



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Jason Winebarger spoke to a silent and attentive crowd at Sisters High School last week, recounting the story of his son's suicide.

SUICIDE RISK: Event was well-attended by Sisters parents

Continued from page 1

they have ever thought about suicide.

While there are often many signs and symptoms leading up to a person's suicide, that is not always the case. In Jacob Winebarger's situation, nothing indicated he felt hopeless, which made his suicide a complete shock to his family and friends.

Jacob shot himself in his home and survived for a short period of time on life support until the family agreed to discontinue it once it was clear that he could never recover.

"I will never forget the moment when his heart stopped beating and mine kept going," said Winebarger.

Winebarger urged the audience to have the courage to actually speak the word "suicide" rather than be afraid of it.

"Talking about suicide directly and with purpose will not make it more likely to happen," he said. "Letting people know help and support is available is vital."

He said, "Choosing death is not rational so we need to do all we can to prevent people from getting to that point that they see no other option."

Winebarger hopes that one day the topic of suicide will have the same type of level of attention as breast cancer awareness.

"The color pink has become synonymous with cancer prevention and awareness," he said. "Imagine if we were able to raise that kind of awareness for suicide prevention."

Putting a number to the topic, there have been over 40,000 suicides each year since 2014 in the United States according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. That number is about the same as deaths due to breast cancer according to the Centers for

Disease Control.

"More needs to be done," he said.

Winebarger answered questions from the audience and received words of compassion and thanks as well. One man shared how numerous members of his family had suicided and thanked Winebarger and the panel of speakers for bringing the topic to a public forum.

Following Winebarger, staff members from Sisters School District, including Heather Johnson and Brook Jackson, along with Jennifer Noble of Deschutes County Mental Health, shared warning signs, resources, and healthy self-care tips.

Johnson introduced the "Care and Connect" concept she has used at the high school for the past few years, which is now being shared at the others schools in the district as well. She teaches her students that they must look after one another and share concerns for themselves and their schoolmates with trusted adults. She has "Care and Connect" cards that students can fill out to communicate concerns with adults in support positions. The "Care and Connect" cards are being expanded throughout the school, with positive results, according to Johnson.

"Students are breaking out of the traditional 'code of silence' so common in our society," she said. "Students are beginning to understand that silence can be damaging and even deadly."

"Kids actually respond very positively when a counselor brings them in to share a concern delivered by a schoolmate," she said. "It's all about helping students access the support they need."

Plans are underway to present a "Care and Connect" assembly at both Sisters Middle School and Sisters High School as well.

"We need to be thoughtful in our approach with students, but we also owe it to them to raise awareness," said Johnson.

The Nugget Newspaper Crossword

By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

ACROSS

- 1 Noisy bird
- 5 Plays a role
- 9 Hearth residue
- 14 __ beans
- 15 Radar screen image
- 16 Faithful
- 17 Trip details
- 19 Isle of __; tourist resort near Naples
- 20 Flea collar wearer
- 21 City fellow on a ranch
- 22 Woods
- 23 Chain of printing stores
- 24 Quarrel
- 26 Lends a hand
- 30 Try
- 35 VP Agnew
- 36 Deadly vipers
- 38 As __ as a boil
- 39 Heart or liver
- 40 Charge
- 41 Chef's accessory
- 42 Season that begins today
- 43 Scorch
- 44 "Good for you!"
- 45 Gobi & Negev
- 47 Overindulgent parent, perhaps
- 49 Dobbin's dinner
- 51 __ race; daily grind
- 52 Holiday drink
- 56 Head covering
- 58 __ Miss
- 61 Hay bundles
- 62 Reckless risk-taker
- 64 __ out; say before thinking about
- 65 Lawn trees
- 66 Computer tech
- 67 Canary food
- 68 Cozy home
- 69 Wildebeests

DOWN

- 1 Cut coupons
- 2 Ceremony
- 3 Eliminate

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Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/14/18

— Last Week's Puzzle Solved —

P	A	I	N		C	H	A	T		S	P	E	C	S
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2/8/18

- 37 Baltic or Black
- 41 "All __!"; train conductor's cry
- 43 Male animal
- 46 Perches
- 48 Parish leader
- 50 Layered rock
- 52 Recedes
- 53 Strong wind
- 54 Adhesive
- 55 Bookish fellow
- 57 Gives a gun to
- 58 Microwave, e.g.
- 59 In __ of; as a substitute for
- 60 BPOE folks
- 62 Relaxing room
- 63 Cake ingredient

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