

Day after...



PHOTO BY CONRAD WEILER

Shopping was a big pastime the day after Christmas in Sisters.

Trail maintenance leads to damage, tighter oversight

BEND (AP) — The Bend-Fort Rock Ranger District is tightening oversight in a newly strengthened permit-approval process after two snowmobile clubs performing trail maintenance ended up causing \$200,000 in damage. *The Bulletin* reports the U.S. Forest Service, Central Oregon Snowbusters, and La Pine Lodgepole Dodgers are sharing the repair costs in what the agency says is a shared misunderstanding. Groups secured permits for maintenance for the

summer of 2014. Deschutes National Forest district ranger Kevin Larkin said earlier this month that the conversation should have been longer and more detailed. Larkin said more than 30 miles of trails and forest roads were damaged near the Newberry Volcanic Monument. Peggy Spieger is the executive director of the Oregon State Snowmobile Association. She says the groups had only good intentions.

CORRECTIONS

- The photo credit for last weeks cover shot was omitted. The downtown shot in a snowstorm was taken by Gary Miller.
- Sisters Library will host a presentation by Julie Muller, organizing consultant, life coach and owner of Peace of Mind Organizing Firm, on Wednesday, January 6, 2016, at noon. Last week’s story listed an incorrect time.



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Troubled students pose challenges

By Jennifer Moody
Albany Democrat-Herald

ALBANY (AP) — The first email came on Sept. 15, one week to the day after the school year began. Dozens more followed, asking questions, seeking advice. What do I do with an out-of-control student? How do I cope with a kid throwing chairs? I have a child who has screaming tantrums; do you have any advice? Sue McGrory has counted more than 100 similar emails and calls since the school year began. As head of the Greater Albany Education Association, she’s often the first stop for teachers looking for support.

McGrory spoke for the union at the Nov. 16 meeting of the Greater Albany School District’s board of directors, saying teachers need support, training and intervention techniques to cope with emotionally troubled children whose behavior disrupts class. At best, the students’ outbursts are simply too loud to work around. At worst, they become a safety concern to either themselves or their classmates. Sometimes, they get so frustrated they run away. “Veteran teachers are telling me that they have seen a drastic, dramatic change in high-needs students just in the past three years,” McGrory told the board. “They want help, and they want me to fix this.”

Some teachers have told

McGrory they file multiple office referrals each week but don’t feel they’re being heard or answered. “We’re losing countless hours of instructional time,” she said. “What we are doing is not working.” Superintendent Jim Golden (former superintendent of Sisters School District) and Director of Special Programs Ryan Mattingly say they see the situation differently. Albany does have a problem with disruptive behavior, they say — as does every other district in the state, and most likely beyond. But what is needed, they say, are more resources to continue doing what is already being done. “We have the right policies in place,” Golden told the board. “We have the right systems in place. What we don’t have is enough capacity.” Albany is not alone in struggling with escalating discipline issues, particularly with its youngest students. Golden is a member of the board of directors for the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators and is president-elect of the Oregon Association of School Executives. He said he hears comments like McGrory’s from superintendents statewide. “I would say without hesitation that we are seeing a statewide crisis in terms of young, behaviorally disordered kids,” he said. At the University of Oregon, Jeffrey Sprague,

professor of special education and director of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, said survey information is lacking on emotional outbursts in young children at school. But anecdotally, he hears many more instances than he used to. Western Oregon University in Monmouth is trying to address the situation from a teacher training perspective, said Mark Girod, dean of the College of Education. “Just in the last year have I heard more superintendents talking about increasingly challenging student behavior in schools and classrooms,” he said. “Instances of teachers getting kicked, hit, and spit upon are, unfortunately, actually occurring.” Albany teachers say only a very small number of students get to the point where their behavior disrupts class, but they believe that number is growing — along with the intensity of the behavior. That’s a belief that’s hard to quantify, however. If a child is throwing things, for instance, some teachers choose to do a “room clear.” That involves taking all the rest of the students to the library or an unused classroom to get them out of harm’s way while the out-of-control student settles down. But no policy defines how and when to clear a room, nor does the district keep records of how often it happens or under what circumstances, said Mattingly.

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