

**WINTER:** No evidence indicates repeat of last winter

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warm and dry winter was expected by most. Instead it was cooler and wetter than normal, except for February 2016. Most of the rest of the U.S. received the El Niño-like conditions that were anticipated, but not here in the West.

And we all know what happened last winter.

A neutral El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) signal was in play, causing most forecasters to lean toward an “average” to slightly warmer winter, mainly because of a warm blob of water in the eastern Pacific last fall. Spurts of extreme weather tend to favor neutral ENSOs — but that’s not what happened.

After a warm and dry November, winter roared into Sisters Country early in December and stuck around for quite some time. Temperatures in December 2016 and January 2017 were far below normal, with copious amounts of precipitation that translated into an accumulated snow depth in

January of about four feet, which was record-setting in some areas.

It was still cold in February but slightly drier than usual. Temperatures returned to normal by March, allowing Central Oregon residents to begin digging out.

On September 14, 2017, the Climate Prediction Center and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society issued a La Niña watch. They say there is an increasing chance (55-60 percent) of a La Niña to develop during the Northern Hemisphere fall and winter 2017-18. Over the last month, equatorial sea surface temperatures have been near-to-below average across the central and eastern Pacific Ocean. The Oceanic Niño Index (ONI) is currently at 0.2, making the ENSO signal neutral. It needs to fall below negative 0.5 to usher in a La Niña.

And even if La Niña does arrive, it will probably be a weak one. Of course, figuring out what this means for our weather this winter is the tricky part. Wintertime La Niñas generally result in cooler and wetter conditions in the Pacific Northwest.

For the three-month

period December through February, the Climate Prediction Center is calling for an equal chance of temperatures to be below normal, normal, or above normal. Precipitation is expected to be slightly above normal.

To attribute last winter’s extreme weather to a single climatic index is way too simplistic. On the broadest scale, every ONI ENSO signal is based just on the temperature of the water in the tropical Pacific Ocean. Upon this, however, ride a number of other weather cycles of various durations, such as the Arctic Oscillation, the Madden-Julian Oscillation and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation.

It’s much more likely that the kind of weather experienced over a season is determined by how these climatic entities interact.

There is no evidence to support the notion that our weather this winter will approach the severity of last year’s.

*Note: Those interested in further exploration may want to read an article that appeared in the October 2016 edition of Scientific American entitled “On the Trail of El Niño” by Emily Becker.*

## Renowned folk singer to play in Central Oregon

Martyn Joseph is coming to do a one-and-only Central Oregon show on October 1.

Joseph, a frequent Sisters Folk Festival performer and Encore Artist 2011 from Wales, UK, is performing at St. Helens Hall, 231 NW Idaho, across from Trinity Episcopal Church, at the south end of Wall Street in Bend.

Doors open at 6 p.m. for

potluck — plates, utensils, non-alcoholic beverages included. Music starts at 7 p.m.

Joseph will play two sets. Suggested contribution is \$20; all proceeds go to the artist. RSVP at [www.houseconcertsintheglen.com/rsvp.html](http://www.houseconcertsintheglen.com/rsvp.html) For more information email [Houseconcertsintheglen@gmail.com](mailto:Houseconcertsintheglen@gmail.com) or call 541-480-8830.

## Oregon’s top election candidates build war chests

By Andrew Selsky  
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — An election to choose Oregon’s next governor is more than a year away, but the main Democratic and Republican candidates’ fundraising is already going full steam. Almost \$2.4 million has been raised so far.

Gov. Kate Brown, a Democrat, is shrugging off the \$500,000 donation Nike co-founder Phil Knight gave

in August to her Republican rival, Knute Buehler, a member of the Oregon House of Representatives.

Brown’s campaign has reported raising \$1.25 million since Jan. 1, according to figures compiled by the Oregon Secretary of State and her campaign.

The Buehler campaign’s fund-raising dates back to only August 3. The reported contributions already amount to more than \$1.1 million.

**Shop Local**

Rediscover our hometown and keep our dollars at work in our own community...

Sisters has had a tough year. A little extra effort to dine out locally more frequently; a little extra sustained effort to shop local instead of buying online or at the box store, will go a long way toward helping the local business owners.

PHOTO BY GARY MILLER

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