

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 Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned.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.

Protecting water

To the Editor:

In Central Oregon, we pay a lot of attention to water — water we drink, water used in agriculture, water used for recreation, water that provides and sustains the habitat for our fish and wildlife.

But Kurt Schrader doesn't share our values when it comes to water. He voted four times to eliminate the Clean Water Rule that protects the waterways that feed into the drinking water of one in three Americans, as well as the streams, headwaters, wetlands, and other water bodies that serve as habitat for wildlife, reduce flooding risk, and naturally filter pollution. Instead, Schrader casts votes that serve

the interests of his corporate PAC donors. One of Schrader's long-time donors is Koch Industries, which has been fined repeatedly for violating state and federal environmental laws.

Jamie McLeod-Skinner is a pragmatic progressive who's running against Schrader in newly redrawn Congressional District 5. She's never taken corporate PAC money. Instead, she's driven 45,000 miles listening to what ordinary Oregonians have to say. She's worked tirelessly to help communities recover from the devastating 2020 wildfires and has been a leader in drought mitigation. That's why she wholeheartedly supports reasonable environmental protections to safeguard our water.

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PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

“Stick that guy from Oregon in that box over there.”

Loyalists & Liberty

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

Political tribalism crops up everywhere these days. Last month, I traveled to Savannah, Georgia, for a newspaper conference. With a free Saturday in hand, I figured to indulge my historical proclivities and headed down to the Savannah History Museum in the beautiful city's lovingly cared-for historic district.

The fellow at the front desk — a gentleman of retirement age and appropriately gregarious demeanor — asked me where I hailed from. I told him I had traveled from Sisters, Oregon, on the east slope of the Cascades. Then he said something strange:

“I consider myself a liberal kind of guy — the kind you probably hate.”

Huh?

I told him that he was making a mighty big assumption and asked what made him think such a thing. He replied that, “All you people east of the Cascades want to join Idaho.” He didn't mention it, but I suspect he had also profiled me on the basis of my hat, which some folks can't seem to help seeing as an ideological emblem.

This was all a preamble to a friendly sermon on the importance of neighborliness regardless of ideologies and politics — a point of view I heartily endorse. But that's a really strange lead-in which read to me like: “Let's be neighborly, even though you probably hate me for my politics, which you wouldn't have known a damn thing about if I hadn't told you. I know you probably hate me because, well, just look at you, and everybody knows what those people that live on the east side of the mountains are like... Enjoy the museum.”

Weird.

But this, apparently, is how we roll in the USA these days. A friend of mine was welcomed to a new neighborhood with a query as to what he thinks of Donald Trump. I thought the standard was, “Welcome to the neighborhood; here's a rhubarb pie,” or something like that. I guess it's more important to know right away what little ideological box we should stuff people into — in a neighborly way, of course.

This wacky sort of discourse is annoying. I have political views and policy preferences, of course, like any citizen should. Like many people, my views are actually pretty heterodox, and don't fit neatly into prefabricated ideological boxes. Being profiled and stereotyped by somebody who just clapped eyes on you two seconds ago is obnoxious.

But what's *really* irritating is that people feel compelled to shove their politics in your face at the drop of a hat, under any social circumstances whatever. I may have my opinions, but I don't look at the whole wide world through a political lens, and a person's political and ideological leanings are *way* down the list of things I might find interesting about them. I sure wasn't interested in a political discussion with the greeter at the museum and visitors center in Savannah, Georgia.

I agreed with the fellow that neighborliness is a good thing, and he pointed me to the museum entrance.

I spent a couple of enlightening hours there, and enjoyed a tour with a reenactor of the Spring Hill Redoubt American Revolutionary War battle site. The program was called “Loyalists & Liberty,” and it was all about men trading musket fire and sticking each other with bayonets over their political differences.

Sisters Weather Forecast

Wednesday

March 2 • Showers

52/37



Thursday

March 3 • AM Showers

46/30



Friday

March 4 • Partly Cloudy

45/29



Saturday

March 5 • Partly Cloudy

43/27



Sunday

March 6 • Partly Cloudy

44/26



Monday

March 7 • Partly Cloudy

42/25



Tuesday

March 8 • Partly Cloudy

42/20



The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

Website: www.nuggetnews.com

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Member

**Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Nugget Newspaper,
P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.**

Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

Editor in Chief: Jim Cornelius

Production Manager: Leith Easterling

Creative Director: Jess Draper

Community Marketing

Partner: Vicki Curlett

Classifieds & Circulation: Beth Jacobsen

Proofreader: Kit Tosello

Owner: J. Louis Mullen

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area. Third-class postage: one year, \$70; six months (or less), \$45. First-class postage: one year, \$110; six months, \$80.

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Here's pie in the face...



Students had a lot of fun with a pie-throwing event that served as a fundraiser for the Mr. SHS pageant.

PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK