

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Wear your mask

Sisters, like the rest of Oregon, is under a mandate for everyone to wear a face covering in indoor public spaces, like the bank or the grocery store.

The mandate comes in response to a surge in cases of COVID-19 across much of the state — including here in Central Oregon. Sisters has recorded its first confirmed cases since the pandemic began, and St. Charles reported nearly doubling its hospitalizations in a 24-hour period last Friday.

None of this is a cause for panic — increased cases were an inevitable development with the reopening of economic and social activity, and the caseload reflects both actual increased community spread and better diagnosis through significantly increased testing. Cases will continue to climb along with contact tracing and the number of tests performed. That’s expected and a cause for reasonable precaution, but not for undue fear.

There’s some good news — the mortality rate is not increasing. The total daily number of deaths hovers between 500 and 1,000 currently. That’s a thousand losses to a thousand families and should not be treated cavalierly. But the threat of COVID-19 as a killer scourge seems to be gradually receding.

We are learning to live with COVID-19, and that means adapting our behaviors.

Wearing a mask won’t prevent the spread of COVID-19, but it has been shown to reduce the radius of dispersion of the respiratory droplets that carry the virus. Health officials believe that, in combination with physical

distancing and thorough and frequent hand-washing, wearing the mask can slow the spread of COVID-19 — while still allowing for something resembling a “normal” economic and social life.

The need for such measures may last until there is a vaccine or until we reach herd immunity.

Sisters businesses need for all of us to comply with the mandate. Like it or not, believe in it or not, they’re responsible for enforcing the mandate, and they need our support, not complaints or belligerence.

Nobody likes wearing a mask, and being ordered to do so raises the hackles on folks who prize individual liberty and the right to make our own choices. But the inconvenience of donning a face covering to go to the grocery store pales in comparison to the impact of shutting bars and restaurants down again, as the governors of Texas and California recently did in response to significant surges in those state.

The survival of many of our local businesses could be at stake here.

Do it as a reasonable precaution; do it because you’re a good neighbor and want to help local businesses and their employees make it through these strange and turbulent times.

Wear your mask.


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’m writing to express thanks to Craig Eisenbeis for his article “Oregon’s History Steeped in Racism” in the July 1 issue of *The Nugget*. It was painful to be reminded that laws in force in Oregon in my lifetime discriminated against African Americans. I grew up in Medford in the 1950s. I don’t think any Blacks lived there then.

I heard later that “sunset laws” meant that Blacks were not welcome overnight. Recognizing historical events we might prefer to ignore is the important first step toward equality for all. Now we need to rededicate ourselves to making it so.

Carolyn Gabrielson

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Sisters Weather Forecast
Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday Sunny 78/49 	Thursday Mostly Sunny 78/49 	Friday Sunny 83/50 	Saturday Sunny 87/49 	Sunday Mostly Sunny 78/47 	Monday Mostly Sunny 80/50 
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What Sisters High School has given me

By Ashlynn Moffat
Guest Columnist

We all know the last three months have not been ideal — they have changed plans, and shifted learning methods. We went from one week without a care in the world, dreading school, to the next, sitting in our bedrooms wishing the people on our screen were with us in person.

I cannot deny that those nine weeks were hard.

Sisters High School is a welcoming place where teachers not only teach you, but become close friends. The support shown through these times of online learning was so incredible. Teachers spent their time giving to us. They worked longer hours than a normal school day. They created online platforms and figured out how to teach us best. I never experienced a teacher who got upset or impatient.

Even when my attitude was negative and selfish, they remained patient and kind and gave so much time to us.

I look back and wish I could have been more grateful for school. My freshman year brought not only learning of material, but the way the teachers poured into me was something so unlike any school experience I have had.

Not only did I experience support and love from teachers during the online learning phase, but every time I walked into those Sisters High School doors, the staff were right there with me. They serve the students with joy and genuine passion.

I would also like to share about how I felt supported this year with my first high school basketball team. The team was a place where I was pushed to be better and I was challenged. I was surrounded by people who genuinely radiated joy, integrity, and care for those around him. Brittaney Brown was a huge aspect of that team and I had a very positive experience with my first high school team this year. Thank you, Brittaney!

I believe that I am undeserving of the forgiveness I am shown daily. I was shown so much grace at

Sisters High School. I also believe that grace had to be given in order to succeed in the phase of online learning. I believe that this year and everything that has come with it (COVID-19, racial tension, canceled events etc.) were very hard, yet extremely unifying.

I see now that my entitled behavior blinded me from everything Sisters High School has done for me. I was a part of classes that I will remember the material for forever.

I believe it is necessary to go through a dark time. It slowly unblinded me. My eyes adjusted to the dark and therefore, I could see again. My heart became filled with gratitude just to see my teachers again. I longed to be back in Global Studies watching BBC one-minute world news.

So I write this to let everyone reading know that, by no means was my first of high school perfect. Did it humble me? Heck yes! I got my first D in a class. It reminded me that I need other people. I need my teachers. I longed to be back at school. My heart was filled with more gratitude than it’s ever been. In the midst of disappointing and humbling experiences, I was being molded and shaped. I was being challenged to leave my cozy corner of entitlement, and be vulnerable to reality. It allowed me to see again. To see that the people at school really do love their job. They give so much to the students.

The idea of Independence puts us in a box of selfishness and entitlement. We start to believe that we deserve others to serve us. Independence and entitlement bury gratitude. When we dismiss the idea of depending on other people. It blinds us. Truth is: WE NEED OTHER PEOPLE!

I thank every staff member at not only Sisters High School, but also the elementary and middle schools. I thank coaches who lost their spring season. I want to live with a grateful heart, and I want to build people up and encourage. This year has taught me so much and it began to help me see my entitlement. Thank you, Sisters High School, for giving everything!

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