

New adult foster care home opens

By Erin Borla
Correspondent

Sisters' new adult foster care home, Mac's Country Haven, is open on Rope Street and taking new residents.

Sarah Spurlock, a third generation caregiver and her husband, James, along with their six children, moved to Redmond from Harney County last year with the hope to someday own their own care home.

Spurlock took a job in Sisters and quickly found the home they are now running. In January, the family moved from Redmond to Sisters.

She lives at the care home, and the family also has another home outside of Sisters where Spurlock and her husband live with the children. The children come and go throughout the day so residents get a chance to interact with her family on a regular basis.

"I grew up in this type of setting," Spurlock says. "When I was younger I didn't appreciate the fact that we had this type of home — I look back and realize I always had one of my parents with me and we did everything together, and the people in the home became our extended family."

Mac's Country Haven, named after Spurlock's grandfather, Mac, who was a logger many years ago, is a Level 3 Care Home regulated and certified by the State of Oregon. They accept Medicaid and offer a veteran discount. The home is equipped with five bedrooms, each with its own half-bath. There is a shared bathroom with a handicapped-accessible shower and bathtub, as well as a full kitchen.

"We want our residents to feel like this is their home," Spurlock says of the common spaces. "This is as much their home as it is mine. I run my home and do my business just like my parents — like my residents are my family."

Mac's Country Haven assesses all potential residents



PHOTO BY ERIN BORLA

Sarah Spurlock and her husband, James; their six children; and Liz, the first resident at Mac's Country Haven, Sisters' new adult foster care home.

to make sure they will fit well with current residents.

"For folks that are interested in our services I try to get as much information as possible over the phone and then spend a day with them," Spurlock says. "I travel to where they are and speak with them and also allow them the opportunity to spend a day out here with us and see how everything works together."

The interview process is not intense, but allows for Spurlock to get a better sense of the individual. She asks questions about hobbies and interests as well as likes and dislikes to make sure the resident and the care home will fit well together.

"I want to make people feel good about themselves,"

she says. "Sometimes larger homes can be depressing, we want to help people live. Just because folks are elderly doesn't mean that they should just give up."

Mac's Country Haven currently has one full-time resident who sings the praises of Spurlock and the home. Just in the last week together they visited the High Desert Museum, made chicken parmesan, worked on the garden beds around the property and are planning a craft area where the resident can work on creating wreaths to sell at local craft fairs.

"I want to take the 'facility' feeling away," says Spurlock. "This is their home, too — they're not just living in someone else's home."

HOMES: Partnership joins school and nonprofit efforts

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day raising walls with future homeowner Benson. The students built the house walls in the fall. Because of the winter weather, the pouring of the foundation was delayed and the walls had to wait to be raised. Most of the students who were enrolled in the fall class were able to attend the all-day event.

"Hallelujah!" Benson shouted when she was asked to share a few words. "I feel like queen for a day."

Benson, who has lived in Central Oregon since 1990, told the crowd that nine years ago she left a relationship and wasn't sure she could stay in Sisters. But because of Habitat for Humanity she will now have a home and not have to move due to rising rent costs or rentals being sold.

"My heart is right here. My roots are right here."

She thanked the students, Habitat volunteers and the crowd.

Sisters High School senior Hayden Parsons has been

taking Cosby's woodworking classes for most of his high school career. He has made an Adirondack chair and is currently working on a guitar. What he has found most rewarding, however, is building walls for a house for a future Sisters Habitat homeowner.

While Parsons and his fellow builders were working, he shared how meaningful it is to know that the house walls will impact someone in the community. "Building a guitar is just for me," he said, "but working on the walls helps others."

Sisters High School junior Garrett Young said he took the construction class when he was a freshman. He didn't really know what the class was all about when he signed up. He said he learned more than he imagined, and building the walls for a community member had lasting impact, and gave him reason to take the class again.

"This is a great program," Cosby told the crowd who gathered to watch the walls go up. "It may be the only one like it in Central Oregon."

Sisters Habitat has partnered with Cosby and his students for nearly five years.

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