

O P I N I O N



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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

Attended the Sisters Science Club presentation about bees. Been looking forward to this talk since announced. Wanted to see what else we can do to help our bee population. Been growing our own food and freezing it all summer as well as many, many wildflowers and bird seed, feeders, etc.

Instead we were charged the usual \$5 admission which we expected, *but* because we sat upstairs we did not get the 3D glasses required to see the pictures.

And we learned that "the only place in the U.S. that did not experience climate change was the White House..." and "That Republicans don't eat!"

I did not know that bees were political!

I'm sorry, but I will not attend another science club lecture, I came to hear about bees, not political views of *one* person whose opinion is more important than facts.

Roger Engstrom



To the Editor:

Hello. I really, really think you need MORE letters printed to the editor from Mr. Mackey. Or, is it that you get so few letters to the editor you HAVE to print what you receive? I will go with No. 2.

Gary Pogue



To the Editor:

This is my second letter to your publication. I have rarely written to newspapers in my past,

but I am very concerned about both the lack of transparency and the lack of support provided to children in the Sisters School District.

It is my understanding that the SSD completed an in-depth investigation about bullying, harassment, and abuse by coaching staff, and allegations were found to be true. To quote a portion of the investigation "...I do find that the coaches' conduct meets the definition of harassment, intimidation or bullying set forth in the District Policy JFCF. Their actions interfered with the educational benefits, opportunities and performance and created a hostile educational environment... and psychological wellbeing" of five Sisters High School athletes.

It is my understanding that these coaches were not fired, and that at least one of them remains on the SSD payroll as a teacher and coach. I have so many questions about this decision and the related concerns, but of primary importance is the question of transparency with the parents of the children in the classroom of this teacher. How much of this information has been shared, and have the findings above been duly noted?

Most surprising to me is some information that I have learned recently. Although I am not privy to all the information going into decision-making about the daily workings of Sisters High School, I do know that plans have been put in place for the safety of some students related to this issue, and that those plans require children to modify their behavior to avoid the adults who have been found guilty.

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Robert C. Koehler

"When the U.S. Constitution was ratified, women, indigenous peoples, and slaves were treated as property, without rights."

In the same vein of exploitative ignorance, we're still treating a living, life-sustaining, crucial being as property: the ecosystem. And in the process, we're choking our own habitat — that is to say, ourselves — to death.

But as Mari Margil, who is quoted above, points out: "... that is beginning to change, thanks to the Rights of Nature movement."

It's happening, literally, all around the world. It began more than a decade ago, in South America, when Ecuador and then Bolivia gave constitutional recognition to Pachamama — Mother Earth — declaring that she has the right to live. And the movement continues to bubble, at levels both national and local. Sweden, for instance, has recently proposed a constitutional amendment giving nature the right to "exist, flourish, regenerate and evolve." And tribespeople and municipalities all across the planet are demanding that legal personhood be recognized for imperiled natural resources: the Klamath River in California; the River Frome in England; the Whanganui River in New Zealand; even Lake Erie (the Great Lake whose waves caressed my childhood), long poisoned by toxic agricultural runoff, which has spurred voters in Toledo, Ohio, to pass a Lake Erie Bill of Rights.

Matthew Green, writing at Reuters about the residents of the town of Frome, a hundred miles west of London, whose residents are petitioning the British government to grant "legal personhood" to the river that flows through it, put it this way:

"In throwing down this gauntlet, the town has joined a global 'rights of nature' movement linking river basins in New Zealand to rainforests in South America and towns in the U.S. Midwest. In each case, communities are reimagining ways to harness the law to defend the Earth's living tissues, and the places they call home. Some have dubbed

it Mother Earth's MeToo moment."

This is the essence of our perilous new times: the need to harness not nature but the law! We need to harness, in short, ourselves.

A living planet! What does that even mean? Perhaps we can relearn.

"One way to rediscover the practices that helped Homo sapiens survive for over 200,000 years is to pay more attention to indigenous wisdom and traditional place-based knowledge (where it has not already been completely lost)," wrote Daniel Christian Wahl at Medium.com. "Indigenous human cultures are an expression of generations of co-evolution of humans within the ecosystems they inhabited.

"... Indigenous world-views around the planet share a common perspective: the world is alive and meaningful and our relationship with the rest of life is one of participation, communion and co-creation."

Can the "civilized" — non-indigenous — branch of humanity step beyond its arrogance and learn from its own past, which it has been trying for several millennia to dismiss? Wahl believes it's possible for the world to "re-indigenize."

"Even in the so-called 'developed world' much of the traditional knowledge of how to meet needs within the limits of biologically regenerative resources of the region was still predominant only 150 years ago," he writes. "That is only a few generations! If we re-value what that knowledge and indigenous wisdom holds for us, we can recover much of it and blend indigenous wisdom in creative ways with the best of modern technology and science."

When we begin consciously and systematically doing this, we can, indeed we will have to, let go of the concept the Rights of Nature, because it implies that nature is something separate from human beings. This seems true only when we are caged in our ignorance. In reality, we're all in this together, co-evolving.

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 49/25	Mostly sunny 60/27	Sunny 52/27	Sunny 61/34	Partly Cloudy 64/34	Partly Cloudy 60/35

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