



Tales from a
Sisters Naturalist
by Jim Anderson
Recollections

You know how some little thing can suddenly take you back? I had one of those moments recently while driving into Bend, glancing at the fuel gauge when the little red window to the left of the “E” came on in my 4Runner.

Took me right back to when I was taking my first flight in a Citabria, flying over a solid deck of Montana clouds heading for Spokane and talking to Charlie Wessinger — who was doing the navigating — ahead of me in his Cessna 206.

“Charlie, I’m right close to the ‘Big E.’”

“Hang on Jim, I’ll go find a hole,” he replied, and I watched the 206 pull away, leaving me and the Citabria all alone at 12,500 feet with a whole lot of Montana real estate under me.

My wife, Sue, and I had purchased an entire glider operation from a well-preserved gilder operator in Montana. We had to wait for three days while he sobered up so we could make a deal.

I eventually hauled a grand old Schweizer TG2 World War II training glider on its trailer back to Bend behind a 1952 Buick convertible that had a launching winch mounted in the back. (A couple of years later I

achieved my five-hour soaring badge in that grand old TG2.)

Sue was driving my Aunt Dutch’s camper, behind which she was towing a trailer with a 1938 Weihe (German for Harrier), a single-seat, high-wing, high-performance sailplane back to Bend.

When we got back home, Charlie offered to fly me to Montana so I could fly the Citabria tow-plane back home. It took some doing to find it, but we finally located it in a homemade hanger made of billboards at the end of a wheat field. The battery was dead, but it had half-a-tank of fuel, and we put in another five gallons of av gas (“just to be sure”) and got the battery charged. After we both preflighted it thoroughly, we got it going and I took off for Spokane for more fuel.

You know about “Murphy’s Law?” It states that if something can go wrong, it will. Well, it did. We got into snotty weather and a headwind neither of us planned on and there went the Spokane objective, and a lot of the Citabria’s gas.

I never felt so helpless, looking down at the solid deck of clouds under me, with not a sign of anything poking up, not even a tree or a mountain goat. I gave Charlie the bad news; “Charlie, I’m on the empty BB,” I croaked.

“I’m comin’ Jim...” he responded, “and I found a hole.”

There was a short pause and he added, “Turn on your landing light so I can find you.” I did. “I see you,” he said, and before I could say

See ANDERSON on page 29

Arts association celebrates launch

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

The secret is out — Sisters is an arts town. The arts — from fine arts to music to the kind of art produced in a kitchen — not only form the backbone of local culture, they drive the local economy.

The newly minted Sisters Arts Association is dedicated to bringing artists from all media and all levels of commercial engagement together “to provide its members with a unified voice for promotion of the arts, and to create a spirit of cooperation and fellowship among artists and the community,” as its mission statement avers.

“The vision for the Sisters Arts Association began with recognition of the Hood Avenue Arts District by OTE, Oregon Travel Experience,” founders Dennis Schmidling and Bob Burgess explained in a written statement. “The Arts District began to draw support from the City of Sisters and the Chamber of Commerce. Additional support came through a resurgence of vitality among businesses situated on Hood Avenue. But interest quickly spread beyond Hood Avenue into the community at large.”

The fledgling organization will take wing on Friday, May 22, 5 p.m., with a kick-off celebration at Ken Scott’s Imagination Gallery at 222 W. Hood Ave.

The event is a kind of



PHOTO BY JAY MATHER

Sisters artists are coming together in the new Sisters Arts Association.

“soft opening” for the Hood Avenue Arts District and is being held in conjunction with *Cascade A&E’s* 20th anniversary celebration.

“Even though it’s a Fourth Friday, all the gallery owners will show up there,” said Schmidling, who operates Sisters Gallery & Frame Shop with his wife, Helen. “It’ll hopefully alert the community to something new going on.”

While the Sisters Arts Association obviously includes Sisters’ many galleries, it’s not a gallery association.

“It’s about artists,” Schmidling said. “It’ll include artists in a broad range.”

That includes artists who have a low profile in Sisters Country but market their work nationally and internationally. And it includes emerging artists.

“That would include students,” Schmidling said. “We’re hoping to spotlight

students with talent here.”

Burgess emphasized the broad consideration of art. For example, he noted “we’ve got some incredible chefs here.” Some of them have expressed interest in teaching their art through workshops.

The new association will work on issues in the community that effect and are acted upon by the arts, all for the betterment of the Sisters community at large.

“It’s a whole system,” Burgess said. “You bring in more people (for arts events), guess what — you need more lodging.”

Schmidling and Burgess noted that the association is not designed to duplicate efforts or to create competition with events and activities that are already established.

“Our mission is to add legs to what’s already been accomplished,” he said.

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