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Jean Wells Keenan honored with award

By Helen Schmidling
Correspondent

Jean Wells Keenan is renowned in Sisters as an artist, a quilter, an entrepreneur and savvy businesswoman — and the founder of the Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show. At heart, she is a teacher and mentor, wife, mother and grandmother. Last Wednesday night, she added the title Recipient of the Eighth Annual Ben Westlund Memorial Award.

Cate O'Hagan, co-chair of the Deschutes Cultural Coalition, presented the award, an original ink-and-watercolor drawing created by artist Pat Clark. Titled "Landscape Bits and Pieces/ An Oregon Memory," it is a study for an engraving in rich shades of blue. The Westlund Award also includes a gift of \$1,000, which Wells Keenan designated toward the Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show, celebrating its 45th anniversary this July. It remains unique in the world of quilt shows because it's held outdoors, and it's not ticketed. Dawn Boyd, the Quilt Show's



PHOTO BY HELEN SCHMIDLING

Jean Wells Keenan consults with fellow artist Paul Alan Bennett. Wells Keenan's enormous impact on Sisters' arts community was recognized with the Ben Westlund Memorial Award last week.

executive director, accepted the check.

O'Hagan remarked, "Jean Wells Keenan founded the quilt show after starting her quilt store business, the Stitchin' Post, the prior year. When I think about starting a retail business 45 years ago in Sisters, on top of raising

a family, and on top of that, a quilt show, I wonder what that must have taken! As her sister June says, Jean believes that 'If you can dream it, you can do it.' And she does!

"The Stitchin' Post, now in daughter Val's capable hands, has thrived and

grown," O'Hagan said. "Jean's leadership has inspired the SOQS to expand its vision from a local event to an international attraction. An author of 30 books, Jean is widely recognized in this country and around the

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New Sisters development can move forward

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

The road is cleared for development of a six-acre parcel of land located behind Bi-Mart at the west end of Sisters, though such development has raised concerns among local residents about the impact on Sisters' character and quality of life.

With a unanimous vote of 5-0 following a public hearing last Thursday, the Sisters Planning Commission approved the 5.911-acre Master Planned Development (MPD) for the proposed Threewind project. Two commissioners were not in attendance.

The proposed development includes up to 28,000 square feet of commercial building area, up to 28,000 square feet of ground-floor multifamily building area, a public street, and associated site improvements. The application

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Attendance in focus for Sisters students

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

A recently retired teacher from the Sisters School District had a saying for students when it came to the importance of school attendance: "I'm good, but I can't teach you anything if you're not here."

Data underlines this truth, as students with poor attendance form gaps in learning and tend to lag behind their peers in school performance.

Sisters School District is implementing an initiative called "Strive for 95" this year to encourage students to have no more than two absences a quarter, which equates to eight total in a

school year to achieve a 95 percent attendance rate.

Work started on the goal from the beginning of the school year, with a number of incentives and initiatives put in place to help encourage good attendance and draw attention to its importance.

The elementary school drew attention to the attendance initiative in a big way to start the school year when police, fire and other emergency vehicles descended on the campus at the start of the day with emergency and police personnel handing out donuts to parents and thanking them for getting their kids to school on time.

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Outlaws swimmer is state champion

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

Senior Lydia Bartlett capped a stellar high school career in her final event at the OSAA 4A/3A/2A/1A state swimming championships in record-breaking fashion.

The meet was held Friday, February 21 and Saturday, February 22 at the Tualatin Hills Aquatic Center in Beaverton.

Bartlett started the day in the 200-yard freestyle and came up just short of a victory.

After posting the second-fastest time in Friday's prelims at 1:53.27, behind district rival Megan Hager of Sweet Home (1:50.29),

Bartlett knew who to focus on in the finals. The Saturday final was a battle throughout, with Hager holding on to a slim lead through each of the first three laps. After the final turn, Bartlett closed a bit, but Hager was able to hold her off by a mere .15 seconds to claim the crown in 1:50.63 against 1:50.78 for Bartlett.

The pair finished nearly nine seconds in front of third place.

"What a race!" said Coach Bryn Singleton.

But by no means was Bartlett finished as the senior led wire-to-wire in the 500-yard freestyle and set a new 4A/3A/2A/1A state meet

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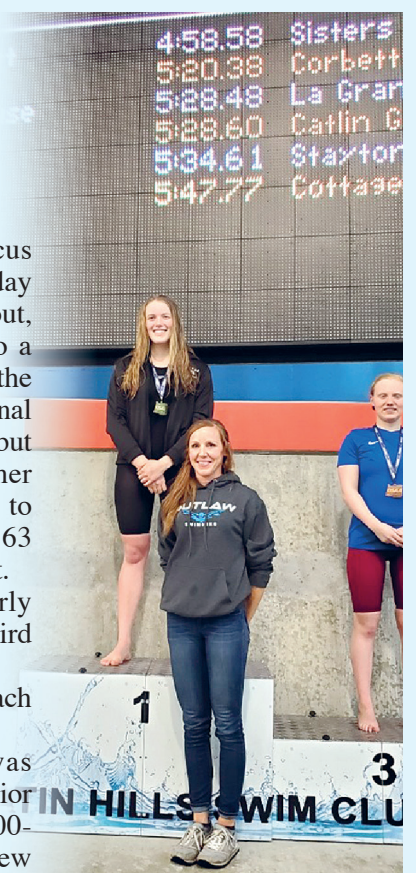


PHOTO PROVIDED

State champion Lydia Bartlett with Coach Bryn Singleton.

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