

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Wear the mask

It's a lot of work maintaining COVID-19 safety protocols at Sisters businesses. Much of that work falls to retail staffers, who have the thankless task of continually reminding people to maintain physical distance and wear masks as mandated by the State of Oregon.

Most people are understanding, cordial and appreciative. However, it only takes a single unpleasant confrontation to make a bad day for a worker — someone who doesn't make the rules and is just trying to do their job.

Things are likely to get more stressful as the weather turns chilly and more and more activities have to move indoors. It looks like we're in for the long haul with the coronavirus

pandemic, which means that local business owners and workers are going to be stuck for the foreseeable future in an enforcement role none of them signed on for.

Give 'em a break. Do what they ask of you. Wear the mask. Keep your distance. Sanitize your hands. If your principles don't allow you to do that, you have options that don't require berating people who are just trying to make a living in tough times.

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

Having been born and raised in Sisters, I have actually never once commented on a *Nugget* post or written a letter. During a time of so much hostility and confusion combined with rapid growth, we have slowly lost our beautiful sense of community. I have faith that we will rebound and one way to do so is to honor key members of our community and educate ourselves.

I hadn't read *The Nugget* in quite some time, being that I really wanted a break from all news, but this morning when I read the letters to the editor I was particularly moved by Don Wilt's suggestion of honoring Jim Anderson and his devotion to wildlife. I am saddened that they moved, but honored to have known them my entire life. That family is pure, kind, and has completely committed their life to nature, which is both admirable and rare.

I just want to second the notion that a school or some sort of facility or program should tribute the Anderson legacy and hopefully inspire more humans to commit to protecting our planet.

Rather than stroking your egos and angrily writing about Trump and Biden let's find common ground and use this as a forum to discuss things actually relevant to our community and not continue to divide us.

Find something about this area you love, honor it, and protect it.
Ryder Redfield



To the Editor:

The recent on-line forum of candidates for the Sisters City Council was quite helpful. I was particularly impressed with Jen Letz and believe she would make a valuable contribution to the Council.

I did hear the phrase "quality of life" uttered by one of the candidates, which has become an all-too-familiar euphemism around here for "gated community."
Roger Detweiler



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Keep Sisters small?

By Emme Shoup City of Sisters Assistant Community Engagement & Program Coordinator

During the 2018 Sisters Country Vision, "Keep Sisters Small" was an overwhelming sentiment from the rapidly growing community. Yet there is a conflict about what small means and the desire for more affordable housing and economic opportunities. At a time when the City is updating its Comprehensive Plan that will influence future growth, it's nice to think about simpler times.

The Sisters History Museum connects the City's 1880s downtown theme to its 1880s beginnings. Sheep used to be herded down Cascade Street to the foothills of the Cascades for summer grazing. Lumber mills employed the community. Sisters was a tourist town even back then as it catered to travelers from the east and west. There were waysides and hotels for guests, a barn to park their animals, merchants and blacksmiths, two general stores, and the quintessential saloon.

There are many more treasures to discover about the history of Sisters in the Museum. Verbal tours of their collection of artifacts and photographs are offered in the historic Wakefield bungalow. Walking tours show parties around the downtown's existing historic buildings and landmarks that had been burned in the fires of the 1920s.

The Three Sisters Historical Society, who founded the Museum, hosted Fireside Talks on various topics at the Five Pine Conference Center — including highlighting ordinary people from the Sisters area to share their extraordinary stories of 'back in the day.' Though large gatherings are temporarily on hold, the Museum continues to find meaningful and educational ways to engage with visitors.

Karen Swank, one of the founders of The Three Sisters Historical Society, says, "Sisters is more than just a tourist drive-thru town. We want to present our rich history. People don't always know about it."

Having opened only one month ago, Swank says the Museum is receiving interest beyond its mailing lists. People are coming from all over the west, between Arizona and the Puget Sound. "Despite COVID and the off-season, our

guest book statistics show we are drawing visitors from outside Sisters including Seattle, Yakima, and Palouse, Washington, as well as the valley. These visitors had family here at one time, so the Museum is the particular destination in order to see what we have in their family files."

The Museum is pleasantly surprised by the turnout, to say the least.

The Museum's momentum and breadth of reach holds opportunity for future services. "We would like to offer tours at the [Camp Polk] cemetery. There's lots of history there," with its first burial in 1880, says Swank. The Museum would also like to place more plaques that identify significant historical landmarks around town.

Though not a direct partner of the Sisters Country Vision, the Museum is embracing what makes Sisters exceptional from the community's visioning. The walking tours and plaques support a more Walkable Downtown. The number of Museum visitors from out-of-town works towards becoming a Four-Season Tourism & Visitor Destination. And preserving the history of Sisters promotes stewardship of its Small-Town Atmosphere.

The Sisters History Museum's unintentional alignment with the Vision's 20 Strategies shows even through their mission statement: "Our mission is to deepen the understanding of past choices, present circumstances, and future possibilities by preserving, sharing and bringing to life the history of the Three Sisters area, and thereby strengthening community bonds."

As Sisters contemplates its future regarding growth and change, learning about the history of how it all started brings a valuable perspective.

With Sisters' 75th Anniversary coming up in April 2021, the Sisters History Museum will be a significant asset in the collaborative development of the celebration. When asked about the history of Sisters in 1946, Swank shared a fitting headline from "The Sisters Herald" newspaper in 1912 after the railroad's arrival in 1911, "Sisters May Incorporate, There is a Movement On Foot to Incorporate Among the Progressive Citizens."

Even today, achieving community visions takes time and continuous effort.

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

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

Wednesday Partly Cloudy 50/26	Thursday Mostly Sunny 50/28	Friday PM Showers 56/36	Saturday AM Snow Showers 39/19	Sunday Partly Cloudy 37/16	Monday Mostly Sunny 47/27
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