

LETTERS

Continued from page 2

COVID (vaccines), and many other policies are taking a backseat to politics.

I am sure I forgot something on this long list of issues our state, our country, and the global population face, but this is a very stressful list of issues we face every day.

Do you want to be part of the many decisions we face? Do you want to help? We have Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and those who do not care and don't want to be involved — fine! But if we don't communicate to one another in some type of town hall or forum, then we will just be going in circles trying to help our community deal with these issues and those coming in the future. We need to govern in a respectful, inclusive manner. If we can put our personal anger, frustration, and knowledge in a direction of calm, understanding, and growth, this community will be rewarded.

Let's get our City Council and local leaders to allow this to happen. They need to schedule town halls not council meetings — to be allowed to discuss and respond to the many decisions we are faced within our city.

Diane L. Hodgson

Certificate of Acceptability

To the Editor:

I was pleased to see the explanation by Sisters City Council President Nancy Connolly of the destination management (DOA) effort underway to assure that those coming to visit will add to "resident livability," since they "share our cultural and environmental values."

Perhaps the City should develop a process by which potential visitors can be certified as to their acceptability prior to visiting. These people can be issued a Certificate of Acceptability (COA) that can be displayed at entrance gates to be installed at City entry points.

Perhaps our local realtors could be "deputized" by the City to assist with the issuance of COAs since they are already doing a good job of making sure those who visit and decide to stay possess at least a half million dollars should they want to buy a house here.

Roger Detweiler

Thankful for Title IX

To the Editor:

Thank you to Paul Bennett for celebrating the 50th anniversary of Title IX in his recent letter to the editor, and for inspiring me to respond to how it had an effect on my life. Title IX had a huge impact on my life prior to and post-passage in 1972. I was born in the middle of six boys who were all very active in multiple sports. I wanted to play competitive sports such as basketball and football, but most competitive sports weren't available for girls at my high school.

When I decided to try out for quarterback of the boys' high school football team, my mom told me to give up on my dream and that the coach would just turn me away. Unfortunately she was right. Yet I persisted by asking the boys' coach if he would coach our powder-puff girls' football team. We practiced for several weeks to play one 30-minute game for the season, yet I was excited and I got to be the quarterback.

When girls' competitive tennis was available in my high school in 1970, I jumped all over it, even though I had never played before. Our coach hadn't either.

Today, I have switched from tennis to pickleball. Pickleball is the fastest-growing sport in the United States, and is expected to be an Olympic sport in the year 2028. It's a sport for all people of all ages. Title IX has taught me to advocate for recreation for all people of all ages and especially for public recreation. Learning to advocate for sports for women prior to and post-Title IX has inspired me to help promote the sport of pickleball and to pursue public courts for our Sisters community.

Our Sisters Country Pickleball Club partnered with Sisters Park & Recreation District to promote the joy of pickleball to our Sisters community. We all know the benefits of recreation and thanks to Title IX, in the United States; we now have equity in opportunities and funding on the basis of sex.

Yes, the 2022 Olympics are an excellent display of the positive results of Title IX. They just held the first-time Mixed Team Aerials competition. And yes, there are even girls on the boys high school football teams today. And yes, Sisters will someday soon have public pickleball courts for our Sisters community and visitors. Paul Bennett, thank you again for inspiring me to use my voice.

Lori Chase

Not so secret

To the Editor:

I hate to tell you, but the notion of secret socialists has long since passed in the state of Oregon as well as our shrinking island of conservative American values in Central Oregon. Bend left the party a long time ago and Redmond and Sisters have quickly followed.

All you have to do is look at the makeup of local government and the infiltration of not-so-secret is staggering. Yep, these "secret socialists" are crazy like a fox. Just take a look at the "new" District 5.

Brian Chugg

Unmask the children

To the Editor:

A scene played out during last week's Super Bowl that is indicative of how shameful our COVID-19 policies have been. Two singers performed as dozens of kids played instruments behind them. The adults were unmasked, while the kids were masked, and faceless. Later during the game, they cut to show all the "celebrities," none of which had masks on.

Just a week before this, a maskless politician posed in front of a class of masked young school children and proudly released the photo, only to be surprised by the backlash.

Our children, who the data showed were never at risk from COVID from the very beginning, have suffered psychologically and developmentally from the devastating effects, not of COVID, but of how the adults forced them to respond to it. We still mask our children for a seven-hour school day, when they face almost zero risk of severe illness or death. It's shameful.

In a month and a half, the masking mandates will end in Oregon. What changed? The medical science has not changed on COVID-19, but the political science certainly has, as polls clearly show that those who support masking and mandates are facing a bleak future.

My greatest regret as a father has been sending my four daughters to school each day, masked and faceless. Have we forgotten that life comes with inherent risk and it is our responsibility to mitigate those risks as best we see fit? We've instead turned that task over to the government, and their failure has taken a devastating toll on our children's mental

See LETTERS on page 16

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