

Forest Service increases fire patrols

Fire officials have seen an increase in human-caused fires since implementing public-use restrictions on July 10. While the majority of the offenses have been abandoned or escaped campfires, a few of the fires are still under investigation.

To date, Central Oregon has seen 208 wildfires in the 2015 wildfire season and of that number, 119 have been human-caused starts, which is an increase from the past few years. Due to this surge, Forest Service law-enforcement officers will be increasing patrols on the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests and Crooked River National Grassland.

Public-use restrictions are in place across Central Oregon. Campfires, warming fires and cooking fires, including charcoal fires, portable propane campfires, biomass or particle wood-burning stoves, and wood-pellet grills or smokers, are prohibited on Forest Service and BLM lands except in established fire rings at designated campgrounds.

The Central Oregon public is reminded that we are still in extreme fire danger. Based on monitoring conducted by OSU-Cascades, Central Oregon fuel moistures in ceanothus and manzanita are currently one to two months ahead of their normal moisture levels and sagebrush, in some areas, is currently at its lowest level of moisture in seven years of study.

In addition to public-use restrictions, the Prineville BLM, Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests and Crooked River National Grassland are currently in Industrial Fire Precaution Level III (IFPL). The IFPL applies to permitted and industrial operations, including woodcutting, on federal lands.

Dandelion Ranch opens in Sisters

By Kathryn Godsiff
Correspondent

Sisters is known as a delightful place to shop for a special gift or souvenir of fun times in Central Oregon. Dandelion Ranch, a newly opened boutique across from US Bank on Elm Street adds to the stable of quality stores in which to browse and buy.

The store is owned by Lisa and Dave VandenBrink, recently arrived in Central Oregon from the small town of Salida, Colorado, where they owned a similar store. Their son, daughter-in-law, and young grandchild live in Bend, hence the draw to the area. Lisa said they immediately began searching for a store in Sisters, knowing that they wanted to establish themselves in a small community.

There are handmade touches throughout the store. The display cases come from Dave's workshop, and in every corner there are items from artisans around the country. Lisa has relationships with all her suppliers, and supporting cottage industry companies is important to the Vandens.

"There's joy in using unique, little companies," Lisa said.

A line of handbags comes from Alabama, using repurposed upholstery fabric and

embellished with quirky sayings. A supplier in South Carolina makes candles called "ReWined Candles." They are soy candles in recycled wine bottles, scented like the fruity notes of wine. Truly. One whiff and you can imagine sipping in a sunny summer vineyard.

A jewelry line from St. Francisville, Louisiana, uses vintage and antique buttons in earrings, necklaces and bracelets. The creator also has a button museum and includes a small history of the buttons she uses in her work.

The store also has Lisa's personal touch in a range of handmade aprons embellished with pieces of vintage linens she has collected over the years. Lisa's two aunts taught her to sew when she was a child visiting their big Missouri farm. The aprons are her own design and are sized from toddlers to adult. She also makes Christmas stockings in a simple design trimmed with the vintage linens.

There are note cards, home décor items, and yard art.

One of the fun features of Dandelion Ranch is the back courtyard area shared with two other stores, Grizzly Ridge Upcycle and Gone Wishin'. All their back doors open onto the courtyard,



PHOTO BY KATHRYN GODSIFF

Lisa VandenBrink at her new shop in Sisters.

enabling customers to browse in all three stores and enjoy the quiet backyard. Out front Lisa has two bright-red chairs, dubbed "The Man Chairs," for spouses who might prefer to watch the street activity.

"The shop is a collection

of the things I love," said Lisa. "We like it to be a nice place to come into, and we're enjoying getting to know people."

The store is located in the big white building on the corner of Hood Avenue and Elm Street, on the Elm Street side.

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