

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Ramp up COVID-19 testing

Testing is the key to getting America working and living again in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every responsible roadmap to opening up the country places as its topline requirement “the ability to monitor and protect our communities through testing, contact tracing, isolating, and supporting those who are positive or exposed,” as California puts it — and Oregon and Washington are aligned with that approach.

Though more extensive testing capability is coming online, it’s not happening quickly or extensively enough. America needs a major wartime effort to get this done NOW.

We used to be really good at this sort of thing. Need thousands of B-17 bombers and Sherman tanks to crush the Third Reich? It’s on. Full court press. We have the capacity to do the same with COVID-19 testing — all we need is clear direction and a focused effort of will, starting at the top.

Contact Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden and Rep. Greg Walden and let them know that there is no higher priority than placing fully adequate testing capability in the hands of healthcare providers across the fruited plain. Contact the White House and demand action.

A little of that gung-ho all-the-way-to-



victory spirit of yore would be most welcome right now.

We can do it!

Jim Cornelius
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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

I would like to take a moment to thank you all as a community for the love and support you’ve given to the Health Care system during this COVID-19 time.

As an ICU RN I find myself overwhelmed with appreciation and joy from all the support

through donations, thoughts, letters, masks, prayers and just your smiles. It truly brings us peace and strength as we walk in to do what we are all honored to do.

I hear often how thankful we are as

See LETTERS on page 11

THE NUGGET OFFICE IS CLOSED TO FOOT TRAFFIC, BUT WE ARE ANSWERING PHONES AND EMAIL ... 541-549-9941
NEWS: Jim Cornelius, editor@nuggetnews.com, 541-390-6973
ADVERTISING: Vicki Curlett, vicki@nuggetnews.com, 541-699-7530

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Rain 60/42	Partly Cloudy 60/41	Partly Cloudy 64/40	Mostly Cloudy 65/38	Partly Cloudy 64/42	Partly Cloudy 61/38

The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

Website: www.nuggetnews.com
442 E. Main Ave., P.O. Box 698, Sisters, Oregon 97759
Tel: 541-549-9941 | Email: editor@nuggetnews.com

Editor in Chief: Jim Cornelius
Production Manager: Leith Easterling
Creative Director: Jess Draper
Community Marketing Partner: Vicki Curlett
Classifieds & Circulation: Lisa May
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.

Published Weekly. ©2020 The Nugget Newspaper, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. All advertising which appears in The Nugget is the property of The Nugget and may not be used without explicit permission. The Nugget Newspaper, LLC. assumes no liability or responsibility for information contained in advertisements, articles, stories, lists, calendar etc. within this publication. All submissions to The Nugget Newspaper will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyrighting purposes and subject to The Nugget Newspaper’s unrestricted right to edit and comment editorially, that all rights are currently available, and that the material in no way infringes upon the rights of any person. The publisher assumes no responsibility for return or safety of artwork, photos, or manuscripts.

Pivoting toward recovery

Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

West Coast states have agreed on a pact for a consistent, coordinated approach to pivot away from locking down to “flatten the curve” and toward recovering our economic and cultural life. This is good news. Central Oregon should craft a coordinated recovery plan as well.

For life cannot indefinitely be decoupled from making a living.

I am at pains to make myself clear here: I take this virus very seriously. I do not want to get it; I dread the very thought of my loved ones getting sick; and I understand the necessity of flattening the curve to stave off a collapse of red-zone health care systems. The world is in a terrible fix, with no good or easy options.

But we must recognize that the social treatment for this pandemic is toxic.

For, make no mistake, the economic fallout of this pandemic will blight and shorten lives as surely — albeit less dramatically — as shredded lungs. And the longer the near-shutdown continues, the deeper and more pervasive the damage will be.

We in the West have lost our understanding of the connection between livelihood and life. We are so incomprehensibly wealthy and have been so secure for so long in our wealth and comfort, that we no longer recognize the wolf when he comes to the door.

The wolf is about to make its presence known.

At some point we will have to move past this moment’s stasis. And that movement will entail risk and sacrifice.

World Health Organization (WHO) special envoy David Nabarro said recently:

“We think it is going to be a virus that stalks the human race for quite a long time to come until we can all have a vaccine that will protect us and that there will be small outbreaks that will emerge sporadically and they will break through our defenses.”

And what if we can’t develop a vaccine in short order? That’s a real possibility, one that our pill-for-every-ill mindset can scarcely comprehend and

instinctively recoils against. Coronaviruses are not easy to vaccinate against, and we cannot count on swiftly conjuring one to save us. We’re going to have to learn to live with COVID-19.

We will not return quickly to pre-COVID normal — not until herd immunity reduces its virulence and we have a testing program that can gauge how pervasive the illness actually is. We must continue to isolate and protect the vulnerable to the degree possible. We must adapt our way of living and take ongoing personal precautions, including modifying social interaction.

But we must venture forth and live and work again.

Western culture has become so imbued with the myth of zero-defect and absolute safety that it will require a massive cultural shift to accept that we actually *must* live with risk and danger. The notion that *any* measure is morally imperative “if it saves just one life” will crumble in the face of a brutal reeducation in what is actually feasible in a world of limited resources.

Indian economist Sanjeev Sabhlok wrote in *The Times of India* on April 11:

“Most nations are behaving like ostriches with their head buried in sand — with febrile dreams about vaccines and treatments. They want to keep their society in suspended animation while reducing the loss of life from the virus. They are oblivious to the incomprehensible cost their society will pay for indefinite lockdowns. Steve Kates, an economist I admire, has estimated that the cost to society of saving a life in extreme, extended lockdowns could be in the range of \$300 million. Good luck to Western nations with that.”

And, of course, Sabhlok recognizes that his own nation can’t even pretend to think that such a commitment is possible. Those who are living closer to the bone than Westerners have lived for generations understand something that we must relearn. Some things can’t be fixed; the best we can do is mitigate — and learn to live again, as our ancestors did, in the valley of the shadow of death.