

Hitting the trails in Northwest Camp

By Craig Rullman
Correspondent

Sixty-six runners, ranging from sixth-graders to incoming high school seniors, descended on Sisters Country from June 27 to July 1, for the Great Northwest Cross-Country Running Camp, hosted by Sisters Park & Recreation District (SPRD).

Josh Nordell, head coach of Sisters High School's cross-country team, told *The Nugget* that the older runners cover 12 to 15 miles a day, while the younger trainees cover nearly six miles each day. Up early for breakfast, the runners hit the trails at various Central Oregon locations, including Round Lake, Smith Rock, and this year ran a rugged trail from Hoodoo Ski Area to Suttle Lake.

Nordell said that the running camp isn't just for running, however, explaining that the camp is divided into "Olympic Teams," and that the kids compete in various challenges over the course of the week including relays, shelter-building, tug-of-war and canoe races without paddles.

Tom Swinford, a cross-country coach from Newport, Oregon, told *The Nugget* that he finds the summer running camp to be very important for his athletes.

"It's a long way from home (for many of the runners) and a different part of the state. I'm a lifelong Oregonian, and sharing this piece of our state is a big thing. Getting them out of their environment and training for five days allows them to find out where their weaknesses are."

Swinford told *The Nugget* that "cross-country depends on summer training," and that the Sisters camp, held earlier in the year than most other camps, allows the runners to build a memory base for later



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Canoe races with no paddles built team spirit.

in the season.

Geoff Lytwyn, who as a former camp attendee returned this year to serve as a counselor, said "This camp gets you in the mood for running. It's nice to be out on the trails here. It builds better conditioning, and builds better cross-country teams through team bonding."

Lytwyn noted that he has attended the cross-country camp since its inauguration three years ago, and believes that each year it is getting better and better.

Liam Hughes, executive director of SPRD, echoed that sentiment, noting that in its first year the camp hosted 23 runners, and has "grown dramatically each year."

Hughes expects the camp's reputation to continue growing, and the number of runners attending each year to follow accordingly. Hughes noted that SPRD strives to run its programs for local children at cost, and that camps such as the Great Northwest help subsidize those efforts.

"It's a really good camp because we strive to keep a balance of activities. The kids are either out on the trails running, out rafting, canoeing, at the aquatic park, or even building shelters. It's a good

mix for a summer camp," Hughes said, noting SPRD's appreciation for the cooperation from Oregon State Parks.

SPRD also wished to thank The Belfry for donating their kitchen to help feed the hungry runners, GFP Enterprises for donating yurts for the camp attendees to sleep in, and Sisters Middle School for providing showering facilities after long days running the trails of Central Oregon.

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Artist marketplace set for Saturday

The Sisters Artist Marketplace will be held on Friday and Saturday, July 8 and 9 at 320-340 W. Cascade Ave., in downtown Sisters.

The event features arts and crafts vendors, food and live entertainment.

Event promoter Richard Esterman has been battling with the City of Sisters over rules put in place on transient vendors and outdoor events, in response to concerns raised by some local event organizers and "brick & mortar" businesses that see such activities as riding on the coat-tails of keystone events and downtown businesses.

Esterman has made that battle a feature of the Sisters Artist Marketplace, protesting new 100-foot setback rules that he says create "a

business dead zone" along Cascade Avenue. To do that, he has created a Cold War theme evoking the divide between East and West Berlin.

"On Friday, we kick off at noon with the Cold War iconic symbol of entering into the Free World," he said. "The Check Point Charlie Bar will be welcoming you on the border of the Dead Zone."

There will be live music on both days. On Friday, that is Derek Michael Marc Double AA Band and on Saturday, The Anvil Blasters will play.

There also will be a display from a private collection of Dean and Mary Smith's "Amazing Quilt Creations."

The event is free and open to the public.



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"Friends of Furry Friends" quilt was pieced by Valerie Fercho-Tillery. The bold colors and incredible detail make this a spectacular quilt.

The quilt is currently on display at The Nugget office, 442 E. Main Ave. Bring your pup by for a dog cookie and have a look!

Tickets may be purchased at The Nugget office or online at our website www.furryfriendsfoundation.org.

Tickets are \$1 each, six for \$5 or go for it, 25 for \$20.

Info: 541-549-9941

"Friends of Furry Friends" - by Valerie Fercho-Tillery (46" w x 59" h)