

O P I N I O N

Happy Holidays from The Nugget!

During 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 26 ... Closed
Tuesday, December 31 ... Closed

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Due to adjusted press times for the 1-1 issue, we are unable to accept advertising or content past deadline.

Deadlines for Display Advertising, Announcements, Events, Meeting Calendar, Classifieds, Letters to the Editor is 5 p.m. on Friday, December 27.



Jonah Goldberg

On Wednesday, during the interminable “debate” on articles of impeachment, one Republican House member after another warned, threatened, lamented or just plain promised that the Democrats’ decision to impeach President Trump would make partisan impeachments more likely in the future.

It’s not a trivial concern. Indeed, I largely agree. Impeachment is becoming a partisan weapon because just about everything that can be turned into a partisan weapon is “being weaponized.”

As Andrew McCarthy puts it in the *New York Post*, we are working under a new theory these days “that elections are won not by broadening a coalition, reaching out to attract or convincing opponents and undecideds. No, they are won by stoking grievance on one’s own side and electrifying one’s base — which is never more united and enthusiastic than when it opposes a political enemy.”

The Democrats, according to McCarthy, are feeding their base a heaping bowl of impeachment because that’s what the base craves. To a large extent, I think he’s right.

But I have a problem with this analysis, because it leaves out the fact that Trump invited this — and so many other problems — on himself.

I should be fair to McCarthy, whom I respect. He opposes impeachment, and that’s a reasonable point of view. But he’s also perfectly willing to criticize the president’s behavior in the Ukraine scandal — also reasonable.

But here’s the thing: Reasonableness is not what the president demands, particularly from GOP members of Congress. If you listened to them Wednesday, you heard not only that Trump did absolutely nothing wrong, but that his innocence is so profound, and the Democrat-run process so cruel and unfair, that no one has been so wronged since Jesus was sentenced to death.

No, wait, scratch that. Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-Ga.) actually said Jesus

got off easy compared to Trump.

“During [Jesus’] sham trial, Pontius Pilate afforded more rights to Jesus than the Democrats have afforded this president in this process,” Loudermilk explained on the House floor.

I have no problem entertaining the idea that partisanship plays a significant role in what the Democrats are doing. But the notion that they impeached him purely for partisan reasons ignores a glaring fact: Trump gave them the excuse they were looking for.

Whatever you think about what he did with regard to Ukraine, if he’s the master strategist some bizarrely still claim he is, his actions were a political mistake. Why? Because they at least appeared so atrocious that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi could no longer fight back the impeachment effort.

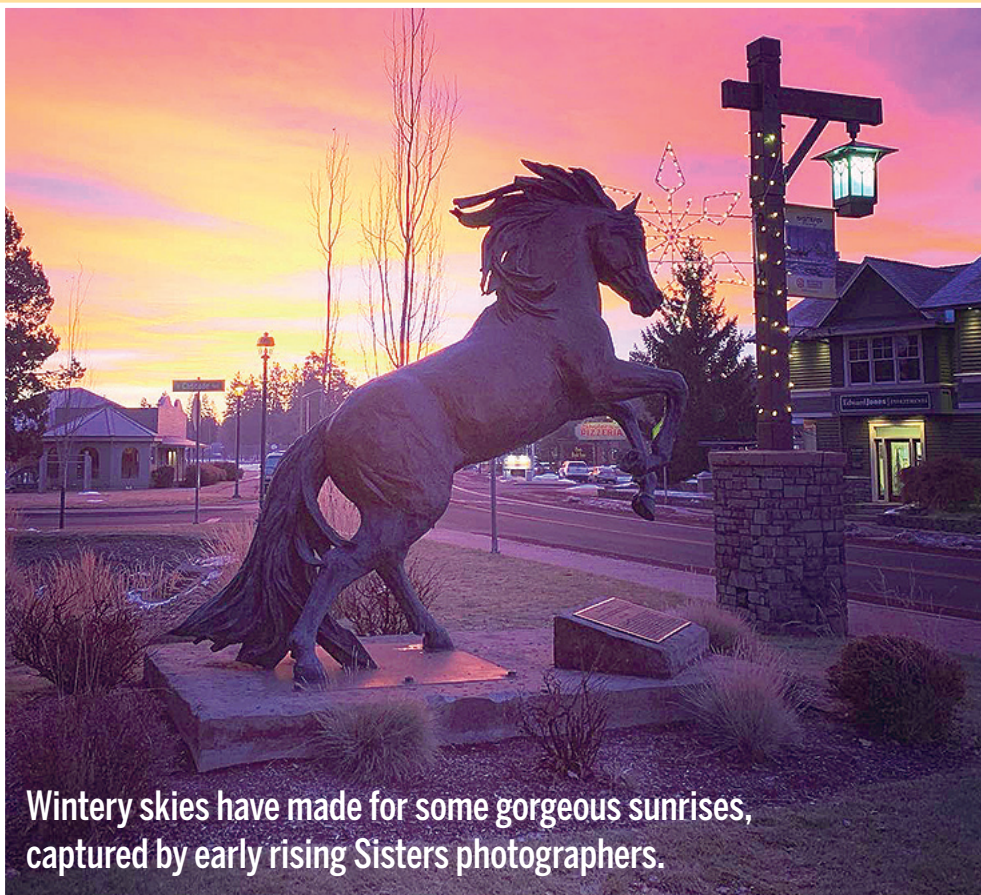
Similarly, Trump’s total refusal to cooperate with an impeachment investigation may or may not be an impeachable offense. But if he were as innocent as Jesus, he wouldn’t be behaving as if he has something to hide.

This is a good example of a larger dynamic of the Trump years. He breaks rules, precedents and norms out of contempt or ignorance, and the response from his defenders is that he has a mandate to behave churlishly or worse because he’s a “disruptor.” But when other actors, some of whom were elected to be a check on Trump, behave in partisan fashion or in defiance of norms, the president and his defenders are shocked and dismayed by the terrible precedents being established and the rules being violated. So much of it boils down to, “My bull was elected to destroy the china shop; how dare your bull get in on the action.”

I agree that impeachments might be more frequent in the future, and that may be a bad thing. But there might be an upside as well: We might get more presidents who say to themselves, “I better stop behaving like a jackass because I don’t want to give them an excuse to impeach me.”

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The beauty of a winter sunrise...



Wintery skies have made for some gorgeous sunrises, captured by early rising Sisters photographers.

PHOTO PROVIDED

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday AM Clouds/PM Sun 39/24	Thursday Partly Cloudy 39/24	Friday Partly Cloudy 42/25	Saturday Partly Cloudy 43/28	Sunday Rain/Snow 42/29	Monday Partly Cloudy 42/29
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