

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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.

Vaccine priority

To the Editor:
For the record, we have found no one in Sisters nor in our wide circles of friends in five major cities in Oregon who object to teachers given vaccine priority over seniors!

It is sad to know a few loud voices have lumped the rest of us into a genre of crotchety old people who think only of themselves. We want kids back in school, which means teachers have no choice, so we want them and their families to be safe.

The truth is that we seniors have the option of staying safely at home with no obligation to go anywhere. We can wait a few weeks for

the sake of kids and all educators, and think Governor Brown is doing the best anyone could with all the unknowns, changes and demands of this pandemic.

Mike and Wendie Vermillion

Support Sisters School District Bond

To the Editor:
I have two boys: ages 6 and 4. My 6-year-old is in his first year of kindergarten and is having a blast. He loves his teacher and seeing his friends. I want him to continue to love school and thrive. Sisters is a

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Housing and jobs are in crisis in Oregon

By Craig Wessel
Guest Columnist

I would like to convey a response to Bill Bartlett's article in last week's issue of *The Nugget*, regarding the affordable-housing crisis in Sisters, Central Oregon, and arguably the U.S. (and world) as a whole. I have read his article and I fully agree with his statements. And there are certainly plenty of well-paying jobs in Sisters, and around Central Oregon as a whole.

However, we cannot deny that, at least in Central Oregon, people in very skilled professions, like a teacher or a doctor, will take a significant pay cut to come work for Sisters School District, or St. Charles Health System, compared to what they could make if they were to work for a school district or medical group in the Portland Metro Area, or Salem or Eugene. Couple this with the fact that our housing costs are out of control, and the reason we have a shortage of workers in all industries, including skilled professions, becomes clear.

To add to this, I would also like to point out that, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, a lot of people would rather sit on their duff and collect unemployment, because it pays more than most jobs here currently will. Yes, I know there are people who are having a significantly hard time finding a job, even something as simple as a cashier at McDonald's or Bi-Mart. But a lot of people are just collecting unemployment because it pays more than any job currently will.

Returning to the housing subject. As someone who works retail at \$13.15 per hour, I should qualify for the low-income housing units at Ponderosa Heights or Tamarack Village. However, I do not. A single person will only qualify for those apartments if their income is less than \$26,000 per year. My current income is over that. Which means I don't qualify. And that is wrong, as I am quite clearly in poverty. Maybe not federally, but for sure in Oregon.

I sadly believe it is likely I will have to be living with my parents for the foreseeable future, as I just cannot afford to live in this town otherwise. Regrettably, I am also looking at moving to other areas in the northwest, in hopes of pursuing more gainful employment in my trade, the tech industry, as we do not have enough tech opportunities in Central Oregon.

We have the Facebook and Apple data centers in Prineville, but they don't hire technicians very often, and that is quite likely because the people who are working there as technicians, are holding onto those jobs with a death grip, as they are probably some of the best paying, best benefits jobs in Central Oregon as a whole. Outside of Facebook and Prineville, there is Ixex in Bend and also BendBroadband and Century Link. But that is about all I can think of for most of this area.

Housing and jobs in this town, Central Oregon, the U.S., and quite possibly the world as a whole is a real problem, especially among the younger generations. Millennials and Zoomers simply do not have the advantages the Baby Boomers and Generation X did with housing and jobs. A lot of Millennials and older Zoomers have crippling college debt that they can never hope to pay off, and have not found a job with their degree, which further hinders their ability to find a place of their own to live.

There needs to be something we can do. I am not sure what it is we can do, but it has to be something. We cannot continue on with a terrible job market and out-of-control costs of living. People my age really are getting the short end of the stick. While there are people my age who are definitely lazy, most are not, and just want a share of the pie that their parents and grandparents got. I would also like to iterate that I say these things as a moderate-ish libertarian, and not a conservative or a liberal. We are in a housing and job crisis, and it is going to continue to get worse, and something *must* be done.

Views 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 Sunny 68/41 	Thursday Partly Cloudy 65/33 	Friday Partly Cloudy 68/40 	Saturday Cloudy 55/36
Sunday Showers 54/33 	Monday Mostly Cloudy 54/32 	Tuesday Partly Cloudy 58/35 	

The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

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



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
Community Marketing Partner: Vicki Curlett
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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Celebrating the classics...

Car enthusiasts heralded the arrival of spring, turning out for a causal cruise-in at Eurosports. The informal gathering of classic cars takes place each Friday evening from 4 to 7 p.m.

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