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School district to investigate coaching claim

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

The Sisters School Board agreed Wednesday, October 2 to investigate concerns of several Sisters parents regarding coaching in the Sisters High School girls basketball program.

The investigation will be the third conducted by

See **COACHING** on page 24



Dancing on the pond...

The trumpeter swan community at Aspen Lake, east of Sisters, is thriving thanks to the attentive efforts of homeowners and wildlife managers.

PHOTO BY AL KRAUSE

Sisters man arrested after hemp farm theft

Sheriff's deputies arrested Noah Kirshner of Sisters in connection with the theft of industrial hemp from a farm east of town.

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office reports that on October 1, deputies were dispatched to a theft of industrial hemp from a farm in the 66000 block of Gist Road.

The farmer reported

See **HEMP THEFT** on page 24

Attendance and health focus for school board

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

Concerns about the health of the Sisters High School health program, about attendance and about student vaping occupied the Sisters School Board at their monthly meeting on Wednesday, October 2.

The meeting also focused on reports from the principals, an update on the school enrollment, and support for the mission and vision project that is entering its implementation stages.

The meeting opened with comments from three members of the audience including a parent who expressed concern about the status of the high school's health occupations program following the departure of long-time teacher and coordinator Heather Johnson, who took a new job in Bend.

Sisters High School

Principal Joe Hosang assured those present that everything possible is being done to keep the program vital through creative problem-solving. Board chair Jay Wilkins echoed the sentiment, acknowledging that his own daughters have taken part in the program and agreed that Johnson's departure was a "huge loss" on many levels.

Elementary Principal Joan Warburg and Middle School principal Alison Baglien joined Hosang for a joint administrator report, which was a bit of a question-and-answer regarding the way the schools are weaving in the mission and vision into each building's goals, but included other topics as well, including attendance, vaping, and social/emotional support in schools.

Board member Jeff Smith

See **BOARD** on page 30

Winter is coming: Tame or tumultuous?

By Ron Thorkildson
Correspondent

This is the time of the year when key aspects of the atmosphere and ocean begin to emerge that will drive weather patterns in the coming weeks and months. Soon seasonal forecasters will begin evaluating this information, making their own judgments about which sets of data are most important in order to paint a picture of the upcoming winter here in the Pacific Northwest.

Most atmospheric scientists regard the ocean/atmosphere coupled mode, known as the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), to be the dominant factor of climate variability and is still the cornerstone of operational seasonal climate forecasts issued worldwide. Specifically, the ENSO is a recurring climate pattern involving changes in temperature and wind direction in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

The most commonly used



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

The Three Sisters got an early blanket of snow. It may not signify much in terms of the winter forecast.

tool to evaluate the state of the ENSO is the Oceanic Niño Index (ONI). It is based on averaging sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies across a given region. ONI values greater than +0.5 constitute an El Niño; those less than -0.5 signify a La Niña. When the ONI is between +0.5 and -0.5 the ENSO is said to be neutral, called by some La Nada.

Prevailing trade winds normally blow across the tropical Pacific Ocean from east to west, causing warm surface water to pile up in the western Pacific. This allows modest upwelling to occur in the eastern Pacific that leads to cooler SSTs. This is the normal state of affairs — the La Nada. When the trade

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