

# Sisters couple marks 10 years at café

By Jim Cornelius  
News Editor

Chris and Pam Wavrin are marking their 10th anniversary as the owners of one of Sisters' landmark restaurants — The Depot Café.

Chris and his brother Bill launched the venture, purchasing the then-Depot Deli.

"My brother and I basically did this together," Chris recalled. "He had a chef background. He rolled out for other interests shortly after purchase."

That left Chris and Pam, recently moved from California, to operate the business. They largely stuck with what had worked in the past — a strong breakfast and lunch menu.

"It took a while to feel like our place," Pam said.

Gradually, they streamlined the menu, keeping best-sellers and adding new items, and increasingly moving into sourcing their ingredients locally. The café serves up homemade, healthy options, and has become a go-to stop for people who are gluten-free — which reflects a family dietary change.

"Three of four of us are gluten-free," Chris said, "so we really try to take care of people who are."

Pam enjoys coming up with the new options.

"I do like to cook," she said. "Not on the line; I'm not a line cook. I get to create recipes."

Each year, the couple



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

Chris and Pam Wavrin with long-time employees Sami and Cher Madsen.

engages in one big improvement project — a back patio and stage; a new front patio; new siding.

"What we'd like to do is expand our kitchen to better serve summer crowds," Chris said.

Both Pam and Chris expressed their appreciation for the support of the Sisters community. They were surprised at how connected their business has become with the community. The Depot Café is a Sisters Folk Festival venue, and it has been a summer job for many a Sisters teen.

"We've had people who worked with us when they got their first driver's license and now they're having their first babies," Pam reflected. "We've been a part of that,

and that's pretty cool."

The Depot Café employs from eight to 25 people depending on the season. Some have been on staff for the whole time Chris and Pam have operated the restaurant.

Running a successful restaurant in Sisters is challenging — coping with a seasonal economy and wearing multiple hats as a small-business owner. And it's physically demanding, too. But Chris and Pam enjoy the people on both sides of the counter and enjoy being one of Sisters' destinations for thousands who visit here and for the locals who rely on their offerings for a tasty — and good-for-you — meal.

The Depot Café is located at 250 W. Cascade Ave.

## SCHEDULE: Two-week spring break remains on the books

Continued from page 1

"We have a plan, barring more of the white stuff coming down," Superintendent Curtiss Scholl said.

He explained that union representatives for the District's certified and classified employees approved the altered schedule "to do what's best for students."

Shortening spring break was discussed, but was rejected because 20 staff members have made plans that will prevent them from being in town during the second week of that vacation.

Scholl called the chances of finding 20 available substitute teachers "very slim" because other school districts are in the same position as Sisters, trying to find enough teachers to meet their own scheduling needs.

The superintendent added that Sisters schools already exceed the State Department of Education's mandatory class time. That's why no waiver from the State is needed here, although the department is offering such waivers to districts.

School Board member Stephen King suggested that, in the future, the Sisters District build two potential snow days into its annual schedule. The school year could start two days earlier than normal, he said, and classes could be curtailed two

days earlier in the spring if no snow days are used.

Scholl called it an idea worth considering. It would put the District in a proactive stance instead of a reactionary one, he said. Scholl noted that two days were lost for weather reasons in 2015-16 — one for snow and another for icy conditions.

This winter's unusually heavy snowfall has affected more than class time. It also has slowed some of the work on school renovation work authorized by the \$10.7 million bond measure voters approved last year.

"This spring will be a busy spring," Scholl said of the bond work. "We will start to see earth move."

School Board Chairman Jeff Smith acknowledged the unusual winter weather.

"This is the longest we've had snow on the ground in my 21 years here," he said. "There are a whole lot of people in a whole lot of arenas who did a great job for us. I want to take my hat off to them."

That includes personnel who shoveled snow, inspected school building roofs, and arose in the wee hours of the morning to drive area roads and check whether conditions would allow safe transportation of students.

Sisters Elementary School Principal Becky Stoughton added a touch of humor to the discussion.

"Our snow berms have turned into ice berms," she said. "We've lost a few snow boots, but no students yet."

**HAVE A VACATION HOME, COTTAGE, CABIN, RV OR EVEN A ROOM TO RENT?**

This year's big events in town (Sisters Shootouts, SALI, Sisters Stampede, Sisters Folk Festival, August Solar Eclipse, Sisters Rodeo, Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show & more) fill lodging establishments months in advance. Place a Nugget "Vacation Rentals" classified ad for just \$2 per line the first week, \$1.50 per line on repeat weeks. And it goes online at no extra charge! Placement deadline is Monday before noon, at 541-549-9941 or nuggetnews.com.

**THE CAMPAIGN FOR WHYCHUS CREEK**

Flowing from snowy mountains, through pine forests and desert canyons, Whychus Creek IS Central Oregon. Speak for the creek in your backyard, donate to the Campaign for Whychus Creek: [deschuteslandtrust.org/campaign](http://deschuteslandtrust.org/campaign)

DESCHUTES LAND TRUST

This ad sponsored by The Nugget Newspaper in support of Deschutes Land Trust.