

The people behind The Nugget... Charlie Kanzig

Charlie Kanzig has been running and writing for most of his life — and for the past 22 years, he’s been combining the two as a freelance writer and reporter with *The Nugget*.

Kanzig started out in the mid-1990s covering sports, including providing reports on Sisters Outlaws cross-country teams that he coached. He branched out into other sports, including a year of covering football, and then he moved into other feature writing.

Kanzig enjoys the features, because the reporting takes him down trails he might not ever discover on his own.

“It’s been fun to get exposed to things I wouldn’t ordinarily have any contact with,” he said.

The reporter recalled being assigned to cover a Gold Wings Motorcycle group that made Sisters a regular stop some years ago on a tour.

“They were so enthusiastic about their motorcycles,” Kanzig recalled.

He ended up being invited to a whole raft of Gold Wings events in Sisters, culminating with their motorcycle parade.

“It just cracked me up that I ended up on the back of a Gold Wing just because I did the story,” he said. “Their enthusiasm was fun for me.”

Editor Jim Cornelius says that Kanzig’s own enthusiasm

makes his work appealing.

“Charlie is genuinely interested in people — obviously an important asset for a school counselor,” he said. “That’s a key element for a reporter, too. Writing skills only take you so far; you need to really engage with your subjects to make a feature come alive, and Charlie gets that — he genuinely gets a kick out of all the interesting things people in this community get up to.”

Writing for *The Nugget* allows Kanzig to work muscles he developed at the University of Oregon, where he started out as a journalism major. He ended up switching to English in order to get into teaching and counseling, which he made his career.

“This gives me a chance to kind of have it (journalism) as a sideline,” he said.

Whatever his other pursuits, Kanzig has always been most passionate about running. He discovered cross-country in the eighth grade, and found he had a knack for distance running.

“It was different from other sports,” he said, physically and mentally challenging.

His coverage of running-related stories, including Olympic trials, “has been a joy,” he said. He noted that his coverage of Ashton Eaton allowed him to write about a

world record-holder.

Kanzig writes the “Running Commentary” column in *The Nugget*, and continues to cover track and cross-country. He enjoys the fact that his neighbors read his byline and appreciate the work. He sees a community newspaper as a vital resource for the community — and the schools he has been dedicated to for the past 24 years.

“I think a small-town newspaper is really important,” he said. “People still read *The Nugget* and they know what’s going on in Sisters because they read *The Nugget*. It’s a connection that a lot of people here share.”

“People still read The Nugget and they know what’s going on in Sisters because they read The Nugget. It’s a connection that a lot of people here share.”

— Charlie Kanzig

As for the schools, “It seems that it gives people access that they wouldn’t have if (the paper) wasn’t there.”

Kanzig enjoys being part



PHOTO PROVIDED

Charlie Kanzig was a journalism major before turning to teaching and counseling. His work with *The Nugget* taps that interest.

of a stable of diverse freelance voices in the paper.

“You do have some diversity in this, and it’s not all just coming through you as the editor,” he told Cornelius. “It seems that you let people have some free rein.”

Living and working in Sisters for almost a quarter-century, Kanzig has seen a lot of change. The changes in the community were thrown into stark relief when he left in 2013 for a two-year teaching stint in South Korea and then came back in 2015.

“It’s like Rip Van Winkle,” he said with a laugh. “I feel like I’m behind a little bit. I don’t recognize as many

people when I go to the store. But maybe that’s because we’re all older, I don’t know.”

Despite changes, Kanzig thinks the heart and soul of the community remains much as it was when he came here in 1994.

“That spirit of coming together in times of trouble is still there,” he said, reflecting on the support he and his family received as they faced the death of their daughter Claire. “That’s a good indication that people are still connected.”

Kanzig plans to continue to make connections, telling stories and exploring the community he and his family call home.

THANK YOU to all our readers who have let us know how much they enjoy reading The Nugget. We are honored by your appreciation and support!

The Nugget

You, too, can help The Nugget continue its journalistic mission...

Readers like you can join our loyal advertisers in bringing The Nugget to Sisters — for free — every week!

Make a financial contribution to keep professional community journalism thriving in Sisters...

Visit NuggetNews.com, stop by the office at 442 E. Main Ave. (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri), call us at 541-549-9941, or drop a check in the mail.

Thank you for supporting us!

Three easy ways to support community journalism:

- Complete the form below and mail today
- Call 541-549-9941 and pay by credit card
- Go to NuggetNews.com to contribute online

- ☐ **\$50/year** Supporting Subscription
- ☐ **\$100/year** Sustaining Subscription
- ☐ \$ _____ Other Contribution

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

☐ Check enclosed ☐ Please charge my credit card

Visa/MasterCard _____ Exp. ____/____ Security Code _____

Mail to: The Nugget, PO Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759