

Montessori preschool launched

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

Parents who want an engaging educational experience for their preschool-aged children have a new option in Sisters.

Becky Mallon is opening Mountain Montessori at 104 E. Adams Ave. in Sisters, part of the former site of A Joyful Noise.

The school has openings for children ages 3 through 6. As is common in the Montessori model, the mixed-age school provides lots of opportunities for hands-on, active learning in different, well-designed areas of the school.

“We don’t all sit down and do math together, or language together,” says Mallon. “It’s all about individual learning.”

At the start of the day, the children have responsibilities to take care of.

“They have jobs to do, so every morning they come in and they’re responsible for something,” Mallon says.

That could be watering plants or getting a space organized — something to get the students active and engaged.

“It’s very organized ... everything has a purpose and a reasoning behind it,” Mallon says.

Mallon says there is a conscious effort made to prepare the young ones for kindergarten, with an emphasis on learning sounds that will become necessary for reading.

“They take off reading when they know the sounds the letters make,” Mallon says. “It’s nice that some of



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

Becky Mallon has years of experience teaching in the Montessori method.

them are reading and writing sentences before they leave, which gives them a lot of confidence.”

The school also encourages a strong learning/teaching dynamic among the students, with kids teaching kids how to do things and learning to lead.

“The 3-year-olds look up to the 6-year-olds and the 6-year-olds help the 3-year-olds,” Mallon explains.

Mallon has 16 years of experience with Montessori education, 13 of those years in Bend. Her direct experience with success in Montessori school drew her into a career in the field. She was the nanny of two boys in Seattle, who were having a tough time in a traditional

environment.

“We found a Montessori school and they did awesome,” Mallon recalled.

She received her certification through University of Puget Sound and taught in Washington before moving to Bend.

Now Mallon, her husband, Desmond, and her three children have chosen to come to Sisters.

“We lived in Bend, and Bend was getting a little too big,” she says. “We wanted to live in a small town.”

Registration is underway now. School starts September 1. Schedule an observation at Mountain Montessori at www.mountainmontessorisisters.com. For more information call 541-549-0000.

British firefighters visit Sisters

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

A contingent of firefighters from the United Kingdom are in Sisters to study wild-fire firefighting organization, infrastructure and tactics.

Five firefighters from Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service arrived here last Friday and participated in emergency calls on Saturday. Three of them rolled out with a Sisters task force to provide structure protection on the still-raging wildfire near John Day.

Station Manager David Hodge (roughly equivalent to a Battalion Chief in American Parlance) explained why the British firefighters are here:

“We want to be one of the best fire services in the UK,” he said.

To do that, officials from Hampshire Fire & Rescue are traveling to different areas of the globe to tap specific expertise and experience.

“We appreciate that the West Coast would lead in wildfire,” he told *The Nugget*.

Hampshire, located on

the central south coast of England, may not have vast forests nor the dry climate that makes Sisters Country so vulnerable, but they have experienced serious wildfire incidents.

“We want to be one of the best fire services in the UK.”
— David Hodge

“We appreciate that we don’t have wildfire on your scale,” Hodge said. However, “the skills we’re learning here should be easily transferable to an incident of that scale” as would be found in Hampshire.

Another contingent is set to travel to Hong Kong to tap their world-leading expertise in fighting high-rise fires.

Hodge explained that Sisters was chosen through a personal connection: his

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