

O P I N I O N

Editorial...

Thanksgiving is a date on a calendar

Many people's Thanksgiving plans have been disrupted by the surge in COVID-19 cases. Sisters' traditional holiday kickoff events this weekend will be sorely missed. So much has been canceled and so much that the Sisters community values has been put at risk this year.

We're all fatigued and most all of us have suffered losses of one kind or another.

And yet...

There remains much to be thankful for and much to appreciate. The stalwart volunteers who stage the Sisters Community Thanksgiving Dinner have found a way to make it happen — even if it's not the same as gathering with friends. Teachers continue to find ways to give Sisters students a version of the remarkable educational opportunities that make Sisters schools stand out (*see story, page 1*).

Shopkeepers and restaurant owners keep finding ways to persevere, and neighbors continue to reach out a helping hand.

A friend who has had a particularly brutal 2020 noted that, "Thanksgiving is a date on a calendar." If you can't celebrate with loved ones this Thursday, you can defer the celebration to another day, as my own family will do.

But there's no need to defer giving thanks. The tradition arises out of adversity, from the arduous early settlement of America through the Revolution, the Civil War, the Great Depression and world wars. The purpose of a day of Thanksgiving is not to eat till we're stuffed, nor even to enjoy the fellowship of family and friends: It is to remind ourselves that even in dark times, there is much good in our world, much to be thankful for.

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

We are heartbroken that all of the Sisters community events have been canceled this year. The Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce has spent many thousands of dollars on our shop-local advertising campaign, given out thousands of pieces of PPE and tens of thousand of dollars in grant funding to our business community.

We appreciate the community support and your willingness to step up and support our local businesses during the COVID-19 crisis.

As you may know, the Chamber has canceled our community events. Again, we are heartbroken not to be able to have our community trick or treating, tree lighting, parade and visit with Santa where we have 200 children fill our chamber and give their Christmas wishes to our very own Sisters Santa Claus.

Given that, we request our community members resist the urge to organize events on their own. We understand the need to help our local business by organizing events. Our concern is if there is an outbreak in Sisters,

we will not be able to reopen and that will have long-term economic consequences for our local businesses.

Everywhere I go the community has really stepped up to the plate and is following all the rules laid out by the state government. Whether we agree or not with mandates, most of us are following the restrictions. I also do not agree with some of the mandates. As an example, the gyms have purchased thousands of dollars' worth of sanitizing equipment, the equipment is sanitized by every person using the facilities' equipment, face masks are being used, social distancing is in place and guards have been put up to separate gym employees from the public. Also, due to the safety requirements, restaurants are also some of the safest places, as well.

So, while we don't agree with all of the mandates, we do agree we must follow the protocols in place so we can stay open and stay safe. We are in this for the long haul and

See LETTERS on page 20

Your kids are looking to you for leadership

By **Kathy Nagel Hood**
Guest Columnist

Observations from a counselor:

The stress your children are experiencing isn't just coming from online learning or lack of contact with friends. Please remember that your kids hear *everything*. They hear your stress over finances. They hear your anger over schools opening — or not. They hear your frustration with your employers. They hear your anguish over the inconvenience of not going out to eat or living a "normal" life. They hear your fear — or disdain — over COVID.

They love you and want you to be happy. A great deal of their stress is generated from feeling responsible for your happiness, while also feeling helpless around being able to do anything about it. They don't know how to take care of you, or how to "fix it." As a result, they may distract, act out, or fall into depression. As one little girl in my practice put it, "I don't know how to make mommy not sad, and it makes me feel sad, too. Then I get mad and be bad."

I know that parents are handling a LOT these days: scary finances and world outlook, juggling job and kids, facing loneliness with the quarantine, and missing your friends and family among other things — but, somehow, some way, you've got to make current life OK for your kids, no matter what that looks like. This doesn't mean buying them things or figuring out playdates — your kids are looking to you for leadership on how to feel and how to learn that "normal" can be a fluid paradigm.

So...what to do. Top of the list: making "it" (whatever "it" is) OK for yourself will, in turn, make "it" OK for your kids. Online learning is OK. Going to school is okay. Staying home is OK. Everything, no matter what it is, is OK — no matter how you feel about it. Naturally, you'll want to let them talk to you about their frustrations over whatever situation they are facing; the point is that it's important to protect them from your projections. Give them the space to be happy with whatever they are experiencing without having to worry about how you feel about it.

Re-word/redirect/reduce your anger. I see my clients and friends digging deep in

the trenches with anger and militant attitudes, not allowing for any kind of pleasure in their lives. Children don't know how to navigate this. Adopting anger as a way of life with the current state of affairs can be both emotionally and physically addicting — not a good lesson for your kidlets. One remedy? It takes work, but a shift in semantics can make all the difference in the world. Teach yourself (and your kids) to say things like "this is just a weird year," or "this is only temporary."

Changing your wording changes your wiring.

Leave unnecessary drama behind as you create your new normal. I see folks gaining a lot of energy and traction from complaining. Look instead to the secondary gains created by staying close to home. How many times in your life will you have this opportunity to explore family in this manner? If you do have to complain, do it outside of your kids' earshot. Walk to a park or sit in your car to phone a friend. Email with a family member. Do what you need to do to keep the airspace clear of complaints in your children's lives.







Show appreciation for the thoughtful things your kids do. Most importantly, do it without a "but" statement after. Example: "I appreciate it when you are kind to your teachers," or "I appreciate it when you do the dishes." Studies have shown that appreciative statements help to positively rewire the thoughts of both the sender and the receiver.

Create adventure. Thanksgiving is the perfect example this year. I see two choices: either to suffer from the lack of family and normalcy, or to create cool memories for your children. Do something a little wicked that feels outside the rules. Eat pie for breakfast. Let everyone choose a movie and watch them one after another. Wear pajamas all day. Have popcorn for dinner. Do whatever you can that feels a little naughty or conspiratorial, something only your family will understand.

Again, I know how stressful this is for all of you — my daily job is to listen to the stories. This message is about your kids. Do what you can to make this OK for them. This is a wonderful opportunity to help them develop resilience.

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 Rain/Snow 42/31 	Thursday Partly Cloudy 44/26 	Friday Partly Cloudy 49/27 	Saturday Partly Cloudy 49/23 	Sunday Partly Cloudy 45/26 	Monday AM Snow Showers 44/24 
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Community Marketing Partner: Vicki Curlett
Classifieds & Circulation: Lisa May
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