

Commentary...

Be alert to elder abuse

By **Betsy Leighty-Johnson**
Guest Columnist

Cheat grass. Once you know what to look for, you begin to see it everywhere.

Elder abuse is kind of the same — once you know the warning signs you begin to see it more frequently. “See it, stop it, prevent it” have become the watchwords for this insidious and growing crime.

One reason it may seem elder abuse is on the rise is the increasing number of Baby Boomers cresting age 65. Wes Fitzwater, a Portland-based attorney specializing in elder law, has been a presenter at various forums including to Oregon attorneys, eldercare service providers, as well as financial and insurance groups. He emphasizes the “human tidal wave” that will “change the face of America” based on U.S. Census Bureau data. In the next 15 years, more than 10,000 Baby Boomers will reach age 65 per day. Further, he presents the economic outlook that “America is sitting on the edge of what is expected to be the greatest transfer of wealth in our history.” The prediction is “by the year 2052, an estimated \$40.6 trillion will change hands as Baby Boomers and their parents pass on their accumulated assets to their heirs.”

The Oregon Legislature and Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) have worked together to improve Oregon laws. ORS 124.005-124.040 is the Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities Abuse Prevention Act (EPPWDAPA).

DHS’ Adult and Protective Services (APS) is responsible for coordinating and conducting abuse

investigations and providing statewide services to reports of neglect and abuse of vulnerable adults, including: adults over the age of 65, adults with physical and/or developmental disabilities, adults with mental illness, and children receiving residential treatment services.

If you’re reading this and are over the age of 65, you are part of the vulnerable population and are covered by Oregon’s elder abuse laws.

The DHS APS 2017 Data Book reports they conducted 16,793 investigations to determine whether abuse or self-neglect had occurred, encompassing 18,855 distinct allegations, some involving multiple victims; 70 percent of these allegations were community based and 30 percent were for facilities. Of these allegations, 4,720 were determined to be abuse with 32 percent financial exploitation, 26 percent verbal abuse, 15 percent self-neglect, 15 percent physical abuse, 9 percent neglect, 2 percent abandonment, restraint, and seclusion, and 1 percent for sexual abuse.

What is elder abuse? “Elder abuse includes physical harm, failure to provide basic care, abandonment or involuntary seclusion, unwanted sexual contact, verbal or emotional abuse, neglect, self-neglect, wrongful restraint and financial exploitation. Abuse can happen in a person’s own home or the home of family or friends. It can also occur in a professional care setting such as a nursing facility, a residential care facility, an assisted living facility, an adult foster home, a retirement home or a room and board home” (from the DHS website).

This is Part 1 of a multi-part series on Elder Abuse Awareness, intended to raise community awareness and to provide resources for individuals who are themselves vulnerable or are caregivers, family or friends of vulnerable people.

If you become aware of signs that a person over 65 (or a person with disabilities of any age) is being abused, report it and let the authorities investigate. Protect any evidence you may have and call the toll-free abuse hotline at 800-503-SAFE or by calling local law enforcement in the county where the abuse occurred. If you report elder abuse in good faith, the law will protect you from being sued by the alleged abuser if you are mistaken.

Dr. Betsy Leighty-Johnson has a PhD in Human Services with a specialization in Social and Community Services. In September 2014, the author and her husband discovered his (then) 96-year-old mother had been the victim of financial elder abuse. They were very involved in the collection of evidence assisting in the felony prosecution of the victim’s daughter for the crime. Since that time, the author has become an elder-abuse advocate, currently assisting the Deschutes County District Attorney’s office with elder-abuse cases.

Efforts planned to improve Whychus Creek

By **Sue Stafford**
Correspondent

Grant applications are being submitted to support the restoration and improvement of Whychus Creek where it runs between the Creekside Campground and Creekside Park inside the city of Sisters.

The Upper Deschutes Watershed Council (UDWC) will apply to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and the Pelton/Round Butte Fund. There is approximately \$150,000 available to pay for fish passage and in-stream and riparian habitat restoration.

The City submitted a grant request to FEMA to help fund the Locust Street component of the project, which involves removing

the bridge-mounted sewer line from the upstream side and placing it under the streambed to avoid damage to the line during high water events.

The UDWC and the City are planning to implement the fish passage and riparian restoration work along with ADA retrofits on the pedestrian bridge over the creek based on funding availability.

July 1 through October 15 is the window for the in-stream work to occur in order to have the least impact on the fish. The water will be at its lowest flow level so the least amount of water will need to be piped around the in-stream work. The City will take the lead on the bridge and sewer line work.

METALS
By Artist Bryan Lee Brown

Jewelry • Repair
Custom Work

Specializing in mokume-gane or wood-grained metal and kintsugi, a unique way of repairing pottery with gold. 40+ years experience

Upstairs in the Three Creek Building • Tu.-Sa., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
220 S. Ash St., Ste. 8 • 541-904-0410 • metals.bb@gmail.com

SISTERS MEAT AND SMOKEHOUSE

We always listen to our customers when it comes to what they want, and then deliver only the best...

NOW AVAILABLE!
ALASKAN SEAFOOD & WILD GAME
ALASKAN SALMON, HALIBUT, COD & MORE

- High-quality, line-caught directly from the Sitka owner/operator
- Flash-frozen and packaged same day it was caught
- Flown to Central Oregon • Quantities limited!

WILD GAME

- Elk sourced in Sisters is our first addition
- Other game to come soon!

MEAT FOR THE GRILL
Fresh Beef, Pork & Chicken

DINE-IN OR TO-GO

- Smokehouse Jerky, Sausage, Pepperoni & Cheese
- Made-from-scratch Sandwiches & Sides
- NW Craft Beer, Wine & Cider
- Party Platters (Please Pre-Order)

Open 9AM-7PM Every Day
541-719-1186 | 110 S. Spruce St.
Call ahead and your order can be ready when you get here.

Touch of Class Tours
www.touchofclasstours.com
connie@touchofclasstours.com

TOPAZ LODGE TOUR – OFFERED JUST ONCE THIS YEAR!
JULY 23-26 | \$179 PPDO
Receive \$30 free slot play and \$15 in food coupons! Topaz Lake is a famous fishing destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Single occupancy is an additional \$30

COWBOY DINNER TREE - SILVER LAKE
AUGUST 10 | \$115 PP
Enjoy our ride as we embark upon a very hidden treasure! Great to include out-of-town guests for this favorite! Minimum of 25 passengers or surcharge may apply!

CRATER LAKE
SEPTEMBER 28 | \$159 PP
Leisurely drive around the rim with step on Park Ranger!

CANADIAN RAIL
OCTOBER 16-23
Limited availability \$2,499 PPDO
Experience the best of beautiful Canada! Includes air, transfers, taxes, train, tours, 2 breakfasts and hotels! Price subject to air availability!

BRANSON
NOVEMBER 6-14 | \$2,449 PPDO
8 nights, includes air, taxes, transfers, 15 shows, 15 meals and so much more!! (We've added another day, and 2 more shows, so price has increased!!)

CHRISTMAS TIME TOUR/ CRUISE ADDED!
DECEMBER 15-23 | \$2,849 PPDO
New Orleans, LA to Memphis, TN! Super sale, book now to guarantee these rates.

Connie Boyle
541-508-1500
Box 615 Sisters, OR 97759

Live Life Better!

55 & Over • Pets warmly welcomed • Independent living
Chef-prepared meals included • Transportation services
No long-term commitment

Learn more: Free gift & chef-created lunch for you and your family when you mention this ad.

Come For A Tour And Free Lunch!

HOLIDAY RETIREMENT | **Stone Lodge**
Independent Retirement Living

541-318-0450 | 1460 NE 27th Street, Bend | stonelodgeretirement.com

