

Running commentary

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

Mother Nature has been a big part of the news here in Sisters Country over the past two weeks, in ways that have impacted all of us.

First it was the buildup to the solar eclipse that brought droves of people along the path of totality. I recall the last solar eclipse in Oregon in 1979 as a freshman in college, but don't remember any hype compared to the 2017 event. It was overcast in Eugene, so, although it got dark and the birds roosted, there was no view of the corona, no brilliance of the "diamond ring."

The invasion of thousands to Central Oregon didn't quite pan out fully, but since my wife and I had already decided to stick close to home, we joined friends about 10 miles out Wilt Road just below Geneva. As the obstruction began and the air cooled I stepped away from the small crowd seated near me, feeling a sudden need for tranquility and quiet. Many people have described witnessing the moments of totality in spiritual terms. I have not come up with words adequate to express the experience, but beyond the sense of wonder and peacefulness, I truly felt thankful that for that minute or so

there was a feeling of unity that has been sorely missing in our current political climate.

The second "act of nature" impacting our community is the Milli Fire and its accompanying evacuations and nearly constant smoke. While most evacuees have now returned to their homes, the smoke persists and seems to be taking its toll on everyone, physically and emotionally. Runners have had to travel out of the area, wear masks, stay indoors, or take a break from running. Of course, there are some die-hards who run regardless of conditions. In my younger years, when I had the feeling of invincibility, I would have been one of those die-hards. Now I am just trying hard not to die.

These two natural occurrences have in common the factor of shared experience. We shared the grandeur of the eclipse and now we are sharing, as a community, the challenges of a major forest fire in our backyard. Homes threatened, favorite trails endangered and burned, school start disrupted, and fatigue of smoke inhalation ... none of us can escape the impact.

I have noticed that while looking after ourselves, we are also looking out for one another. I have had calls and messages from all over

asking if my family is in harm's way. In turn we have offered refuge for those displaced by evacuation. Dutch Bros. is handing out coffee to firefighters. It's not a dazzling moment, like the eclipse, but there is unity just the same.

This togetherness theme is one for us to pay attention to, I think, both at the micro and macro level. For me, it's the start of another school year and another season of coaching runners. Teamwork, striving for a common goal of improvement, school spirit, and cooperation are foundational to a successful and meaningful school year and cross-country season.

Beyond the boundaries of the Sisters community, in the broader picture and in light of rising racial and political tension and divisiveness, I was encouraged to see images of thousands of people simultaneously gazing skyward wearing their goofy paper-and-plastic glasses, with smiles stretched across their faces. We got to experience something truly awesome in a very memorable shared moment.

The eclipse has come and gone and the fire will eventually die out, but August 2017 will be remembered around here as a time of unity.

SPRD gets set to bury the beef

Sisters Park & Recreation District will once again bring to the Sisters community their Buried Beef & Brew Feast.

"This event has grown in size every year, which is what SPRD hopes for with all their events," said Shannon Rackowski, adult/senior programs coordinator.

SPRD strives to create and bring to Sisters Country events that are different, yet fun, affordable, and great for families.

The main attraction to the Buried Beef & Brew Feast is the BEEF. What makes the beef tender and flavorful? How it is prepared: A 12-hour roasting process starts with digging a large pit in the ground, packing it with wood, creating a bed of coals, seasoning the meat (secret

family recipe), wrapping the meat in water-soaked burlap, then foil, and laying it out on the bed of coals. Other fix-ins with the beef will include beer keg beans, corn, artisan bun, dessert, and lemonade.

This event is sponsored by First Interstate Bank and Three Creeks Brewing Co., and will be held at Fir Street Park on September 23, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Dry Canyon Stampede will once again entertain the crowd, so get your dancing boots on!

Tickets (\$12 for adults and \$5 for youth) are available from SPRD: online at www.sistersrecreation.com, by phone at 541-549-2091, or stop by the office at 1750 W. McKinney Butte Rd. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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