

LETTERS

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the Elementary School. It was a young man in Levis and a T-shirt with a sign: "Stop Racism."

I went back there this evening and found there were now three, sitting under a popup awning. Two are Sisters High School students, the other a Sisters graduate working at U of O on a masters. Out of respect, I did not ask their names. Out of admiration, I gave them an American flag.

All across America, in satellite cities around the world, people are saying out loud "Enough. We must change."

During the Vietnam War a reporter driving down the New York Thruway saw Pete Seeger standing on the side of the road in the rain with a sign: "Peace." The reporter stopped, went back, and asked him why he was doing this. "It's just something I had to do."

That gut feeling perhaps inspired the civil disobedience of Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King — "something I felt I had to do."

Today the situation is different. Did George Floyd's behavior warrant such brutal aggression? Did the peaceful protest in Lafayette Park warrant gas, horses, rubber bullets, and helicopters?

The protesters today are not exercising civil disobedience, rather they are calling for a rule of law that treats and protects everyone as a valuable human being, and they are protesting on behalf of the First Amendment.

...Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right to assemble, and the right to petition the government.

We have lost our way. We must change.

At George Floyd's funeral service Thursday, the Reverend Al Sharpton quoted from Ecclesiastes 3, Time for Everything. "There is a time to be silent and a time to speak."

It seems that Sisters students have spoken loudly: "This is something I had to do." They say they will continue to be protesting there daily from 12 to 6 p.m. I have invited my friends to go join them if they choose.

Robert Collins



To the Editor:

Years ago when I published a small town weekly newspaper, on occasion we covered controversial issues. There were differences of opinion, and sometimes bitterness. Letters to the Editor were occasionally "difficult."

We strove to publish every letter, though at times we had to give writers a second chance to moderate their language. On very rare occasions, we fulfilled our responsibility to the community and refused to spread pure bile. Importantly, when doing so we acted mindful of responsibilities conferred by the First Amendment to the Constitution. Of course, not everyone agreed with our interpretation.

But there was one rule that was not bent, let alone broken: Opinions had to be signed. Our philosophy was that if one wanted to speak up, one had to own their speech.

I personally believe that guideline would greatly benefit social media, and in fact, American politics.

Each post on Facebook and Twitter and every other platform should be linked to its author, which must be a verified individual. Every political contribution should be linked to its contributor. If the Supreme Court wants to grant "personhood" to corporations (a decision I disagree with, by the way) then that corporate "person" should be identified when entering into the political area with vast sums of money. No more hiding behind PACs or other loopholes.

Free markets, to the extent they exist, depend on transparency. The "marketplace of ideas," in the words of Jefferson, is no different.

Eliminating anonymity in the American conversation would go a long way toward improving our dialogue.

Erik Dolson



To the Editor:

One of my memories of the Sisters Rodeo was a Sunday after the Rodeo, when the cowboys and locals were gathered at the B Bar B. A group of bikers arrived and entered the bar. Soon, a brawl began that spilled out into Cascade Avenue, punches being thrown, noses broken, blood being shed.

I was watching from across the street, back when there was a hotel and gas station. At the time I was

12 or 13, a third generation Sisters local. The police arrived and couldn't break up the fight, themselves being punched and kicked. The Sisters Volunteer Fire Department showed up with a fire truck and started hosing people off the streets, breaking up the fight and protecting our community establishment.

I would hope that if violent protests and riots showed up to our town, we would follow in the footsteps of the Sisters Volunteer Fire Department and band together to protect our local businesses.

Jack W. Hammack



To the Editor:

I would like to thank *The Nugget Newspaper*, the Sisters community, and our Rodeo sponsors. This would have been the week of the 80th Anniversary for the Sisters Rodeo. The town would have been full of rodeo fans, the bands would be getting ready, the beer would have been stocked in the coolers, and the cowboy boots and hats would be coming out of the closets.

But this year, we had to deal with something that none of us had ever expected or experienced. With social distancing and Stay Home/Stay Safe, we had to cancel our event. The Board of Directors, volunteers, and members of the Rodeo Association know how hard this hit our entire community.

The good news is that The Biggest Little Show in the World cannot be stopped and will return in 12 months on June 9-14, 2021. We will again have the 80th Annual Rodeo. We want to thank all those who participated in the many Rodeo pages in *The Nugget* this week with a big thank you to *The Nugget* staff for all their work.

Let's look forward to next year and remain the strong community that we are.

Curt Kallerg
President Sisters Rodeo Association



To the Editor,

What can we do to help each other during this time of crisis? Let me tell you a story that I heard recently:

There was a young woman at high school who thought she was invisible, unimportant, forgettable. She was so depressed that one day she had decided to kill herself. That afternoon as she closed her locker, she looked up and caught sight of a girl down the hallway smiling at her. The smile said, "I see you." She stood there stunned. Quickly she looked away, and glanced back to see the same sweet smile beaming for her.

That night she did not take her own life but wanted to see if that girl would smile at her again. "Was that real?" she thought to herself, "Did this really happen?" At the end of the next day, she peered down the hallway and the girl smiled just for her. Each day for an entire week this young woman hoped and searched for that precious smile and it was there as daily comfort and gentle reminder that she was not invisible. She began to realize that she was noticed, beautiful, maybe even important—someone special.

I tell you this story because your smiles are so important to others and to me. I was raised in a place where strangers didn't smile at you. But here in Sisters, we smile and we chat sometimes. It is our culture and our way of caring. I miss that camaraderie.

So, I will wear a mask where it is requested for all our safety; but when I step outside, I will doff my mask and smile at anyone who meets my eye. I miss "Sisters Smiles." Blessings to you during this time and many, many smiles too.

Paula Lovegren



To the Editor:

I just want to take a minute to applaud the young man who has been standing at the corner of Locust and Highway 20 practicing his right to protest in peace over the death of George Floyd and countless other acts of police brutality.

I write this from a standpoint of supporting our well-behaved police and standing with the peaceful protesters. We are all in this together. This is a trying time and these are sensitive and extremely polarizing subjects that we are currently addressing, and seem to be continuously addressing in modern American times. To see this young man standing alone in a politically divided county such as ours really made me proud.

As a local Central Oregonian who left in 1998, spent my 20s and 30s in Portland, and just recently relocated back to this gorgeous part of Oregon, it can be extremely unsettling to see some of the misguided bigotry around me in Deschutes County, and the yelling I heard hurled at this kid today left me sick to my stomach.

As I waited to turn off of Locust, a pickup truck slowed in front of our solo protester and by the time I got my window down to listen, what I believe I heard him angrily yelling was "blacks are killing white people every damn day" and "f--- that n-----" before he sped off.

Our lone protester stood strong, nodded his head and kept a chin up. I honked and gave him a thumbs-up and wished I could be there with him. I am hopeful that the number of honks for solidarity and support greatly outnumbered the reactions like I witnessed.

Here's to you young sir, I commend you and I tip my hat.

Adam Payne



To the Editor:

I am a white, 60-something person married to the same white, 60-something person for the past 39 years. We are in the top 10 percent of earners, retired, and of opposite political parties. Compromise is part of our daily experience.

What has been on the news, both Fox and NPR, has disturbed my comfortable situation and prompted this letter. What the world currently sees in the United States is violence, prejudice, and partisanship. What the world could see is:

- Equal treatment by those in authority of people, regardless of any individual's education, economic status, living situation, or skin color.

- Laws and regulations that will preserve this country for the next generation and beyond, in all areas: economics, climate, environment, education, and healthcare.

- An acceptance that this is a global economy, that the ultimate goal is survival of the planet and humanity, and that unity is what allows survival.

- Government that puts the needs of the 80 percent above the needs of the upper and lower 10 percent.

How this can happen is for each elected official, at every level, to act according to the following:

- Keep the needs of the center 80 percent of those you represent at the forefront of all policy decisions.

- Accept that you will never, and should never, get 100 percent of what you want because you cannot know everything about every situation. Compromise should be a given.

- Act as if others, especially those of opposite political persuasion, have the same ultimate goals for the city, county/parish, state, and country as you do, unless you are aware of actual malfeasance or corruption.

- Recognize there are multiple ways to get to the ultimate goal.

- Know your job is done when the center 80 percent of the people you represent get the best resolution possible.

This is a lot, but not too much, for the people of the United States to expect of their government at all levels. Please challenge your own partisanship, analyze your level of commitment to bettering the lives of those you represent, and examine how you have been conducting the business of government in light of the above bullet points. We won't agree on everything, but this is a start.

Victoria E. Tennant



To the Editor:

What a nice tribute to Sisters Rodeo presented in *The Nugget*. This was such a generous thing to do for a tradition of Sisters Country, which established the town's Western theme.

There were actually three high school students tapped for rodeo scholarships. The rodeo has been extremely proud of our support of students since the first graduating class, and have granted, as of this year, over \$150,000 in scholarships.

Thank you, *Nugget* staff, for thinking of such a kind thing to do.

Bonnie Malone

Former Sisters Rodeo Board Member

Editor's note: Bonnie Malone is correct — there were a total of three students awarded the Sisters Rodeo Scholarship for 2020. The recipients are Gracen Sundstrom, Amanda Erlich, and Charmayne Owens.