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Holiday Faire
 Located at 142 E. Main Ave., Sisters
 November 23 - December 16

Great selection handmade items from local vendors. High quality! Unique gifts! Free admission!

Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Of a certain age... Blessings on us all

— By Sue Stafford, Columnist —

As each year folds more quickly into the next, it is evident that my financial security has become tenuous with my retirement reserves gone. Whenever I find my anxiety ramping up, I turn my thoughts instead to acknowledging all the comfort and certainty in my life.

Although I frequently weigh the pros and cons of selling my house and downsizing to smaller, less costly surroundings with less upkeep, I acknowledge I am fortunate to have a house to sell. I'm not living in my car, or being evicted from an apartment I can no longer afford.

I have fairly decent health that allows me to continue to live independently. For when I need it, I have full Medicare and supplemental health insurance that allows me to seek appropriate and timely medical care. I have insurance that will pay for long-term care if the day comes when I need it.

Friends and family care about me and provide love and human connections that we all need in our lives. I am not alone or lonely, not invisible like many elderly are.

Though I am beyond the average retirement age, I am especially fortunate to have the ability and opportunity to engage in meaningful, rewarding work that provides needed income to supplement my monthly Social Security benefits.

Living in a charming, nature-rich community that is physically untouched by so much of the horror filling today's headlines and news broadcasts allows for a comfort and continuity that doesn't exist for millions of people around the globe.

I am not homeless, sick, fearful, or living in poverty. I have much for which to be thankful — now, in the past, and in the coming days. It is incumbent upon me, with all the blessings I have received in my life, to extend a hand to those who have not enjoyed the good fortune I have.

More than a duty, it is a joy to be able to bring a little light into another's darkness. Many of us are easily moved at holiday times to give money or material goods to help out our neighbors. Such gestures are appreciated by the agencies providing the help and those



receiving it; and I will participate again this year.

But writing a check, dropping money in the red kettle, buying a toy for a child or a \$20 sack of groceries, although greatly appreciated and needed, are temporary bandaids at holiday time that don't last.

The most precious gift I can give is to share my time and talent all year round for the betterment of our world and our neighbors — whether here in Sisters or in a far-off place I will never see. The gift of my time doesn't require money — just a willing spirit and an open heart. A task that seems easy to me, like changing light bulbs and batteries for an elderly neighbor, or grocery shopping for him, makes a big difference in his daily life and helps him to remain in his home.

There is overwhelming fear, hatred, bigotry and greed choking our world. Hearts and minds are closed, unwilling to see the needs of our brothers and sisters, whoever they may be. Guns, bombs, walls, and empty rhetoric will never bring lasting peace or equity. Fear breeds fear and hatred. Love trumps fear.

I am only one person, and you are only one person. If I greet you in hope with love, and you do the same to another, and so on, we can make a difference. The best gift I can give this holiday season and all year long, is to not lose hope — to believe my attitude and actions can make a difference and you can make a difference.

Despair is the enemy of hope. I will keep my candle of hope lit so that together we can provide light in those dark places. May the warmth and love of this season reside in our hearts and actions each and everyday.

Blessings on us all.

Three Sisters Lions Club Holiday Faire

A hand-made gift can be the most thoughtful kind of gift you can give. The Three Sisters Lions Club Holiday Faire makes it easy to find one-of-a-kind hand-crafted gifts of exceptional quality. Centrally located at the corner of Hood Avenue and Elm Street, the holiday faire runs through December 16.

From wonderful holiday décor items that will put your home or business in the Christmas spirit, to unique gifts that will be appreciated and handed down, you'll find a host of treasures at this annual event. Metal sculpture is a big hit, as are clever "pocket purses," hand-crafted pottery, and blown glass — all kinds of unique gifts made by local artisans.

And your gifts give in multiple ways. Of course they will delight the loved ones on your list. They'll also support the thriving arts economy in Sisters, while supporting the vital outreach of the Three Sisters Lions Club.

