

O P I N I O N

A bit of winter...



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

The Three Sisters put on their winter coat – but so far things have remained pretty mild and dry down on the flats. The forecast doesn't hold much in the way of new snowfall.

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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:

Yesterday I experienced us at our best.

Because of my age, I qualified for a COVID vaccination. We were given clear, explicit instructions on how to find the site (fairgrounds). When we arrived, though the line of cars was long, there was clear signage and both National Guard and volunteer aides. The lines were orderly and there was an assistant at each junction. The person who administered my shot appeared to be about my age but she had volunteered as "it was the right thing to do."

This is our community at its best. This could be every community. Ours is a rich

country — rich in resources, rich because of our diversity (ethnic, sexual orientation, even our differing perspectives re: policy). But our virulent internal divisiveness will keep us from EVER being great.

Janice Druian



To the Editor:

The business community is so important to Sisters' economy, but climate change brings extremely dry conditions extending and exacerbating fire season, which threaten normal life and business operations here. That's why

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We cannot win 'war against COVID'

By Wyatt Woods
Guest Columnist

It's perfectly OK if some people contract COVID.

There, I said it. Someone needs to say it. Heck, a lot of people need to say it out loud so that the collective mentality can evolve around this disease.

Hold on! Don't get all riled up. I said that it's OK for *some* people to get COVID. Not everyone.

Sure, COVID poses a mortal threat to a certain percentage of our population. My 90-year-old grandmother may not make it to her next birthday if she got food poisoning, so she should definitely avoid contracting COVID. My 68-year-old mother has Type 2 diabetes and some other health conditions that make her a pretty good target for COVID as well. It's possible that if she contracted COVID, then she may witness a lengthy hospital stay or may eventually become a victim of COVID.

My grandmother and my mother are two lovely ladies who should take daily health precautions (washing hands, etc.) to avoid infectious diseases, and they should certainly get a COVID vaccine as soon as possible. Once readily available, I suspect that we will treat the COVID vaccine in the same manner that we do the flu vaccine, and those who choose to do so will get their annual shot (and yes, I realize it's not a flu, it's not a cold — but it is a virus).

Unfortunately, society has drunk a strange Kool-Aid served up by policy makers who have focused on herd immunity, primarily through vaccination, as the only solution to "winning the war against COVID" and as a requirement to returning to something resembling normal daily life.

Please read this next sentence very carefully and then repeat it to yourself and those around you: We *cannot* win a war against COVID.

Herd immunity is unlikely to be achieved

for even a short period of time. It is highly likely that this disease will be a part of most of our lives for the distant future because, like it's closest viral relatives, the common cold, it mutates quickly. You have likely read stories by now about COVID variants popping up around the globe. Today's vaccines will probably be ineffective next year and may be replaced annually by new vaccines that would be effective against new variants.

Now that vaccines are becoming available, I feel that we should focus our efforts and public health messaging to ensure that vulnerable people such as the elderly, immunocompromised, and people with serious pre-existing health conditions have the opportunity to become vaccinated.

Afterward, there is no reason that society should not be able to return to "life as usual" before COVID.

Politicians and policy-makers will cater to our collective thinking and create policies to make themselves popular so that they can get your vote. It became popular to fight and win the war on COVID. The manner in which this war has been carried out is having a disastrous effect on the economy and on people's abilities to work in order to feed their families. While people stay holed up in their homes ordering their livelihoods off of Amazon, businesses close their doors daily — and permanently.

The war on COVID sounds like valiant effort and a brave fight to win, but sadly the war is mere fiction. Furthermore, any fight to be won against COVID requires money, real money produced through a healthy economy and an influx of tax dollars.

Let's change our thinking and dialogue around COVID so that we witness progressive policy change that protects the right people and witnesses the return to the "old normal" — except with an annual COVID shot at your local pharmacy.

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

<p>Wednesday AM Snow Showers 40/24</p>	<p>Thursday Partly Cloudy 46/31</p>	<p>Friday Partly Cloudy 47/29</p>	<p>Saturday Sunny 51/31</p>
<p>Sunday Partly Cloudy 50/26</p>	<p>Monday Partly Cloudy 46/26</p>	<p>Tuesday Partly Cloudy 44/27</p>	

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442 E. Main Ave., P.O. Box 698, Sisters, Oregon 97759
Tel: 541-549-9941 | Email: editor@nuggetnews.com



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Production Manager: Leith Easterling
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Community Marketing Partner: Vicki Curlett
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