

Sisters salutes

• Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) thanks Cork Cellars Bistro & Wine Bar for partnering in hosting a very successful “Toast the Trails” FUNdraiser! Cork Cellars was filled with enthusiastic trail supporters from Bend, Tumalo, and Sisters on Tuesday, November 27. Close to \$600 was raised during this fun event benefiting STA, a local non-profit who plan, build and maintain multi-user, non-motorized trails in and around Sisters, Oregon.

Cork Cellars generously provided a welcoming atmosphere, tasty food, and delicious wine to guests. Event attendees had the opportunity to connect with STA Board members and fellow trail enthusiasts throughout the evening. STA Board Chair, Catherine Hayden, shared current trail happenings and encouraged further involvement through volunteering and/or membership. STA appreciates the community support from Cork Cellars and those who attended the event.

• Kiki Dolson, founder of Furry Friends Foundation, thanked those involved in the annual Pet Photos with Santa fundraiser on Saturday (see story, page 13).

“I want to thank all the volunteers who helped make the day happen including, Jeannie Sandeck, Monica Rendon, Marcy Kuhlman,

Gregg Simonsen, Kelly King, Vivian Bousquet, Pete Rathbun and Jim Cornelius. Special thanks go to Santa (Sam Hernandez) and local pet photographer Jodi Schneider who both donate their time.”

• Sisters Middle School and Sisters High School would like to thank Tate Metcalf and Sisters Athletic Club for the donation of a stationary bike and elliptical machine. They are great additions to our workout areas and will be especially helpful for concussion management of our students. Thank you, Tate, for your continued support of Sisters schools!

• Nila Lukens, a 2015 Sisters High School graduate, helped to lead the Southern Oregon University volleyball team to a fifth-place finish at the NAIA National Volleyball Championships in Sioux City, Iowa this past week. It is the highest finish for the SOU team in program history.

RESTRICTIONS: Much of Sisters wilderness is impacted

Continued from page 5

areas that are so lightly used that I rarely encounter anyone at all when hiking. Part of that, of course, is because I infrequently hike on weekends or holidays. So, if restrictions must be implemented, there is no logical reason to start off with sweeping restrictions that encompass every single day of the hiking season. It would be much more reasonable to start off with a more modest approach that requires reservations only on weekends (Friday to Sunday) and holidays. Also, the restrictions should end after Labor Day, not at the end of September. Only if these more reasonable measures prove ineffective, should the extreme blanket restrictions even be considered.

Another action that doesn't seem to be even under consideration is actual enforcement of existing forest and wilderness rules. I have personally witnessed egregious violations — and reported them

— only to be told that no wilderness ranger was available, even though other Forest Service personnel were on scene or nearby!

The “proposed decision” falsely alleges that “a large number of the wilderness trailheads remain free with unlimited access for day use.” It also makes the patently ridiculous excuse that only 0.5 percent of the U.S. Wilderness is impacted. If you live in Sisters Country, however, nearly 100 percent of your prime wilderness is impacted. I saw one alternative idea that would grant a sort of preferred status for local forest users to be able to enjoy the forest in their own backyards without special permits. That is certainly another option worth considering.

In summary, it seems *See RESTRICTIONS on page 24*

pretty obvious to me that the Forest Service made up their minds on this easy “fix” long before the proposed “options” were ever drafted. In this current governmental alternate reality of imagined crises and alternative facts, it is not surprising that such an autocratic solution would be proposed. This is not forest “management” but an abrogation of leadership.

The only hope for sanity, now, is that the final comment period might bring some reason and common sense into this travesty. Comments must be made prior to the end of December and must conform to a narrow set of criteria and to comply with 33CFR218 or face summary disqualification; a physical mailing



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