

The Nugget

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Foster parent heroes in our midst

By Bonnie Malone
Correspondent

From a desire to have a daughter to join their two sons, Shellie Souza's life took a turn that the best of us would find incredibly challenging. With her husband, Brad, theirs is a story of changing 102 young lives.

At the end of a quiet lane of dirt and pine needles in a serene country setting is the home of the Souzas, where foster children have found a place of solace and security.

When they still lived in California, the Souzas wanted to adopt a girl. Through a myriad of loops, they were

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PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS
A City of Sisters Public Works crew is installing upgraded playground equipment at Village Green Park. The City, its parks advisory board and Sisters Park & Recreation District collaborated on the design, seeking input from children on desired features.

Sisters facing COVID-19 impacts

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

Editor's note: As the impact of COVID-19 is a rapidly unfolding situation, The Nugget will update information at www.nuggetnews.com and on Facebook as it becomes available.

Sisters was caught up during the past week in the floodtide of closures and cancellations accompanying efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Sisters schools closed as of Friday, March 13, and will remain closed until April 6 as a mandated statewide closure overlapped with Sisters'

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City signs off on law enforcement contract

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

Sisters will have a lot more law enforcement coverage starting this summer, when a new contract between the City of Sisters and the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office takes effect.

The Sisters City Council signed the contract at its Wednesday, March 11 meeting. It now goes on to the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners and Sheriff Shane Nelson for their approval — which is expected to be readily forthcoming.

Nelson expressed his satisfaction with the contract in an interview with *The Nugget* last week.

"I'm excited about it," he said. "I think this is going to be a great opportunity not just for the City but for the residents out west. I think this is

a great moment for the sheriff's office and the Sisters Country out here."

The contract calls for Sisters to have a dedicated force of one lieutenant and three deputies. Consistency of staffing was a critical component of the agreement — as close an approximation to having its own police force as Sisters can realistically afford to come.

The Sisters contingent will have distinct markings on its patrol cars.

"We want anyone who lives in Sisters to be able to see a law enforcement vehicle and understand that is a deputy who is serving our community through this contract and the taxpayers are paying for," said City Manager Cory Misley.

Misley said that the emphasis will be on building

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A wildfire campaigner retires

By Ceili Cornelius
Correspondent

Jinny Reed has been working fire for 32 years. She has been with the Sisters Ranger District for 19 of those years working in wildfire prevention, education and suppression. After a career spanning most of her adult life after high school, Reed hung up her uniform and retired as of February 29.

Reed's primary role as assistant fire management officer for Sisters has to do with prescribed burns and fire prevention and education.

"My passion is to get the best information about fire and preventative fire out to the public," Reed told *The Nugget*.

Her main focus over the years has been on planned ignitions, treatments on certain areas of the forest, and mitigation of the impacts of wildfire.

"I really feel like I have done my part in my career



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jinny Reed worked in wildfire management for most of her Forest Service career. She retired at the end of last month.

in the planning, educating, and post-fire rehab stuff," she said. "I do feel a sense of accomplishment when I drive through Sisters Country and see the areas that we have treated or worked on."

Reed estimates that she has been a part of treating 75,000 to 100,000 acres of land.

She has worked on more than 19 campaign wildfires

in her career and focuses primarily on rehabilitation after fire. She is actively a part of proactive treatment services and getting the forest back to "pre-Euro settlement" conditions.

"The forest and trees are where my roots are growing up in Deschutes County," she

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