

O P I N I O N

Happy Holidays from The Nugget!

As we enter the holiday season, please be mindful of our deadlines and special closings that allow our staff time with family (while still delivering *The Nugget* to each of you every week).

Thursday, December 12 ... Closing at 3 p.m.

Tuesday, December 24 ... Closing Early

Thursday, December 26 ... Closed

Tuesday, December 31 ... Closing Early

Due to adjusted press times in December, we are unable to accept advertising or content past deadline.

Display Advertising, Announcements, Events, Meeting Calendar ... 5 p.m. on Friday

Classifieds, Letters to the Editor ... 12 noon on Monday

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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 am an avid reader of letters to the editor in this paper, as well as other towns I visit. This section of the paper yields meaningful insight as to the character of the community as well as their wants and needs. The information gleaned from a few paragraphs and the follow-up responses paint a picture of the community's feelings on a variety of subjects.

The shortcomings that I find in almost all these letters are they address problems but lack solutions to those problems.

Obviously, here in Sisters there is no scarcity of problems or opinions. Within the last four months there have been several editorials and letters to the editor regarding the proposed construction of the Dollar General Store and its adjoining development of multi-housing and more unneeded shops and restaurants. When my wife and I moved to Sisters about six months ago the population was estimated at 2,500.

A wild guess on my part is the 2020 census will show it closer to 4,500; this is not what we

moved here for. So I'll cut to the chase with a suggestion that could lead to a possible solution to our current problem. The City buys the subject land from its current owner at fair market value. That land is then re-zoned to agricultural or whatever zoning is required to grow Christmas trees (see page 32, last week's *Nugget* article "Tree supply is tight").

The procured land could be leased to a tree grower or the City itself takes on the task of "how hard could it be to grow Christmas trees?" OK, it's out-of-the-box thinking, but that's what it takes to win over Big Business. Stop wasting your time blaming current City management, their hands are somewhat tied due to existing zoning having been approved years ago. Each and every person that is against this "urban sprawl" needs to get involved in preventing it from going any further or at least help slow it down.

Don't wait to see what happens, be what happens.

Terry Coultas

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Mostly Cloudy 41/28	Partly Cloudy 41/32	Showers 43/33	Showers 43/30	Partly Cloudy 44/25	Mostly Sunny 43/26

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A failure of civic duty

By John Chase

Guest Columnist

The evening of January 18 of this year my daughter and her friend were struck by a moving vehicle making a left turn onto North Oak Street from East Cascade Avenue. The two teen girls were walking inside the crosswalk when the vehicle struck my daughter from behind directly on the outside of her right leg, which threw both girls onto the paved surface.

Stunned, in shock and wounded, the girls got up to find the driver asking if they were OK and that she could not call for help because she had no phone. The injured teens in shock stated they would be OK.

The driver proceeded to drive her vehicle away from the scene. Simultaneously the girls moved down the road toward safety and entered Sisters Saloon where they were received by a helpful staff and patrons. Thank you, Sisters Saloon!

They were cared for immediately and I was contacted about the incident. I arrived shortly afterwards to find both girls visibly shaking and wounded with abrasions from being struck and hitting the pavement. The local ambulance had been contacted. The girls were evaluated in short time and interviewed by a Deschutes County Sheriff's Office deputy.

While the girls were being interviewed I set out on foot to possibly find the vehicle. It was a Friday night and I had a hunch the vehicle might be found nearby. After the girls settled down and exited the ambulance, I drove my daughter by the vehicle I found that fit the description. She confirmed it immediately and I sent the info through dispatch to the deputies.

Many months passed, the girls' injuries mostly healed and, despite lost opportunities with sports, things are relatively back to normal. Although the emotional and physical injuries were not life-threatening they were significant and remain in a recovering status. The bruises incurred where the vehicle struck my daughter are shocking.

I pushed the sheriff's office to follow up and issue a citation. Shortly

after the accident I spoke with the officer and he indicated that the D.A. would review the case. About four months later we found that the District Attorney was not seeking hit-and-run, and this was not a criminal offense.

Personally, I agree with the D.A.'s decision declining a criminal charge. However I am unsettled that the driver was not cited for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk. The driver carries on with no consequences nor record of an accident that was frighteningly close to severely injuring not one but two people in downtown Sisters that night.

Our community citizens suffered injury that night, for how will the laws be upheld if they are not enforced? Especially when the law was clearly violated and — admittedly so — by the driver. The officer lost my support by not following through with his duty. A driving infraction in this circumstance was necessary to uphold the law for all of the people who walk the streets of Sisters. I followed up with the deputy and other deputies from Deschutes County many times, demanding the driver be cited. The citation was never given and the six-month limitation has long passed. I personally called the non-emergency line and left messages to the deputy three times this summer. He never took the courtesy to call me back nor did I receive a message from him.

As a community I ask you to question whether you are being served appropriately by those who are sworn to protect and serve. I ask you to be intuitive and engage with what is right legally and civically. I have personally provided information to police that upholds law, order, and good civic duty. My daughter is doing the same, recently helping police find a runaway. I am grateful to those who serve our community. Whether you serve as a firefighter, police officer, EMT, teacher, volunteer citizens, etc., we can't have a good community without your service.

It takes all of us doing the right thing to maintain the high-quality community Sisters is known for.

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