

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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.

A note of appreciation

To the Editor:

It had been four years since my last visit and the changes to the town are impressive. New stores, houses, school upgrades, and trail improvements are some of what I witnessed, but what was most impressive is what had not changed: the community participation through action, and the kindness toward one another abounded.

I am taking the goodness I experienced while there and will pay it forward to my community here in Connecticut. I won't

be able to recreate what you all have, but realize I am grateful for my time with you all and knowing there is a little town like Sisters out there.

Be well.
Bill Rexford



Strengthen power grid

To the Editor:

We must do more to strengthen our power grid against an electromagnetic pulse

See LETTERS on page 14

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday

Sept. 1 • Sunny

76/41



Thursday

Sept. 2 • Sunny

76/43



Friday

Sept. 3 • Mostly Sunny

82/47



Saturday

Sept. 4 • Partly Cloudy

85/49



Sunday

Sept. 5 • Sunny

85/48



Monday

Sept. 6 • Sunny

85/50



Tuesday

Sept. 7 • Sunny

84/52



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PHOTO BY BILL BARTLETT

New deputy welcomed

By Greg Walker
Guest Columnist

Oregon Public Broadcasting's (OPB) Emily Cureton recently wrote a story regarding the findings of an internal investigation conducted by the Bend Police Department (BPD). The investigation was initiated by a complaint filed by Mr. Michael Satcher, a cofounder of the Central Oregon Peacekeepers (COPK). Satcher, while being cited for criminal trespass by Corporal Josh Spano, noticed a keychain holder with the phrase "Molon Labe" present on the officer's equipment vest.

Rachel Basinger, HistoryNet, notes, "The phrase comes from the Greek historical account of the battle at Thermopylae where 300 Spartan warfighters stood against a massive invading army from Persia."

The phrase translates as "Come and Take Them," referring to the weapons of the ancient Spartans. The complaint alleges that the phrase is associated with right-wing extremism.

The officer was fully exonerated on the most serious allegation and the nine others were deemed unfounded.

The phrase "Molon Labe" has long been popular with those who believe in the supremacy of the U.S. Constitution. During my own service in Iraq (2003/2004) I saw it displayed by our military warfighters in the form of tattoos, patches, and "battle flags" flown from our vehicles. It is the official motto of the U.S. Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT).

Both Mr. Satcher and Corporal Spano are combat veterans who participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Both men suffered military-service-connected wounds and injuries and draw VA disability compensation for these. But that's where their shared personal narratives end.

On August 8, 2020, Satcher was arrested during what became a violent confrontation during a demonstration in Prineville. Satcher is charged with Assault in the fourth degree, use of ESG/tear gas/mace in the second degree, interfering with peace/parole and probation officer, disorderly conduct in the second degree, and harassment. Of the charges, Satcher posted this on his Facebook page: "The Crook County District Attorney offered me a plea deal. I respectfully declined, because I'm the sort of nerd who believes in living by a code of ethics. The consequences of not taking the plea could be unpleasant, and I've chosen to believe that I will likely be convicted."

From its inception the

Central Oregon Peacekeepers have professed their hatred of law enforcement and their intention to see the Bend Police Department, in specific, defunded. Defaming cops, past and present, is one of the tactics they use in pursuit of this objective.

Left out of the OPB story was Corporal Spano's military accomplishments — accomplishments listed in the final BPD report. These include his enlisting in the Army in 2003 as a combat medic; serving in Mosul and Baghdad, Iraq, during some of the most intense house-to-house fighting of the war; calling in 9-line MEDEVAC helicopters for his wounded soldiers while at the same time treating both U.S. and enemy wounded under fire. He is the recipient of or mentioned in 23 letters of commendation. In addition, he has received seven lifesaving awards in the course of his military and law enforcement career.

He had no disciplinary problems while employed by the Bend Police Department.

Corporal Spano is on the board of directors of Warfighter Outfitters, a nonprofit, veteran-run organization headquartered in Sisters. The group provides wounded warriors with outdoor-related activities at little to no cost. None of those on the board receive compensation.

The report affirms this: "Corporal Spano participates and donates his time, money, and effort to assist veterans and law enforcement officers who have been engaged in traumatic incidents and need ways to decompress."

Bend PD's report is exhaustive in its detail. It mirrors a similar complaint and investigation reported on in June 2021 by the *Akron Beacon Journal* — an investigation that likewise exonerated the accused officer, the complaint filed by local "social activists" for whom law enforcement is the enemy.

Where did the officer get his key chain? According to the report, "Corporal Spano described the brown fabric key chain with Greek lettering is a key chain that was given to him by a friend... The friend who gave it to him was a member of the 19th Special Forces Group..." That's the same special operations unit I retired from in 2005 after 20 years as a Green Beret.

Prior to the internal investigation, Corporal Spano interviewed with the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office. Since 2018, DCSO has asked local officers in good standing to apply, offering lucrative incentives for doing so.

Corporal Spano is now Deputy Spano and we, as a community and county, are blessed to have him.

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