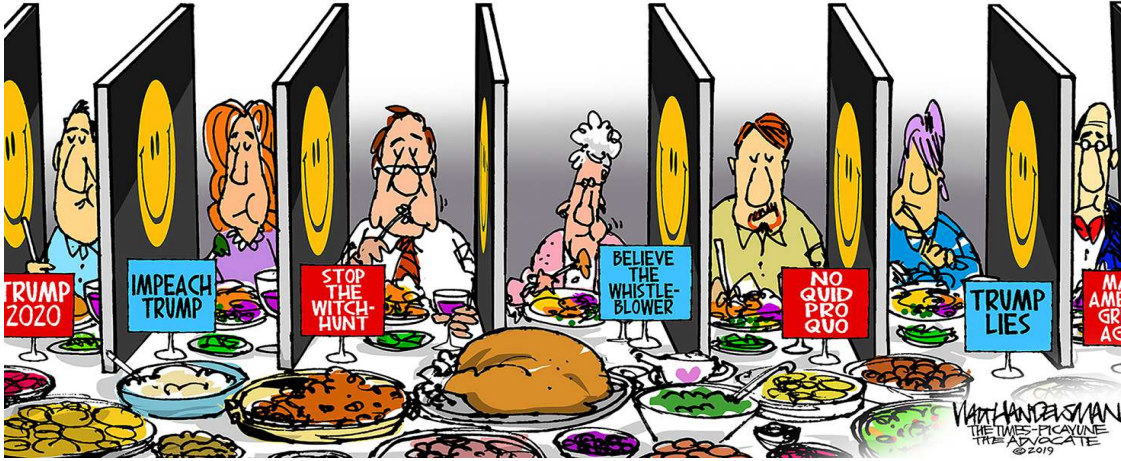


O P I N I O N

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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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

About a month or so ago, after hearing about the criminal event where an individual broke into a home in our neighborhood, I visited the sheriff's substation here in Sisters and talked to the admin lady at the counter, asking about the incident. Note this was about two days after the incident. She said she had not heard anything.

I told her at least three law enforcement cars were there and you have no information? Then I asked, do you furnish crime reports to the public/newspaper? She stated she does but she sometimes is a day or so behind (can't remember the last time I saw this in *The Nugget*). Then I asked her if I could obtain a "crime statistics report," not a crime log for the city of Sisters, since I had heard awhile ago, a report that there was a crime a day in and around the city of Sisters.

Her response was hard to believe. She stated "she could not furnish that information" to me. I said "what?" this is public information. She then stated that the only way to obtain that information was to get it from the

Sisters City Council, that's who they provided that information to. So why does the City Council not volunteer this information to the general public?

Are they not wanting the people of Sisters to be aware of how bad crime really is in Sisters? Do the realtors lobby against it so they can sell homes? We should be able to see how the stats break down on an ongoing basis throughout the year. This is not just a weekly crime log that is basic and vague. Let's see what is really happening in our town of Sisters.

Marvin Inman



To the editor:

A recent showing of the movie *Saving the Dark* by the Sisters Astronomy Club and a local chapter of the International Dark Sky Association showed how much of the dark skies we have lost due to light pollution.

As a result of this pollution, 80 percent of

See **LETTERS** on page 23

Expansion of Sisters benefits few

By Josh Groves
 Guest Columnist

One of the side effects of democracy is that a small, very vocal minority can grab the podium when the majority of folks are too busy, or maybe too apathetic, to fight for their voices to be heard. It happens in national elections and it happens in small communities. This phenomenon is manifested in the development and expansion of the Sisters township.

As I talk to fellow neighbors and other residents, they are overwhelmingly opposed to the development that is currently taking place — and planned to take place in the future — in Sisters. This is not a surprise when you think about the population of this town. Most residents are transplants that moved here for the small, mountain-town lifestyle. The expansion of Sisters only benefits a select few: Local business owners, city officials, and land developers. The best I can estimate from census data, this constitutes about only 30 percent of the population at most.

Yet, the three interested party types I just listed are disproportionately vocal and active on this issue. This is because their livelihood flourishes as they add more warm bodies spending money to this tiny mountain town. Most of us, on the other hand, reap no economic benefit from expansion. And, though most of us are very much against expansion, we are reluctant to give up our nights and weekends to fight in the town hall or picket for a cause that doesn't hit us in the wallet.

The two primary arguments I've heard in favor of growth simply don't hold water with most of the population of Sisters. "There will be more stores and activities, so you won't have to drive into Bend to

shop or for a night out." Most of us very deliberately don't live in Bend and are fine with having to make the trek every once and a while. "It will bring a shot-in-the-arm to the local economy." Let's not pretend Sisters is a down-on-its-luck logging town — you can hardly cross the main drag most days there is so much tourism. And, anyways, the supposed "economic boost" would largely only apply to the interest groups previously mentioned.

I realize that most everyone wants the gate to lock behind them once they enter paradise. We need to avoid this characterization; it will make the issue at hand an easy target for would-be social-justice warriors. Instead, I would frame this as a need for preservation versus an attempt at exclusion. If one needs to reference an example, look to our national park system. A number of our country's national parks now have limited access so that the beauty of the parks — the whole reason that people want to visit the parks — may be preserved.

So, what action can we, the less-vocal majority, take to preserve our little community? Fortunately, we live in a democratic society where the majority can win out, as long as there is focus and coordination. I recommend two fairly passive, but time-tested, steps. Step one, vote out all community leaders who are aligned with the sort of special-interests mentioned above. (Getting the facts may involve a little Googling and maybe some asking around.) Step two, significantly throttle the issuing of all future building permits. To be clear, this will invoke the ire of the special interests minority — that's to be expected. But this is how democracy is supposed to work.

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

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Partly Cloudy 42/26	Sunny 42/25	Sunny 54/29	Partly Cloudy 56/33	Partly Cloudy 53/26	Partly Cloudy 45/27

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