

## IEE: Program combines outdoor and classroom activities

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what area they are studying. They also do art and project-based activities in the spring, working with Upper Deschutes Watershed Council.

The class focuses heavily on leave-no-trace camping, environmental impacts of humans and animals, literature about Oregon rivers, and the science of the mountains, rivers and rocks of Central Oregon.

Herron, who teaches geology and science, instructs students on the surroundings in the classroom. The students are then able to take what they learn out into nature and experience it for themselves.

"There is more ownership of learning by opening kids up to the outdoors and they are able to take their education into their own hands," said Herron.

Throughout the class, students work in small groups and branch outside of their norm.

"I see students who are really quiet in the classroom open up and be a lot more active on the trips and gain a lot more confidence" he said.

There is a lot of team-building outside of the classroom, which teaches students how to work with people.

Students are able to hear



PHOTO BY CEILI CORNELIUS

Students learn outdoor skills —and build confidence and teamwork.

from experts in the field, outdoors, applying what they learn in the classroom to the place where they live.

"Partnerships have been developed here with the program that are really important and a big part of it," said Herron.

Most importantly to Runco, it allows for students to learn about the environment around them in a very untraditional classroom.

IEE is offered to Sisters High School students in their junior year and is application-based. Seniors can also participate as interns — a more rigorous process and a large commitment, but an opportunity to become outdoor leaders.

The class runs throughout the school year on the semester schedule. The first

part of the term is focused on the Cascades region of Central Oregon, with the expedition being a three-day backpacking trip up Middle Sister, which includes a trek on Hayden Glacier. Students wear belts and crampons, making it "the official experience."

The second half is focused on the region east of the Cascades in the basin and range. Students learn about the river systems and geology of the region. There is also a focus on learning belaying and rock-climbing technique and safety. The expedition in the spring is a three-day raft trip down the Deschutes River. During the winter months, the students spend time in the surrounding area doing snowshoeing and winter-safety activities.

## Sisters suspect arrested in meat caper

A 22-year-old Sisters man was jailed on Monday, December 23, in connection with an early morning break-in at Sisters Meat and Smokehouse.

Deschutes County Sheriff's deputies were dispatched at 4:22 a.m. to a reported burglary in progress at Sisters Meat and Smokehouse on South Spruce Street in Sisters.

When deputies arrived the suspect had already left the area after breaking into the business and stealing meats and products. The suspect was seen on video surveillance breaking into the building.

Later on December 23, authorities received an anonymous report that Raymond Seekell was a possible suspect in this investigation.

Deputies were able to determine that Seekell broke into the business.

It was originally believed there might have been two people involved in the burglary; however deputies learned that after Seekell broke into the building the first time, he left the view of the camera, changed his clothing and returned a second time.

Seekell is the only suspect in this case and there is no one outstanding, DCSO reports.

The Smokehouse owner thanked DCSO and the community for their work in quickly identifying the Sisters man, who was lodged at Deschutes County Jail on charges of second-degree burglary, theft and criminal trespass.

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