



## Life with a Willing Heart

Jayson Berray  
Columnist

### Getting real with the O'Neals

My most cherished time of day is the evening. After the children are in bed my wife and I get to just hang out and do whatever we want, uninterrupted by children. Often this involves catching up on our television shows.

We recently discovered a new show on ABC called "The Real O'Neals." It's about an Irish-Catholic family who lives in Chicago. The mother is the most involved and passionate member of the family when it comes to their religion and she is always monitoring the words and behaviors of her husband, two sons, and daughter to make sure they are in line with what she feels God desires for their family.

The catch is, however, that what she is really interested in is the approval of other people, most notably the other women in her church. She uses the guise of God's will to manipulate her family into doing what she believes is the most acceptable way to live. This is an issue to which I feel we can all relate on some level, especially in a small community.

By the way, even though it certainly doesn't sound like it up to this point, "The Real O'Neals" is a comedy. Boy howdy, is it a comedy. I haven't witnessed a show this hilarious in years. You see, I was raised in a devout Christian community of folks and even though I still follow the teachings of Christ I have learned the hard way that not everything is how we perceive it to be. Years ago I would have written this show off as offensive because it pokes fun at a life devoted to God. But now? I embrace it because it's real.

The truth is, this might be the most real show I have ever seen. In the first episode everything falls apart. The parents confess that they are on the brink of divorce, the eldest son reveals he has an eating disorder, their daughter reveals she just purchased a stolen car on Craigslist, and their other son reveals the biggest blow to the mom and their supposed longstanding values of them all — that he is gay.

Only three or four episodes have aired so far, but as you can imagine, the subsequent ones are about how the O'Neal family navigates these new waters having experienced this new level of realism with each other than they ever have previously. They are judged by other members of the church and are also judged by each other for the issues with which each of them "struggle," so to speak.

It might sound like a sad premise, but I promise you, it is hilarious and makes a great show. It has taught me that it's completely OK, if not absolutely necessary, to be authentic with our fellow man because only then do we become wholly free — if we allow ourselves — to

love people where they're at.

And that is the clincher with this show. What truly makes it great is the very real love and connection, which still exists underneath the surface between the members of this family, despite their reputation, when their well-being is on the line. This is exemplified in that the mother comes to defend her daughter at a science fair because her exhibit tries to disprove the existence of God, and later she comes to actually give dating advice to her gay son.

I have always been one to appreciate art, whether it be music, writing, a painting, a film, or a television show, and this show has helped me to see all over again the importance of living life authentically. Whether you follow the teachings of Christ or not, I have come to believe that I will never be able to judge the battle that a member of my fellow man may be fighting and that starts within my own home. Being a human often turns out messy, and rarely do things turn out the way you envision. Lord knows I've fought my own battles and I have my own ugly truths which might make some squeamish, but where would I be without love and acceptance? And even though I still consider myself a Christian, what's the harm in taking life a bit less seriously?

## Sisters students create fish art for mural

By Erin Borla  
Correspondent

During art classes at Sisters Elementary School (SES), artist in residence Laura Campbell has been working alongside art teacher Karen Williams with students in kindergarten through fourth grade developing a mural for the school's fence along Highway 20.

The artist in residence program, funded by the Studio to School grant through Sisters Folk Festival (SFF) in partnership with the Sisters School District, has been working on integrated arts curriculum in grades K-8.

Over the two weeks before spring break students at SES painted wooden fish, rocks, and other riparian items found in Whychus Creek. The fish ranged in sizes from six to 36 inches. All students were able to paint a fish; some of the younger students painted fish together, along with help from Williams or Campbell.

"This is an incredibly integrated project," said Campbell. "We were able to talk about rivers and fish — the students were very excited about steelhead. Talking about Whychus Creek and steelhead opened the door to talk about different things that make rivers work."

Students learned about boulders and rocks and why

they are important to fish. In the classroom they talked about turbidity, temperature, and keeping the rivers clean.

"We talked about how steelhead make the journey all the way to the ocean where they become big fish," said Campbell, "and why their home needs to be healthy for them to return."

What started out as an elementary school project quickly evolved into a larger community event. Integrated Educational Experience (IEE) class interns from Sisters High School (SHS) came to the elementary school to help paint fish and talk river science with the younger students.

“Working with 30 young students and paint has been exciting.”  
— Laura Campbell

"This project has been chaotic but great," said Campbell. "Working with 30 young students and paint has been exciting."

The fish painting will continue after spring break at SES and through classes at the other schools. Students within a few classes including the IEE program at SHS as well

See MURAL on page 13

**SISTERS GARAGE DOORS**  
Sales • Service • Installation  
Residential • Commercial  
**Door & Opener Tune-Up - \$89**  
Dale Lester CCB#151832  
**541-815-1523**

**YEAR-ROUND FIREWOOD SALES**  
KINDLING  
**SISTERS FOREST PRODUCTS**  
**541-410-4509**  
SistersForestProducts.com

We can help you with  
**WOMEN'S HEALTH**  
Sisters Acupuncture  
Julia Wieland-Smith L.Ac., LMT  
Greg Wieland L.Ac.  
**541-549-1523**  
352 E. Hood Ave., Ste. E  
— Licensed since 1989 —  
**Experience Counts!**

**Music Night!**

**Metabolic Maintenance**  
Proudly sponsors a night of music every Friday from 7-9 pm at Cork Cellars!

April 1st	<i>Doc Ryan</i>
April 8th	<i>Bill Powers</i>
April 15th	<i>Ed Fitzjarrell, Joe Leonardi &amp; Fiddler Bob Baker</i>
April 22nd	<i>NTT</i>
April 29th	<i>Brad Tisdol</i>

Come enjoy the fun!

Hope for a child. Change for a nation.

\$37 a month. All the difference in the world.  
Sponsor a Ugandan child with a local organization at  
**HopeAfricaKids.com**

**HOPE**

This ad sponsored by The Nugget Newspaper.