

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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.

Response to Craig Wessel

To the Editor:
The April 21 *Nugget* carried a guest column by Craig Wessel. He references the problems facing many Central Oregonians in finding affordable housing as well as employment paying family-level wages. These problems are especially pressing for today’s younger people; every generation has had its own set of difficult circumstances with which to deal.
Craig states that people his age are getting the “short end of the stick,” and just want “a share of the pie their parents and grandparents got.” I think if he were to talk to many of these

parents and grandparents, he would find that the pie was not served to them on a silver platter. There was hard work, sacrifice, and many lean years before enjoying that pie.
Craig states that something needs to be done but he is unsure what that something is. Actually, I believe he identified a possible option in his second paragraph. While it may not be the most attractive solution, not all problems have easy or attractive answers. He points out that metropolitan areas like Portland, Salem, and Eugene, have more plentiful housing and higher-paying employment

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday
Partly Cloudy
75/46



Thursday
Mostly Cloudy
80/44



Friday
Cloudy
73/45



Saturday
Partly Cloudy
64/36



Sunday
Mostly Cloudy
59/31



Monday
Mostly Cloudy
64/35



Tuesday
Partly Cloudy
66/35



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Mirror image...



A herd of mule deer gathered at a pond east of Sisters.

PHOTO BY ERIK DOLSON

‘Yes’ on Cloverdale fire levy

By Steven Lord
Guest Columnist

Cloverdale Fire Volunteer
I’m encouraging the citizens of Cloverdale to vote yes on levy 9-142 to support the Cloverdale Fire District and their board’s unanimous decision on preparing our district to better serve the community.

Typically, our emergency responders have an 8- to 12-minute delay in response to the station. At that point, we have a standard operating guideline of at least 2-3 qualified staff, depending on the apparatus being dispatched. A large house fire a half-mile from station 602 on Thanksgiving 2019 took us 18 minutes to respond to. I recently responded to a traffic accident (bystanders performing CPR) on Highway 20/Fryrear that took us 16 minutes for BLS-certified personnel to arrive and 24 minutes for paramedics to arrive.

A few years ago, our board of directors recognized response times were a problem and started working on ideas to improve them. This levy plays a crucial part in providing the best service moving forward, while keeping in mind Cloverdale’s continuing need for volunteers. Due to lack of support and comments made by three of our volunteers (two of whom do not have any medical or interior firefighting certifications), I emailed our association with my concerns. I feel that our community needs to hear a couple excerpts of that email to see where our hearts lie.

Like many of you, my time is valuable. My family has made sacrifices to allow me to serve the community in which I reside. I didn’t come to the conclusion that whatever minute I had left in the day would be best spent being a part of a volunteer fire department that didn’t want the best service for our community. We put sweat equity in our training, we put our lives on the line every time we choose to answer the call. Most evenings, I won’t have an adult beverage with dinner to avoid the guilt I have when I can’t respond. In short, we are giving our best effort to make a difference in the service we provide for the citizens of Cloverdale and the communities that we give mutual aid to.

Guess what members.... that isn’t enough. We need 24-hour staff for response, plain and simple. We can’t

get there fast enough. Without the students, I’d guess our average volunteer age is 50+. We don’t have new blood. We don’t have qualified volunteers to take over AIC or duty officer shifts. Looking ahead, we’ve got some problems.

My opinion as a resident is that our tax rate is one of the lowest in the state....and we get what we pay for. I’m fortunate enough to get a first-hand look how my tax dollars are working for me. I bet if we took a poll, most of our community doesn’t understand that we don’t provide 24-hour immediate response. This is the time when our volunteers go to bat for our department and our community, not selfishly derail a levy for service that raises our standard of care.

Now, let’s dive into our age and what we can accomplish for our community and in the not-so-distant future, our own medical-care needs. When I hang up my boots, I want the police and fire departments to be well funded so I can receive the highest-quality, best-trained and experienced personnel helping me or my family should I need them. This is where we should not be skimping out.

As volunteers, we should have our hearts in the right place, knowing we are doing whatever is within our power to make our community safer. We shouldn’t be threatened of losing a spot on an apparatus to a better-qualified paid professional... we shouldn’t put our pride before our patients, and as residents we should pay our taxes and expect exceptional response and service.

There are many untruths spread within our community (some of which made it in the Voter’s Pamphlet) and flat-out lies meant to derail the levy. Other opposition letters say it’s a scare tactic and that our response times wouldn’t improve: false; money grab — false.

In my example of the traffic accident, the young patient did not live. That patient may or may not have lived if a medic unit responded from our station, but in the six minutes it took me to drive to the station, the medic would have already arrived on scene. Every minute counts, whether it is your medical emergency or fire engulfing your home.

I encourage our community to investigate the facts: response times; advanced life support services; 24-hour immediate response.

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

Got a great photo of life in Sisters Country?

Send your high-resolution photo to editor@nuggetnews.com.