Linchpins of school district retiring

By Jim Cornelius News Editor

Sisters High School Principal Joe Hosang choked up a bit during graduation ceremonies earlier this month, contemplating the retirement of school secretaries Pinky Pagano and Suzanne Lind.

Well he might. Not only are Pagano and Lind beloved friends and mentors to staff and students, Hosang knows better than anyone how important those two women are to the smooth running of Sisters High School. In fact, they've been a major factor in the operations of the Sisters School District for three decades.

Both started humbly enough.

Lind and her husband, John, moved to Sisters from California to be closer to her parents in Redmond. Lind applied for a job as a specialeducation assistant - and didn't get it. But she was soon tapped to become a PE/teacher's aide at Sisters Middle School, and her career in the district was off and running.

Pagano's start was similar. She was working as a dental assistant when her husband, John, was transferred by his company from Portland to Central Oregon — a transfer he had eagerly sought.

Friends Teri Ast and Peg Bermel advised her to put in for part-time work and soon the district started calling her for jobs at Sisters Elementary School.

"I started doing lunchroom detention and locker room shower duties and went from there," she recalled.

Sisters School District was tiny then, and there was no high school. The school culture was very tight-knit.

"We were like family," Lind recalled. "We spent every single Friday night at somebody's house with

everybody's kids. Every single Friday. We were a very close bunch."

If closeness was an upside, the downside was a loss of connection with kids as they aged up. After middle school, they headed to Redmond for high school.

"When you graduated the eighth-graders, you just lost contact with them," Lind said.

Both said that getting a high school back in 1992 "was the best."

Both ended up working there as the district grew and the schools built a reputation for quality education and for turning out young adults of accomplishment and character.

Pagano notes that, while the culture has changed during her 27 years in Sisters, important things remain the same.

"I think there's still tremendous pride our students have," she said. "No other school can have art work, pictures (displayed and respected in the high school) the way we have."

Both noted that the world of technology that has opened up for students carries pitfalls that concern them.

"I worry about social media," said Lind. "I don't think they realize that what's on there can be on there for the rest of their lives."

And the Internet allows for phenomenon that are new to the long-time school officials, who are parents themselves like cyberbullying.

"These are worries I never had to worry about," Pagano said.

Lind and Paganao are the event coordinators for graduation, making the ceremonies for the Class of 2015 a wistful occasion. There's a lot that they'll miss.

'Oh, the kids — all the kids," says Pagano. "Every kid has a special need of some sort, and a story. That's what I'll miss."

Pagano decided to retire

Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.



Pinky Pagano and Suzanne Lind have been two key behind-the-scenes players in the success of Sisters School District.

because it was time for her to spend more time with her family. For Lind, "it was just time.'

Both women have daughters teaching elementary school in Madras, and they are looking forward to volunteering in their classrooms.

Lind plans to travel — and she's making sure she's out of town when school rolls around again next year.

"I don't want to be here for September," she said.

Both are grateful for the opportunities they've had in Sisters. Pagano noted that, with the exception of a couple of dental assistant gigs, working at Sisters School District has been her entire career.

And Lind noted, "I'm just proud and thankful for what this school district has done for me. They've let me be a real part of a lot of decisionmaking. This has been the best job I could have ever asked for."

The departure of Pagano and Lind comes at a time of transition. A new schools superintendent is coming on board in July, and the district continues to adapt to a changing educational and funding landscape.

They appreciate that they'll

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be deeply missed, especially by other members of the staff. But they're not worried about what they leave behind.

"I think our staff embraces change," Lind said. "This school district is going to be OK. They're top-notch."

HIKER: PCT trekker was suffering dehydration

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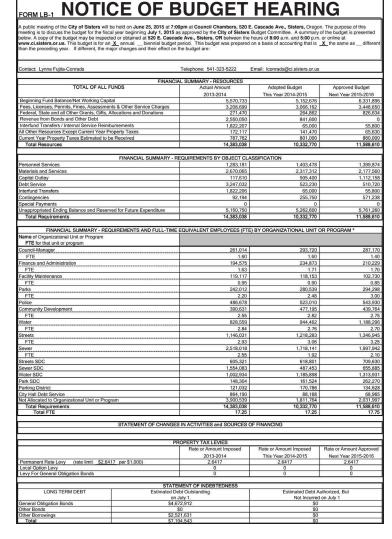
location to the SAR team and he was located approximately two miles from the trailhead. Chase was treated for dehydration by medics and was able to walk out to the trail head under his own power.

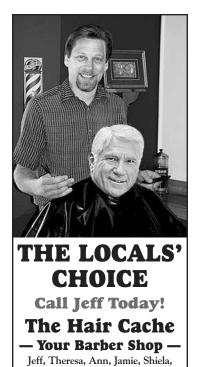
He was transported by Sisters-Camp Sherman medics to St. Charles Hospital in Bend for further treatment.

Jefferson County SAR Coordinator Dave Blann said Chase was very fortunate that paramedics were available to go in with the Hasty Team, as this is not the case on most incidents.

Hikers need to remember that help is not always quick to arrive in remote wilderness locations. Being prepared for any type of emergency while in the wilderness is advised.

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING 1,506,258





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