

HIKE: Hike is best accomplished with two vehicles

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the summit of this 6,737-foot "hill." From there, the trail drops abruptly down to a flat, expansive meadow system and the Scott Trail junction, which is marked by a traditional wooden signpost.

We promptly left the PCT and began the 4.7-mile return to the Scott Trail Trailhead, where we had left our other vehicle. At present, drought conditions have turned a beautiful green meadow with gorgeous wildflowers into a cracked, brown cover of dried-up vegetation.

From the trail junction in the meadow, it was less than a mile to another trail that leads to the summit of Four-in-One Cone, a cinder pile built from the contributions of four separate craters atop the cone. We passed on that climb, as well, and continued across the stark volcanic landscape. A little over a half-mile later, we crossed our last lava flow of the day and were plunged into a lush, green forest comprised principally of hemlock.

From here, we resumed our exploration of Felix

Scott's historic route. It seemed like rather a long haul back to the trailhead, but the quiet and shaded forest made for pleasant traveling. When, finally, the hemlock gave way to lodgepole pine, we began to hear an occasional passing car, and we knew we were approaching the trailhead at Scott Lake. It was a good day.

This hike is most easily accomplished with two vehicles, leaving one at each of the beginning and ending trailheads. Start by taking the McKenzie Pass Highway (242) west from Sisters to the pass summit; from there, continue west for another 5.6 miles and turn right (west) at the Scott Lake turnoff. There is a sign advising of the approaching turn, but there is an intervening turnoff, as well; so wait until you are abreast of the brown Scott Lake sign before turning off.

Once off the highway, the Scott Trail parking lot is the next immediate right. We left one vehicle here; and, with the other, we returned over the pass to the east side (just past the summit) to the Lava Camp Lake area and the Matthieu Lakes Trailhead. Neither trailhead had signs requiring a parking pass. Free wilderness passes are required.

SISTERS: Council heard how project promotes civility

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presentation last Thursday on a program called Speak Your Peace: A Civility Project (SYP), thanks to Councilor Amy Burgstahler, who brought the program to the Council's attention.

Begun 12 years ago in Minnesota by the Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation, SYP is a community resource for building civic engagement. The program provides nine tools of civility to employ when discussing community issues.

The purpose of the project is to teach and remind people how to communicate in a more respectful and effective way. It is not a campaign to end disagreements. Rather, the goal is to improve public discourse by simply reminding everyone of the very basic principles of respect. By elevating the level of communication and avoiding personal attacks and general stubbornness, unhealthy debate can be avoided.

When a community decides to adopt the SYP program, there is every attempt made to get as many

organizations, businesses, civic groups, schools, and governmental bodies as possible to sign a resolution accepting the nine tools of civility.

Trainings and materials are provided to help the program succeed.

The introductory presentation last Thursday was given by Sisters resident Lisa Dobey, executive director of the St. Charles Foundation. She served for 13 years as the CEO of the Tahoe-Truckee Community Foundation, where they reportedly utilized the SYP with great success.

Dobey emphasized that a community dialog that is abusive and contemptuous, charged with personal attacks, a negative tone, and full of vitriol, will tear a town apart with mistrust and polarization. People feel uncomfortable to volunteer and hesitate to speak their minds for fear of ridicule and retaliation. Businesses and visitors begin to dwindle, investments in the city decrease, and the economic vitality of the community falters.

By changing attitudes and communication styles, practicing respect and civility, and advocating for the community and not tearing it down, citizens will again feel

safe to engage in community activities, run for public office, and enjoy living where everyone feels heard and respected.

The goal is not to silence the naysayers, who Dobey believes are acting out of fear and frustration that they aren't being heard. Instead, as the community incorporates the nine tools for practicing civility, citizens take it upon themselves to convey, "I want to hear what you have to say, but the way you are saying it makes it difficult for me to hear you."

Dobey also believes that local newspapers can set standards of civility for letters to the editor.

Dobey pointed out that SYP "doesn't solve all the problems of a community, but it moves you forward... It is not an inoculation that protects you forever. It is more like eating a healthy diet for life."

Council will discuss the project further and decide if this would be a good undertaking for Sisters. To share your thoughts, contact any of the councilors on their City email, found on the City website, www.ci.sisters.or.us. More information is available at www.dsaspeakyourpeace.org.

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