

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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.

SCHOOL BOND

To the Editor:
Before my husband and I considered starting a family, we knew Sisters was where we wanted to raise our family due to the amazing school district and the way the community comes together and takes care of each other. Because of these reasons, I am urging people to vote YES for Sisters School District bond measure 9-141.
We now have three children, two are enrolled in elementary school now and our third will be in kindergarten in two years. The school is past optimal capacity, running at 106 percent and the numbers of incoming students are only growing, as the size of the community grows. Our fifth-grade class, who should normally be in elementary, has been attending

classes at the middle school because of the lack of space.
In order to keep our schools running efficiently and to create the best learning environment for all children, we need this new elementary school. With the new elementary school, classes can remain small, fifth grade can move back into elementary, teachers and support staff can have the space they need to do their best work, all schools will be in the same area, and collaboration between all three schools can create an amazing learning environment for all ages.
Sisters community and Sisters School District has a reputation of taking care of each other and our schools. And because of that our school district is able to thrive. So please, let’s

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday Mostly Sunny 79/45 	Thursday Partly Cloudy 78/44 	Friday Partly Cloudy 73/40 	Saturday Mostly Sunny 74/40
Sunday Sunny 80/42 	Monday Partly Cloudy 68/38 	Tuesday Partly Cloudy 68/37 	

Keep dark skies dark

By J. Thomas Jeffrey
Guest Columnist

Several recent articles and letters to the editor in *The Nugget Newspaper* have highlighted the problems of light pollution in Sisters. One article by Jim Cornelius was about the proper shielding of lighting on houses, and a letter from Signe L. Johnson told about the brightening light dome over Sisters and surrounding cities which is causing the night sky to become much brighter.
According to the astronomers at the Pine Mountain Observatory, which is located 26 miles east of Bend, the light from the light dome over Bend is preventing them from making observations of extremely faint objects that they want to study.
Unfortunately, the City of Sisters is doing nothing to prevent this problem from growing worse.
The City says that they work with contractors who are building new houses in the city limits to make sure that the exterior lighting on these houses are properly shielded to comply with dark-sky regulations. This is not happening.
Last year, I walked around my neighborhood looking at four new houses that were being built. None of the houses had exterior lighting that complied with dark-sky standards. On three of the houses there was no shielding on the exterior lights at all. On the fourth house, the shielding did not cover the bulbs completely. Obviously the City is not ensuring that new houses have exterior lighting that complies with dark-sky standards like they said they were doing.
Even worse, some of houses in this neighborhood

keep their exterior lights on 24/7. They never turn them off.
Several of us from the Sisters Astronomy Club and the International Dark Sky Association met with city officials last year, including the Sisters city mayor, about this problem.
I had taken pictures of the houses mentioned above and tried to show them to the Mayor. He refused to look at them and didn’t want to even talk about them!
SPRD has awarded a \$1,000 grant to SAC (Sisters Astronomy Club, an SPRD committee) for the purchase and expenses related to the use of three Sky Quality Meters. These meters record the brightness of the night sky. I will be putting one at my house on East Cascade Avenue. These instruments will join ones at Sisters High School and Rimrock Ranch and a network of locations around Oregon in a program to monitor sky darkness to help identify sources of light pollution and monitor progress in reducing the problem.
I urge city officials to start taking this issue seriously. By working together to reduce light pollution, Sisters can create a safer and healthier environment for its citizenry while still maintaining dark skies.
Exposure to artificial light at night can harm your health.
Humans evolved to the rhythms of the natural light-dark cycle of day and night. The spread of artificial lighting means most of us no longer experience truly dark nights.
Research suggests that artificial light at night can negatively affect human health, increasing risks for obesity, depression, sleep disorders, diabetes, breast cancer and more.

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

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Moon over the mountain...

The setting moon offered a tempting shot for Paul Lipscomb at his residence east of Sisters.



PHOTO BY PAUL LIPSCOMB