

O P I N I O N



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

MUSH!

Dog mushers were out for a training day on a beautiful Sunday morning in Sisters.

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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 10 a.m. Monday.

To the Editor:

With great sorrow we watch as the star-filled nights of Sisters dim and fade into history.

The grandeur and beauty of this awesome mountain range will rise above — that's if you can still see them. The incredible peace and quiet of the wilderness will remain — if you can still hear it. The pure cold waters and clean mountain air — the incredible wildlife still here — all are doomed.

Not long ago men and women of vision set aside these lands for future generations. We should honor and continue to invest in that vision. It is time to stop the unnecessary promotion of rabid growth in Central Oregon.

End of story.

Dave Elpi



To the Editor:

Jim Cornelius, the editor of *The Nugget*, has made an important point with respect to development in Sisters (*The Nugget*, February 19 page 2): If a developer acquires a piece of property with a certain zoning and prepares a project that meets the requirements of that zoning, then by state law the City must approve it. The city can approve it “with conditions,” but with persistence the developer will ultimately get his way.

The City cannot pick and choose projects per se. It cannot reject a project that is of no use to the city, is unwanted, or is not to the benefit

of most of the citizens as long as it meets the requirements of the zoning. At that stage the City Council becomes a rubber stamp and citizens' objections to the project are futile. Indeed, the notion of a “vision” for the development of the city becomes moot.

There is no brake on this process unless a group of organized citizens follow the development pipeline beginning with the zoning and question everything. How many of us have time for that? Meanwhile the pressure from developers is relentless and the planning commission tends to favor development as if it were a board game. This process is not followed precisely in certain other states, such as California (gasp).

There a City can reject tract housing, apartment complexes, and runaway strip malls despite the proffers of developers, albeit when it comes to zoning. So, unless Oregon's zoning and land-use laws are changed to allow municipalities to really control their development by being able to be selective and to maintain their character, Sisters will devolve into a Beaverton.

The City Council took a step in that direction last week when it approved “with conditions” the Threewind project at the strip mall. This summer when the city is choked, we should remember this.

Gary Leiser

Is Sisters a welcoming community?

By **Kirstin Anglea**
Correspondent

“*Is Sisters a Welcoming Community for All?*”

That was the focus of February's Let's Talk — a monthly community conversation sponsored by Citizens 4Community. Twenty-two community members joined in the evening to reflect on a topic that relates directly to a priority noted in the Sisters Country Vision Action Plan.

As participants arrived

for the talk they were asked to consider three questions (posed in English and Spanish): “What does it mean to be welcoming?” “What does ‘community’ mean to you?” and “When we say ‘all,’ who do we mean?”

Participants wrote their answers on a poster (see responses below). When you ask yourself these questions, what comes to mind for you? Do you find your answer with the lists below or would you have added something else?

What does it mean to be “welcoming”?

¿Qué significa “dar la bienvenida”?

Open to all for inclusion in community events.

Open-armed, making space for difference, a smile, sincere interest

Escuchary, entender su perspectiva

Noticed, acknowledged, honored, kind

Inviting...a place to raise your family

Open-minded

What does “community” mean to you?

¿Qué significa “comunidad” para ti?

Unconditional support, groups sharing space, inclusive

Working together to build/create a safe, kind, supportive place for all to thrive and grow.

Sense of belonging

Being valued

Helping each other celebrate joys, solve problems, grieve sorrows

When we say “all,” what do we mean?

Cuando decimos “todos,” ¿qué queremos decir?

People, pets, wildlife, nature

Humankind, me and you!

All is all - no exceptions

People who live here and those passing through

Those from all walks of life, perspectives, worldviews

Those who moved here from other places

As is true for all Let's Talks, we began with a short skill-builder session. This month we focused on listening—listening with curiosity and openness and without interruption. We practiced using this skill as we created lists of what we love most about our community of Sisters. We then shared our own stories of feeling “welcome” and “unwelcome” in different spaces.

The evening's final question further explored Connected Sisters Strategy 4 from the Vision Action Plan. Centered around diversity and inclusion, the strategy is to: Bring our less-frequently heard voices into a more diverse, welcoming and inclusive community conversation, fostering greater tolerance in the community, helping newcomers as well as longtime residents to feel valued and supported. When asked where there are opportunities for Sisters to become more welcoming, participants expressed a desire to raise awareness of the lived experiences of our youth, homeless, Latinx and LGBTQ communities in Sisters.

Brené Brown speaks of the “high-lonesome” culture we are living in right now. Humans are hard-wired for belonging, relationships and community. We yearn to

be truly seen and known by someone else. Yet 40 percent of Americans report feeling loneliness; and research says that stems from a lack of meaningful social interactions—among families, friendships and communities.

Is Sisters a welcoming community for all? What do you think? As you consider this, I encourage you to ask yourself: “Where are there opportunities for Sisters to become more welcoming for you? For all? What's the story we want to tell about Sisters in five, 10 and 20 years? What is one thing you might do to help Sisters continue its journey toward being a welcoming place for all?”

Let's Talk runs 5:45 to 8 p.m. the third Monday of each month at Paulina Springs Books, 252 W. Hood Ave. For the March 16 talk, participants voted to discuss the topic, “How Can Sisters Maintain its Authenticity While Embracing Change?” Want to attend? Please go to the C4C website, <http://citizens4community.com/> events, to RSVP and save your seat.

Kirstin Anglea is a board member of C4C, Dare to Lead trained (Brené Brown), a facilitator with the Center for Courage and Renewal and licensed educator.

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

Showers/Wind

43/24



Thursday

Partly Cloudy

55/33



Friday

Partly Cloudy

59/36



Saturday

PM Showers

51/28



Sunday

Partly Cloudy

44/26



Monday

Partly Cloudy

46/28



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