

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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.

Thank-you to Sisters community

To the Editor:

I would like to send a thank-you note to the community and friends for their support following Rick Judy's passing away:

Griffin, Chelsea Judy and I thank everyone who came to the ceremony of light held in his honor last Saturday, and for the condolences we received via emails, phone calls, or sympathy cards. All were unique to Rick and we would have liked to thank everyone personally.

Please accept our most profound gratitude for your presence; for donations to the Sisters Rotary Foundation for the Rick Judy Academic Scholarship for Sisters High School graduating seniors; and, most of all, for your friendship.

Bernadette Labrie

Mule deer decline

To the Editor:

I would like to expand on your comments about cougar predation on mule deer ("*Mule deer in steep decline in Sisters Country*," *The Nugget*, December 15, page 1).

It is estimated that there are in excess of 6,000 cougars in Oregon, far above ODFW's management goal of 3,000. Adult cougars generally kill one deer a week, or about 50 deer per year.

If one makes the conservative assumption that Deschutes County has only one percent of Oregon's cougar population, that gives us 60 cougars. If they each kill 50 deer yearly

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Weathering the storm

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

"It was a time of acute insecurity, when political, social, and legal norms were bent out of shape by warring protagonists for whom the system had long ceased to work and who sensed, in its weaknesses, an opportunity to remodel the world according to their desires. At times, the centre seemed unable to hold. Politicians urging unity and moderation watched aghast as factions tore at each other, all restraint set aside..."

That passage comes from historian Thomas Penn in "*The Brothers York*," describing England during the Wars of the Roses in the 15th century.

If this description sounds like it fits other eras — say, perhaps, America c. 2021-22, that's a pretty good proof of the aphorism that history may not repeat itself, but it often rhymes.

In the space of a couple of days last week, several friends expressed deep concern about the future of our country. No, "concern" is too mild a word; what they expressed was fear. These are people who lived through and participated in various ways in the turmoil of the Vietnam War era. The "acute insecurity" they experience now is an order of magnitude greater than what they felt then. Even in the throes of that violent, tumultuous, unstable time, there was a sense of optimism that what ailed the soul of the nation could be fixed, that the sins and failings of the past and the failings of the present could be overcome, that the future would be brighter and better.

My friends no longer carry that very American sense of optimism. They're not alone. Many Americans are feeling more pessimistic than we used to, even if it cuts against the grain to admit it.

A Pew Research study found that:

"A narrow majority of U.S. adults (56 percent) say they are somewhat or very optimistic about what the country will be like in 2050, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. But optimism gives way to pessimism when Americans are asked about some of the specific ways in which the United States might change.

"Most Americans expect income inequality to worsen over the next three decades. Majorities say the economy will be weaker, the nation's

debt burden will be heavier, the environment will be in worse condition and health care will be less affordable than today. Most believe the U.S. will play a less important role in the world. About two-thirds predict that domestic political divisions will become more pronounced. Indeed, Democrats and Republicans have strikingly different priorities when it comes to the policies they believe would help improve the quality of life for future generations."

The proximate cause of my friends' creeping sense of doom was a Washington Post op-ed by three retired generals who raised the specter of a coup in America if the 2024 election is contested, with the military potentially fueling civil war. They cited "the potential for a total breakdown of the chain of command along partisan lines — from the top of the chain to squad level... should another insurrection occur."

The picture the generals paint is, indeed, grim — and it's not just fringe apocalyptic fearmongering from some street-corner prophet shouting that the end is nigh.

My friends and I agree that it would be foolish and irresponsible to try to whistle past the graveyard, to pretend that everything will just — somehow — "work itself out." We need to be paying attention to all the red warning lights that are blinking in our face.

Hard times are here to stay for the foreseeable future. No election or policy is going to provide a sudden and profound change of course that is going to put our feet on the path to the uplands where the sun perpetually shines and the birds sing a chorus of "America the Beautiful."

But we cannot allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by a sense of foreboding and doom. As I told one of my friends, one of the things I am proudest of in my life is that I raised a daughter to be capable, resilient, and adaptable. That's what's needed in hard times. There is a lot that we can do right here in our own community to create resilience and adaptability. We're very lucky in that.

Perhaps we can channel our fears for the future into a resolution that, right here where we stand, we will build our own strength, and that of our families and this community we call home, so that whatever storms may come, we can weather them together.

Sisters Weather Forecast

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Dec. 22 • Rain	Dec. 23 • Snow	Dec. 24 • Snow	Dec. 25 • Snow	Dec. 26 • Snow	Dec. 27 • Snow	Dec. 28 • Snow
46/31	35/30	37/27	33/23	30/23	32/24	31/19

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Sisters Dance Academy presented their annual holiday dance recital to a live audience at Sisters High School auditorium on Saturday, December 18.



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