

LETTERS

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involved but in the end — far less traffic and safer on Highways 126, 97 or 20 between our cities.

2. We pass legislation to assure our aquifer is not and will never be privatized in whole or part. No loss of our water to a bottled water company or for profit firm.

3. We build a large park in our midst (the property between the post office and town along Locust would be perfect — check out the view to the Sisters mountains from the northeast corner) that could be designed to have benches, tables, latrines, grassy areas, large pond with trail around it, trees (but none to block the view), a rollerblade park, and covered venue with barbecue — the latter to be rented from the City for large events: weddings, celebrations of life, graduation parties, etc. This option assures that as we grow, our park can accommodate more of our residents. The Village Green and other parks are great but not large. All great cities preserve large green areas for enjoying.

4. We should assure we have a municipal broadband network, create municipal wind-farms, and build or improve water treatment centers to feed recycled water to agricultural areas.

Let's plan ahead for the population growth due to national migration out of water-starved areas.

Susan Cobb



To the Editor:

After spending three weeks in Central Oregon managing the Horse Creek Complex and Rebel Fire, the Alaska Incident Management Team would like to extend our thanks to the residents in the McKenzie River, Sisters, Bend and surrounding communities who were impacted by the recent wildfires and our presence while fighting them.

The understanding and cooperation displayed by Oregonians in the face of nearly 50 days of smoke, angst and uncertainty generated by the fires was not only helpful, but inspiring. As a team, we are extremely grateful for the help and support provided by local residents, the U.S. Forest Service and the state of Oregon as a whole. The hospitality and gratitude expressed by residents in the communities we worked in and traveled through

was humbling.

Hailing from Alaska, we tend to believe the Last Frontier is the most wild and beautiful place on Earth. And while we still do believe that is true, we learned that Central Oregon is a very special place, too. We tried our best to keep it that way.

On a side note, we Alaskans found it ironic that the weather in Oregon was harsher than what we are accustomed to in Alaska. From a weather viewpoint, our stay at the Incident Command Post at the Hoodoo Ski Resort was an interesting one, to say the least, with blizzard-like conditions and several inches of snow over the course of five days. Had we known what Mother Nature had in mind, we would have packed our skis along with our pulaskis.

Tom Kurth

Incident Commander, Alaska Incident Management Team



To the Editor:

The City of Sisters licensed three vacation rentals in 2006 and 2011 under our name.

Two of the three are in a commercial zone and one is a cottage in Pine Meadows.

The Nugget Newspaper made mention regarding the City of Cannon Beach that approached vacation rentals a number of years ago. One of the end results of their planning regarding future vacation rentals was to adopt a "grandfather" clause for current owners of vacation rentals. My understanding is those grandfathered owners can sell their homes as vacation rentals and they are able to continue being licensed as vacation rentals. New rules were established by the City of Cannon Beach that did not financially hurt current owners.

The vacation rentals currently licensed by the City of Sisters should be able to continue their licensing status in the future as long as they have fulfilled the requirements of licensing that made their original decision to invest in a Sisters vacation rental. Homes purchased for the use as vacation rentals should not be impugned as a result of the city not addressing this issue years ago.

To my knowledge, having been in the industry for almost 10 years, I have not heard of vacation rentals being anything other than an asset to the community in terms of dollars spent and events visited and have not seen any

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FOOTBALL: Clinic offered moms insight into game

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Outlaws. "I learned more about the game and have a new appreciation for those you play. My favorite part, however, was interacting with the young men who were trying to 'coach' the moms during our scrimmage. I think we were their entertainment for the event!"

Jillian Frankl, who is the mother of an eighth-grade footballer said, "The agenda was filled with fun activities and informative speakers, including great information on concussions from Doctor Bob and wonderful demonstrations from the Bend Rugby Team and the high school football players themselves. The event gave moms the opportunity to learn more while becoming a closer-knit community of football fans for their Outlaw players."

Oregon's public pension deficit reaches \$25.3

PORTLAND (AP) — A new valuation by the actuary for Oregon's public pension determined that the system's deficit has ballooned to \$25.3 billion, meaning higher costs will be coming.

The growing deficit will cost schools and local and state government an additional \$1.4 billion, according to the valuation by the Milliman Inc. actuarial and consulting firm.

The increase was likely caused in part by the Public Employees Retirement System Board's decision to lower its assumption of how much it will get from investments from 7.5 percent to 7.2 percent, taking the deficit from \$21.8 billion to \$25.3 billion by the end of 2016, the *Oregonian*/Oregon Live

reported.

The board has allowed employers to underfund the system by billions of dollars.

"We're not paying anywhere close to what we should be paying, and if we did it would absolutely decimate schools," said Jim Green, executive director of the Oregon School Boards Association.

The additional \$530 million school districts will have to pay because of the rising deficit is equivalent to the cost of 2,650 teachers or 11 instructional days.

Local and state governments will be drawing 40 percent of the additional money they will need from state's general fund, which is speculated to result in a budget deficit in 2019.

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