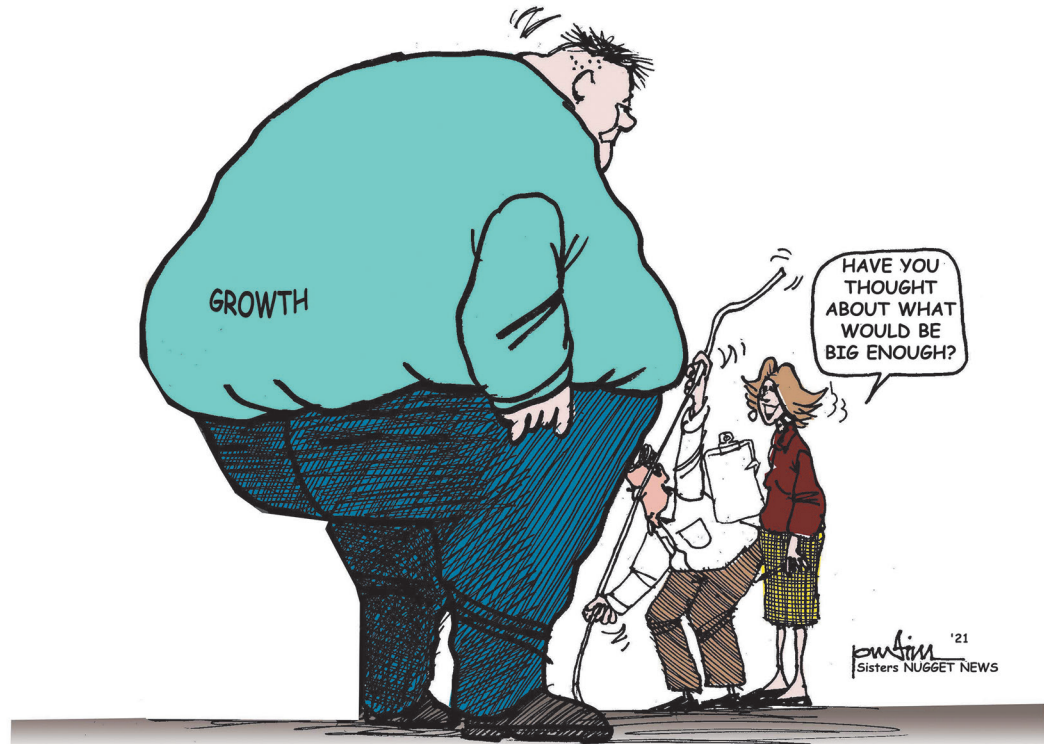


O P I N I O N



## 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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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 write in response to Mr. Damerell's Letter to the Editor of January 6.

Instead of referring to the homeless as vagrants and criminals, how about stepping up and lending a helping hand to the less fortunate? I do, and have been greatly rewarded in peace of mind and spirit, not to mention friendship.

Doug Williams



To the Editor:

I was disturbed, though not surprised, to

learn that after a visit to our St. Charles Clinic here in Sisters, vaccinations for seniors are projected to be available late spring, early summer! This is not okay!

Lon Kellstrom



To the Editor:

I think our new Congressional representative Cliff Bentz should resign.

He's clearly not qualified to be a U.S. Congressman. He had a simple, perfunctory

See **LETTERS** on page 16

## A loaded gun

**By Jim Cornelius**  
Editor in Chief

It is a cardinal rule of firearms safety: *Never* point a gun at anything you do not wish to destroy. Once you pull the trigger — by accident or with intent — you can never call the bullet back.

For far too long, politicians, pundits, and public have been brandishing weaponized rhetoric of insurrection, revolution, and civil war. On January 6 in our nation's capital, a trigger was tripped. The shot will echo through American politics for a long time to come.

The people who stormed into the U.S. Capitol on that dark day chose to be there. They are responsible for their actions. Five people are dead and others will pay consequences for the day's passions that will dog their lives for years.

Will there be any accountability for those who whipped up the passions of the mob?

Suddenly, the effort to use the counting of electoral votes to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election was no longer exhilarating political theater, no longer a salve to the wounded pride of a defeated president, or a means of harnessing the grievances of an outraged base in pursuit of power. Suddenly, things got very real.

Representative Dan Crenshaw (R-Texas) hit his fellow congressmen — among them Oregon's Cliff Bentz — with some hard truth in the wake of the January 6 riot.

"They've been lying to people, lying to millions," he said. "They've been lying that January 6 was going to be this big solution for election integrity, and it was never going to be. It was never going to solve anything and it was always unconstitutional... In the sense that they were led to believe January 6 was anything but a political performance for a few opportunistic politicians to give a five-minute speech. That is all that it ever was. People were lied to."

Crenshaw, a former Navy SEAL and combat veteran, knows what it means when things get real, and he called out those who brandished warlike words and left others to reap what they sowed.

When the mob breached the Capitol, Crenshaw said, the "same members of Congress who called people to fight, they were nowhere to be found. Because it was all fun and games to them..."

They never knew what a real fight was. Real fights are scary. Bullets flying, that's scary. Glass breaking, that's really scary. They were nowhere to be found, they scattered. They talked about the courage to stand up, the courage to fight for weeks and weeks but when it came down to it, there was no courage... All of the members who called for everyone to come and fight and make their last stand, all of those members were scattered like cowards while the Capitol Police had to do the fighting."

One of those police officers, Brian D. Sicknick, died after rioters bludgeoned him in the head with a fire extinguisher.

Words matter. The stories we tell and the narratives we craft matter. Donald Trump and his supporters can argue that he did not incite the crowd to violence in his speech at the January 6 "Save America Rally" that preceded the riot at the Capitol. After all, he did urge the crowd to "peacefully protest."

But he also told them, "we fight, we fight like hell, and if you don't fight like hell you're not going to have a country anymore." Some of those who heeded the call of the president to "walk down Pennsylvania Avenue" and "take back our country" died for their loyalty. In the charged atmosphere of the day, the potential for a violent outcome shouldn't have been hard to foresee.

The unprecedented breach of the Capitol comes on the heels of a summer of rioting and destruction in many American cities — also enabled and promoted by people who should know better. Americans who don't relish watching their country spiral into a cycle of low-intensity civil war may be forgiven for feeling a sense of foreboding and despair.

And yet...

This Wednesday, here in our own community, three new city councilors are to be sworn in. These councilors will join a cadre of volunteers of unprecedented numbers and capability in a non-partisan effort to take on the challenges that Sisters faces, managing growth and promoting economic prosperity, while preserving the quality of life and the community bonds that make Sisters a true home.

Citizens engaged in a constructive dialogue doing their civic duty, in good faith, in spite of it all. America.

### Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

**Wednesday**

Partly Cloudy

46/30



**Thursday**

Partly Cloudy

50/34



**Friday**

AM Showers

49/32



**Saturday**

Cloudy

48/34



**Sunday**

Partly Cloudy

51/33



**Monday**

Partly Cloudy

52/36



**Tuesday**

PM Showers

53/34



# The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

Website: [www.nuggetnews.com](http://www.nuggetnews.com)  
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Member

**Postmaster: Send address changes to The Nugget Newspaper, P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.**

**Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.**

**Editor in Chief:** Jim Cornelius  
**Production Manager:** Leith Easterling  
**Creative Director:** Jess Draper  
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**Classifieds & Circulation:** Lisa May  
**Owner:** J. Louis Mullen

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area. Third-class postage: one year, \$55; six months (or less), \$30. First-class postage: one year, \$95; six months, \$65.

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