



PHOTO BY DIANE GOBLE

Upward Bound students helped the Sisters Garden Club spruce up Sisters.

Coos Bay students beautify Sisters

By Diane Goble
Correspondent

A group of young people from Coos Bay came to Sisters last week to help the Sisters Garden Club with their annual beautification project at both entrances to town. They are part of Upward Bound, which is a college prep program for low-income first-generation college-bound high school students from ages 14 to 17.

This is part of their six-week Summer Academy where they get to choose a different project each summer that involves giving back to the community. Their supervisor, Grant Gill, had a lot of positive things to say about his group.

“Some of these kids haven’t had much parental supervision and have moved around a lot,” he said. “This program gives them opportunities to explore and discover their passions. They are learning to follow directions, take ownership, work as a team, plan ahead, to be respectful and to succeed beyond what they’ve been led to believe they could.”

Larry Nelson, president

of Sisters Garden Club, gave the students a little pep talk starting at the east end of town and thanked them for their service then assignments were handed out — first being, grab a shovel and fill the wheelbarrows from the pile of bark mulch to spread around after the areas are cleared and the shrubs trimmed.

“This program gives them opportunities to explore and discover their passions.”
— Grant Gill

Honora Buell, who had been a substitute high school math and science teacher when this job came up, is the new director of the program for North Bend and Marshfield high schools in Coos Bay.

She said, “This is such a unique opportunity for students to be able to get one-on-one attention to encourage them to go to college. Their

parents didn’t have this experience, so this gives them a head start on applying to college and working toward a degree.”

She has 50 students during the school year and 35 during the summer, and the program is run under a federal grant through Portland State University.

Diana Collins, who will be a senior at Marshall High School this year, said she “wasn’t doing well as a freshman; then I started talking with Honora and she helped me get my head straight. She told me not to give up on myself and to always have hope for a better future. Now I look forward to going to college to study culinary arts and hospitality. My dream is open a coffee shop and hire homeless people.”

The group camped in Tumalo during the week they were in town and got to visit some of the places they mapped out to see in Sisters Country. Their next stop will have them staying in a college dorm at Southwestern Oregon Community College back in Coos Bay and visiting classes so they can experience life on a college campus.

Learning to stay safe in college

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

Many young men and women from Sisters will be venturing to college this fall. For some, it will be their first real venture on their own beyond the safe confines of a small Central Oregon town, where trouble seems far, far away.

Their lack of seasoning makes them vulnerable. Many don’t really know what to be thinking about and what to look for to avoid getting themselves into sticky situations — from fights to muggings to sexual assaults.

Charles Quandt (“Coach Q”) of Sisters Park & Recreation District (SPRD) will lead a free community class on Saturday, July 25, from noon to 2 p.m. to help those young people be better prepared. He will be assisted by Sherri Hermens, Kim Manley, and Deschutes County Sheriff’s Lt. Scott Shelton (Retired).

College Prep Class on Self Defense & Safety – 101 is built on the principles of “how not to be a target.”

“There are real threats out there, real predators that are looking for targets,” says Coach Q. “As a parent myself, I actually sleep a little bit better knowing my son has been given the tools and information” to protect himself.

Attendees will learn some physical tools: where the vulnerable targets are on an attacker, and quick and effective techniques that can extricate a person

from a dangerous position. But there’s a lot more to self-defense than physical technique.

“It’s not just learning to punch and kick,” Coach Q notes.

“There are real threats out there, real predators that are looking for targets.”
— Coach Q

The best form of self-defense is avoiding situations where you can be made into a target. That doesn’t mean a student can’t go out and enjoy college life — but it does mean they need some situational awareness. They need to know what makes them vulnerable: for example, leaving a bar alone around closing time, or getting so intoxicated that they can be taken off by someone they don’t know. Or getting caught up in belligerent talk that leads to a fight — and injury or jail — when the right thing to do is to walk away.

“It’s about making good decisions,” Coach Q says.

The elements of safety come down to awareness, preparedness and people looking out for each other.

All this and more will be part of the two-hour class at SPRD. Class size is limited. Call 541-549-2091 to reserve a spot.

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