

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

We're all on edge

Here at the office of *The Nugget* — your hometown newspaper — we consider ourselves among the fortunate ones.

The press, like it or not, are deemed essential in times of crisis, so we get to work through this global pandemic.

So most of our work these days centers around this crisis, and the pain and disruption that it is causing.

All of us have seen friends and loved ones lose jobs over the past two months. One in four Americans have been forced out of their jobs. That's pretty depressing for the out-of-work, who may struggle to find value in their lives and to pay their bills. And it's depressing for those of us still employed.

But people who work in the media tend to be different from most folks in that we thrive on conflict. This newspaper suffers from the same affliction.

And for good reason. It's not that we relish bad things happening to people, it's simply that conflict is what makes for good story telling.

So we hope you'll believe us when we state, things are not as bad as you see, read, and hear in the national media, especially in the electronic media.

Clickbait is a term that applies to the headlines in electronic media that are specifically designed to get you to click on their link, transporting you (they promise) to a story that will change your life.

And with a fourth of us unemployed and a third of who's left working from home, we're

all spending more time getting our news from social media. This isn't a harmless practice. You know this when you lay down your smart phone in anger.

But perhaps you already scroll past all of the nonsense: speculation of what might happen or a story about how one person is incensed, usually on behalf of a third party, for what they interpret to be an offense.

Well-intended people, masons of the pathway to Hell, use social media as a platform to rise to the defense of someone who wasn't actually offended. The Internet is well-populated with both amateur-police and amateur-journalists.

This has the effect of an Ouroboros, the snake eating its own tail.

Anger begets more anger and modern technology spreads conflict virally (excuse the pun), the effects of which are insidious, damaging our souls rather than our flesh.

As we emerge from two months of sheltering and begin the inevitable rebuilding of our society, please be kind to the people whom, for what ever reason, aren't wearing a mask. And be kind to those people who are wearing masks.

We've all been cooped up for too long, getting our news from sources designed to make us angry. Our real-world social skills are a bit rusty. Please be patient with each other and rather than condemning someone's actions, try to help those in need.

Tom Mullen

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:

As a member of and volunteer with the Sisters Rodeo for 14 years, my most special memory is this:

A few years ago I was acting as an usher during an afternoon performance and just after our entertainer, John Payne the One Armed Bandit, finished his act and left the arena a woman came running up to me and

with the most urgency said she had to speak to him. As we were near the main entrance into the arena I tried to explain that there was no public access but she continued to implore me for help. She looked down to the little boy at her side and my eyes followed hers. There was this sweet boy, maybe 5 or 6 years old,

See **LETTERS** on page 23

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Partly Cloudy 78/46	Partly Cloudy 77/47	Mostly Cloudy 73/45	AM Showers 57/37	AM Showers 56/36	Partly Cloudy 59/39

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



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Production Manager: Leith Easterling
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A response to Richard Esterman

By Don Utzinger
 Guest Columnist

Thank you very much for your letter to the editor published in the May 20 edition of *The Nugget*. I sincerely hope that all intelligent and caring people in Sisters will read, digest and remember it. Perhaps *The Nugget* will even consider reprinting it closer to the Sisters City Council candidate filing date, and/or the election date, to remind potential candidates and voters.

It appears that you have a mistaken understanding of both the Oregon and United States Constitutions, as well as the legal definition of perjury. As arbiters and ultimate interpreters of the Constitution, the U.S. Supreme Court has previously upheld the constitutionality of orders designed to protect public safety. While the Constitution of Oregon specifically grants the Governor the power to declare a "catastrophic disaster" and take appropriate actions for 30 days without legislative approval, she did not declare a catastrophic disaster. Instead, she declared an emergency, which she has the statutory authority to do and to take appropriate actions under the constitution (without a time limit).

I fully expect the Oregon Supreme Court to continue to uphold that authority.

As a military veteran and a fourth generation Oregonian, I'm proud to have defended, and to continue to defend, her authority to keep us safe. On the question of perjury, I suggest you look up the definition in the Oregon Revised Statutes.

Governor Brown was initially reluctant to order any shutdown and, for a time, resisted the calls of medical professionals and public officials to do so. However, her early implementation of effective mitigation is almost certainly responsible for the

significantly lower infection and death rates in Oregon as compared to neighboring states and other states with similar demographics.

Researchers at Columbia University, applying standard scientific and statistical modeling to known data of the county-to-county virus spread within the U.S., estimated that if measures would have been implemented nationally one week earlier there could have been approximately 36,000 fewer deaths and at least 700,000 fewer illnesses. (Only science deniers would be dismissive of this information.)

We'll never know how many fewer deaths there could have been if Oregon had shut down sooner. More importantly, however, how many *more* deaths would there have been if Governor Brown had acted later; or worse, not at all?

How many more deaths and how many more illnesses would have been acceptable to you in order to defend your perceived "right" to make money by risking the lives and health of others? Would you sacrifice members of your own family?

So you're asking business owners to waste their time to request that all Oregon taxpayers contribute to reimburse them for taking appropriate steps (albeit mandated) to protect themselves and their customers? In line with your invoicing suggestion, please consider this to be an invoice in the very nominal amount of \$50 for my time and materials writing this response. Rather than remitting that amount to me, please donate it to any person or persons that are risking their lives to keep you safe and healthy.

Again, thank you for your letter. The people of Sisters deserve intelligent, knowledgeable and caring leaders and I hope they can find them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.

Have a story idea for

The Nugget?

We'd love to hear it!

Send an email to editor@nuggetnews.com