be built by Hayden next to the high school, not to mention the added homes and multiple-unit apartments it is building across from McDonald’s and Ray’s market which will add several hundred more residents to our city. We cannot sustain all the added growth without also expanding our police protection. It’s time for the Sisters City Council to act on re-establishing a Sisters city police department, sooner rather than later.

William Carmichael

♦ ♦ ♦

See **LETTERS** on page 14

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly Sunny 72/51	Mostly Sunny 73/47	Partly Cloudy 63/39	Partly Cloudy 52/34	AM Shower/Snow 47/31	Partly Cloudy 47/29

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Politicizing climate change

By Eric Knirk

Guest Columnist

The climate changes — and always has and always will.

This subject has been politicized, monetized and weaponized to the point where in the public domain it cannot be examined, debated scientifically and rationally. Most data that the media and politicians use to push this subject is found in global climate computer MODELS, that by the way, have been incorrect and adjusted many times.

For example, since 1998 the data has *not* shown a strong warming trend, and it’s right about the time this information was released the term was changed from “global warming” to “climate change.” The fact is, politicians and advocacy groups have popularized the terms “settled science” and “scientific consensus.” Anyone that knows about science, or the scientific method, knows that these terms are antithetical to science. These terms are used to shut down debate and the presentation of contrary facts, opinions and theories.

In 1976 there was a major study that appeared in *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines that declared with all “scientific” proof that we were in a global cooling trend which would be disaster for man. At the same time there were claims of disaster if the earth’s population exceeded 5 billion. Then in the 1990s global warming became the fear and the UN climate report and model was polarized, resulting in calls to rein in the U.S. lifestyle, economy and capitalism in general.

This is the heart of this movement’s agenda.

With climate change they can never be wrong: record warm weather, it’s climate change; record cold, it’s climate change; record drought, it’s climate change; record floods, it’s climate change... The empirical historic data demonstrates that, NO, in fact hurricanes are not worse, nor more frequent than ever. But every time there is a WEATHER event, it is now catastrophic man-made climate change involved.

Greenland used to have Nordic peoples farming it before it became covered in ice and snow; yes the climate changes. Several times, in cycles, the entire northern portion of America was a massive glacier that melted, created the Great Lakes and carved the Grand Canyon; yes the climate changes. There used to be huge interior seas covering portions of the continents; yes the climate changes. What farting cow, power plant, or SUV caused those epic events? Ancient glacial ice-core studies, geologic evidence, and tree-ring studies demonstrate significant global warming and cooling cycles existed long before man’s influence was a part of the ecosystem. These ancient climate changes involved temperatures much more significant than anything predicted in the UN climate computer model. One solar event can change the climate more than any of the temperature changes predicted/estimated in the UN model.

So logically this all begs the following questions:

- Are the models accurate (honest)?

- There is not scientific consensus, so why are we not allowing the entire fact-set to be disseminated and examined? Why do we allow this subject to be so politicized and one-sided? Why don’t we allow our students to receive the entire set of facts and debate?

- To what extent does man’s activity change the climate? To what extent can mankind realistically modify its activities to effect any changes?

- Is .05 to 2.0 degrees in warming over 100 years a net negative world-wide? Because there are studies that show more CO₂ and warmer temps will cause more greening of the planet, which in turn may off-set the removal of rain forest in some regions, off-set warming and be more “food productive.”

Does this contemplation and information come as a surprise to our kids and most of the public? Unfortunately, yes it does. I fear a world where science and debate are overtaken by propaganda and politics.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.