

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Shoulder to shoulder, six feet apart

The battle against the spread of the COVID-19 virus is testing Sisters' resilience as nothing has before. Wildfire, hard winters, road closures, housing crises — we've weathered them all, and yet none of them posed the long-term challenges that the events of Spring 2020 present.

The Nugget remains committed to being the voice of the Sisters community. We will continue to provide accurate and reliable information to the community via our print edition and also through www.nuggetnews.com and our Facebook page. Perhaps even more importantly, we will continue to paint the portrait of our community as it strives to overcome these hard times.

As a small, independent newspaper, these times pose significant challenges to us as they do to all of you. We rely on advertisers' and

readers' support, and we understand that those sources of support are under significant pressure and changing rapidly.

Readers of *The Nugget* can support us by supporting our advertisers, as we will continue to do in any way possible through and beyond this crisis. Those readers who have signed on with supporting subscriptions are valued partners.

We're all keeping our distance physically, but we must still stand shoulder-to-shoulder, and together we will weather this terrible storm.



Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

In my very, very distant life I acquired my nursing license. Nursing 101 taught us all to wash our hands before seeing a patient, and after visiting that patient. We also constantly washed after handling charts, machines, and stethoscope and sphygmomanometer were cleaned even without touching patients. We were also instructed and learned to wash our medical/pharmacy keys after each visit with soap and hot water.

HIV presented itself the second year of my nursing career. I volunteered to work that unit. We did not know at that time how it was spread, or who was or wasn't a carrier, or how fatal it was. Many of those infected (blood test verification) demonstrated very little signs or symptoms. It was later tagged a "gay" disease, but that soon changed with blood transfusion cases. There really wasn't much we could do then but make patients comfortable. Some people were concerned, and some weren't. When children began getting HIV, mostly from transfusion or birth, people started to get "panicky," I see similar societal characteristics with the

current coronavirus.

I urge everyone, particularly the young, to take this seriously. And I do urge people to follow hygiene guidelines, and don't forget to add your keys to the wash list. As a nurse, keys were washed at the same time as our hands. I haven't heard any medical person on the news telling people to wash their keys, but I would recommend it.

You can wash house and work keys with soap and water. Sanitize the bob with a Clorox wipe. I do this at least once a day. I think people would be surprised the amount of dirt that comes off those keys.

Stay healthy!
Bill Anttila



To the Editor:

I was at Bi-Mart and had just run in to grab a couple of boxes of trash compactor bags. Trying to balance them with my back brace on was a challenge.

See **LETTERS** on page 4

Resilient, together

By Mayor Chuck Ryan and
City Manager Cory Misley

We do not need to begin by underscoring how unprecedented and uncertain a time we are in. The people at the City of Sisters — the Council members, committee members, staff — empathize with the challenges and frustrations that our community is dealing with in a variety of ways. We are doing what we can, while acknowledging that we do not have health experts or emergency response managers on staff. Last week, the City participated in countless meetings and conversations with all levels of public partners — local special districts, County, State, and Federal — to coordinate and align efforts.

The City has already taken numerous steps to protect the health and welfare of staff and community members. We closed City Hall to the public, canceled all board and committee meetings, and declared a state of emergency providing flexibility to respond more quickly to a rapidly changing situation.

The state of emergency declaration was not made to cause alarm, in fact just the opposite. It was a calm and calculated decision based on the information available and our responsibilities at the forefront of our minds. It allows us to take many actions, and we do not yet know whether or to what extent they may be needed. We will continue to work with the best and most timely information from the most credible sources. City Council members and staff are in frequent communication, and Council meetings will continue via teleconference.

This dynamic situation is like building an airplane in flight. There is no manual for how to make every decision or address every consequence. You, loved ones, neighbors, and community members are already or may be impacted from a health or economic perspective or worse both. Instead of looking to the past or future, we must exercise courage and vigilance in each moment. This is truly a test of character individually and collectively. Fortunately, as

evidenced in the recent Sisters Country Vision work, this community knows how to band together to solve problems and move forward.

The City is prioritizing essential services that it is solely responsible for: primarily water and wastewater. We see no cause for concern regarding those services and we have prepared contingencies. Beyond those, we are striving to maintain almost all other services at normal levels albeit in an adjusted way. We were assured by the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office that our law enforcement will continue at current levels. Although we closed City Hall to the public last week, staff that can be telecommuting, working on a staggered schedule, or exercising social distancing within City Hall.

City and county governments have been consulted on some of the State's measures, while some we have learned of through the media. This is a changing environment we are all sorting through together each day.

The messages last week and continuing through the weekend from community members offering resources or looking to help coordinate efforts are inspiring and a testament to the compassion within Sisters Country. We must be in this moment for each other and work collaboratively to provide resources for those most in need.

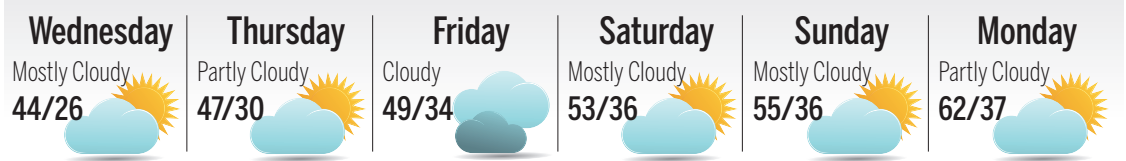
If you have questions, resources, or just need someone to talk to briefly, please contact City Hall at 541-323-5205 or www.ci.sisters.or.us/contact. It will take time for new programs and resources to be organized. We are monitoring County, State, and Federal actions along those lines, and exploring what we can do within our community with partners such as Sisters Country Economic Development and Sisters Chamber of Commerce. Although we will not have all of the answers — we will answer the call and do our best to provide assistance.

The City website will be updated frequently with City, County, State, and Federal information related to the Coronavirus: www.ci.sisters.or.us/coronavirus.

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



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



Editor in Chief: Jim Cornelius
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Classifieds & Circulation: Kema Clark
Owner: J. Louis Mullen

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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