

O P I N I O N



## 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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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 started my career as a licensed helicopter mechanic in the early 1970s. I worked heavy-lift helicopter for the good part of 46 years.

We pioneered a real environmental-friendly way to yard timber-helicopter logging. All through the seventies and most of the eighties we were able to log year round with no issues. Then the Forest Service adopted a new policy, save the top-soil scheme. So all the years we logged the units and then YUM (yard unmerchantable timber) we left the timber sale looking better than we found it. Under the new policy logs were left to rot to enhance the topsoil. In the new era of "let it be" — let the natural fires go, it's turning out to be a big mistake.

I personally watched Yellowstone National Park burn to the ground in 1988 while the different government agencies, ie: Forest Service, BLM, and National Park Service argued over whose fire it was and how to handle it.

In the years after 1987, our forests have become a wasteland of fallen trees and rotting wood all very flammable fuel for wildfires. Sure, there have been years of drought and

cycles in nature but leaving fuel everywhere and mismanaging highway weed control have left our national forests a wasteland.

In my opinion, the private logging companies on their own land do a much better job managing their timber holds than the Forest Service.

Kelly Dodge



To the Editor:

I prefer to deal in facts. In my former job, facts were what made a successful case. Sadly, the letters to the editor reflect personal bias toward the President rather than an analysis, based on *facts* of his successes or failures.

Case in point, the last letter (from Bill Kemp, *The Nugget*, September 9 edition) talked about the President referring to military personnel as "losers and suckers." The author of that letter failed to mention that *The Atlantic Magazine* retracted the validity of their anonymous "source." This follows on the

*See LETTERS on page 15*

## A stitch at a time

By Jim Cornelius  
Editor in Chief

The social fabric of America is fraying, torn by the economic, social, and psychological impact of the coronavirus pandemic, and by social unrest and political tensions the likes of which we haven't seen for 50+ years.

Here in Sisters, we have felt the blows of shutdowns, restrictions, event cancellations, disruptions to education — and in recent weeks, living in a thick, choking pall of smoke. Now we look ahead to a fall and winter partially cut off from the Willamette Valley as two of the major arteries into our part of the state remain closed, potentially for months.

While we all recognize that our troubles are small next to the devastation experienced by our neighbors to the west, in Blue River and Detroit and so many other communities on the west side of the Cascades, we're still feeling the sense of dread and dislocation that comes with troubled times.

We're heading into one of the most contentious elections in American history, which just became even more so with the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the prospect of a raw, power-politics brawl over filling her seat on the Supreme Court.

National politics can seep into the Sisters Country air as insidiously as wildfire smoke — and it could be just as toxic and hazardous to our community's health. In an atmosphere where *everything* is politicized and all politics is weaponized, it can be easy for neighbors to turn on each other in anger and distrust — just when we need to be coming together to meet the many challenges that will continue to face our community for many months to come.

It would be naïve and childish to pretend that what happens on the national stage does not affect our lives in Sisters. Who sits behind the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office matters; who controls the Senate has an impact; the decisions made at the Supreme Court shape our lives.

But we cannot repair and maintain the social fabric by whom we elect to national office. We mend the social fabric one stitch

at a time, right here in our local communities.

This weekend, Sisters will come together to reach out a helping hand to Oregonians who have experienced devastating losses in catastrophic wildfires. There is no political litmus test required to participate. In fact, your politics are irrelevant.

“ We mend the social fabric one stitch at a time, right here in our local communities. — Jim Cornelius ”

This is liable to be a long, hard winter for many folks in Sisters, with ongoing COVID restrictions taking their toll, and the normal slowdown of the season exacerbated by road closures. Business owners will struggle; seniors will be more isolated than ever; workers' paychecks will be leaner than usual. What we do to help folks who need it matters a whole lot more than what bubbles we fill in on our ballots.

There are people who are making vast fortunes and accruing great power through the business of dividing Americans one from another. They have powerful tools of propaganda to wield, day in and day out, in convincing us that our neighbor who has political views that differ from our own is an existential threat to everything we value and hold dear.

The true threat lies in that division itself. If Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Antonin Scalia could enjoy a warm friendship and shared values, despite having virtually polar opposite views on the law, we can certainly lend an ear to the neighbor whose political yard sign or letter to the editor infuriates us.

Better yet, perhaps those who disagree on virtually everything there is to disagree about in national politics can simply shut up about it for a minute, join together and find something to agree on: That these tumultuous and troubled times are just the right time to reach out and help our neighbor.

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Partly Cloudy 76/48	Partly Cloudy 63/43	Mostly Cloudy 61/45	Partly Cloudy 72/45	Sunny 80/47	Sunny 84/49

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