

O P I N I O N



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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

The Hummel family would like to send a big and very overdue "Thank-You" to our amazing community of Sisters for all of the support we received during and long after the time when Rich was sick last fall!

We are so blessed to live in such an amazing community with so much support!

Beth Hummel



To the Editor:

I would like to thank the Sisters City Council for its decision to close Creekside Park to medium and large events starting in 2021. As a Locust Street homeowner and neighbor to the park and campground, I have seen first-hand the significant safety issues raised when these multi-day events are held in this park.

After the organizer and vendors set up their booths, they park their vehicles and tall cargo trailers along Locust Street, blocking the bike lanes and significantly obscuring motorist, pedestrian, and bicyclist views of intersection

traffic, both northbound on Locust and eastbound on Jefferson. Patrons park in the neighborhood, frequently on the narrow Locust Street Bridge, which forces all users of the street into a narrow traffic lane increasing the possibility of an injury accident.

Locust is heavily used by summer visitors staying at the campground and FivePine Lodge to access the downtown area. Many of our summer visitors do not understand that Jefferson can be quite busy and fast as local traffic uses it to avoid Cascade. These folks assume that traffic will be light and often bike or walk through the Locust/Jefferson intersection without stopping.

I personally have nearly been struck, and have almost struck, pedestrians, bicyclists, and, yes, vehicles, due to the obstructed view at this intersection during these events and the congestion they create, and I'm aware of how dangerous it is. Our visitors are not.

While the Councilor who voted no states that "little to no factual reasons" to change Creekside park use exist and implies that the

See LETTERS on page 28

Ain't got that swing

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

Travel time on the way to a newspaper conference last week gave me more leisure than usual to run down the warren of rabbit holes that is political journalism c. 2020.

It's weird out there, as you have probably noticed.

A couple of pieces caught my eye, one of which is simply a telling commentary on the American outlook: According to *The Daily Beast*, "Last year, more people (141 million) voted for their favorite videos on Pornhub than voted in the 2016 U.S. presidential election (139 million)."

So... priorities.

The other was an in-depth Politico profile of Rachael Bitecofer, a flamboyant newcomer to the world of political forecasting, whose claim to fame is that she called the 2018 House elections quite accurately, based around a fairly radical theory that swing voters don't matter much. At all.

Per Politico:

"The classic view is that the pool of American voters is basically fixed: About 55 percent of eligible voters are likely to go to the polls, and the winner is determined by the 15 percent or so of 'swing voters' who flit between the parties. So a general election campaign amounts to a long effort to pull those voters in to your side.

"Bitecofer has a nickname for this view. She calls it, with disdain, 'Chuck Todd theory of American politics': 'The idea that there is this informed, engaged American population that is watching these political events and watching their elected leaders and assessing their behavior and making a judgment.'"

"And it is just not true...."

"In the polarized era, the outcome isn't really about the candidates. What matters is what percentage of the electorate is Republican and Republican leaners, and what percentage is Democratic and Democratic leaners, and how they get activated," she said."

Bitecofer also believes that "ideology isn't as big a motivator as identity" in politics, which I think is spot

on. Just witness politicians and voters alike twisting their purported beliefs into pretzels to support a position that boosts their side or hurts the other.

Being that classic independent "swing voter," I've noticed that nobody really puts any effort into pulling me — or my friends who share my outlook — to their side. If, say, you value robust protections for public lands AND robust protections of your Second Amendment rights, you really don't have a political home in 2020, and nobody is inviting you in out of the storm.

We likeminded folk — "the hardcore, radical center" as a friend jokingly called us last week — aren't going to decide the national 2020 election. As far as the presidential election goes, none of us want ANY of the options we're being presented with anyway.

That leaves people who have been raised, educated and conditioned to civic responsibility more than a little uncomfortable — but there it is. When you know your voice is not going to be heard — and is, in fact, not wanted — you have a couple of options. One is to yell and scream all the louder in the hopes that sheer volume will tell — the tactic of a two-year-old in a full-blown temper tantrum. The other is to turn your attentions to areas where your voice is not only heard, but welcomed.

And that means going local.

The vast amount of psychological energy dissipated in hurricane winds of identity-based national politics — or caught up in various skeezy forms of entertainment — is better spent at home, enhancing our local environment. Participating in the civic life of Sisters is going to have a lot more impact than Facebook posts about national politics; mentoring a child carries more weight into the future.

We all know this — we just have to remind ourselves of it now and then, so we can break the tentacles of a political-entertainment nexus purpose-built to keep us uselessly wrought up and mashing those click links.

Time for this swing voter to go for a hike.

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
xxx 00/00	xxx 00/00	xxx 00/00	xxx 00/00	xxx 00/00	xxx 00/00

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Owner: J. Louis Mullen



Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Nugget Newspaper,
P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.
Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area.
Third-class postage: one year, \$55; six months (or less), \$30. First-class postage: one year, \$95; six months, \$65.

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