

BALLOONS: Science project is a Sisters High School tradition

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collaborating during this time, but it felt like an important thing to do for the students.”

Givot delivered supplies to students’ homes and communicated online in order to pull off the experiments and launch this year.

“We did a lot of group chats and zoom meetings in order to collaborate with our classmates and team members,” said student Tatum Sitz.

Piper Adelt, sophomore at Sisters High School was in charge of running the cameras.

“I am not really a tech person, but I learned a lot and enjoyed this experience,” she said.

Peterzen, who has lived in Sisters for more than a decade, is the founder and owner of ISTAR Stratospheric Ballooning and has been working with the high school for the past six years in creating a student launch program.

“I contacted Rima about doing a student launch program here,” he said. “We got funding for it as a small program and it’s a great way for students to get experience and connections in this field and spark passion and drop seeds for potential future careers.”

This year, ISTAR obtained \$16,000 in funding from the Battelle Memorial Institute for the program. It took about nine months of working with Battelle to obtain the funds, but it was worth the effort to secure the money to keep the program alive for future operations.

Battelle Memorial Institute is a private nonprofit applied science and technology development company

and Peterzen has been working with them for a while to obtain the grant for the program.

“The grant will be used for furthering earth science and space programs, but it was primarily obtained for the weather balloon launch program at SHS,” he said.

Peterzen will be continuing his work with his company, ISTAR, and for Battelle eventually to test antennas for NASA systems and do further research in the Arctic Circle.

ISTAR has also teamed with Battelle to bid on the NASA stratospheric balloon program which involves managing the program and developing new research opportunities.

On Thursday afternoon, the first balloon was retrieved in Post by rancher Jim Wood — who happens to be a Sisters resident and father of Sisters High School student Lachlan Wood, who previously had participated in the balloon launch program. The initial data said that one of the balloons reached at least 88,000 feet in the atmosphere.

The second balloon was spotted by a fisherman and his wife at the Prineville Reservoir, landing in the water.

“This was the first time the balloons were both spotted and we were contacted right away instead of just tracking them, they were actually seen



PHOTO BY CEILI CORNELIUS

Up, up and away! Students launched two balloons loaded with experiments last Thursday.

landing,” said Rima Givot.

After retrieving the balloons, students gathered their own experiments to collect data on what happened to them during flight.

The camera teams will also begin piecing together the footage retrieved from flight.

The weather balloon launch program will continue at Sisters High School, and according to Peterzen, with more grants and funding, can be made an available program in every school.

DROWNING: Paddling accidents on the rise in Oregon

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“The warm weather and loosening of stay home orders have brought people from their homes out into the woods and lakes in high numbers to recreate this weekend,” stated Jefferson County Undersheriff Marc Heckathorn. “This is a very sad reminder of the need for all boaters to wear or have immediately available a person flotation device when on the water.”

Oregon State Police, Forest Service Law Enforcement, and the Sisters/Camp Sherman Fire Department assisted at the scene.

Law enforcement and the Oregon Marine Board report that paddling fatalities are on the rise in Oregon. Sunday’s incident is the sixth on Oregon’s waterways this spring. According to law enforcement authorities, all have two things in common: not wearing life jackets, and cold water.

The Oregon State Marine Board is urging boaters headed to the water as spring weather gets nice — especially people in canoes, kayaks, and on stand-up paddleboards — to dress for the water temperature, not the

air temperature. The water is cold.

“We are concerned,” said Marine Board Boating Safety Program Manager Randy Henry. “People are anxious to get out and have fun, but water is serious business. If you go boating, wear your life jacket, buckle it up, and make sure it’s a snug fit. Always dress appropriately, and if you’re paddling, dress for the water. A dunking this time of year can be deadly.”

This season, many people new to paddling or people who haven’t paddled in a while are strongly encouraged to take a free, online paddling course to learn about self-rescue, how to re-board your paddlecraft, important equipment/requirements and other safety skills to develop. Start out on calm, flat water, and slowly progress to other waterbodies as skills develop. There are also paddling clubs in many communities as well as online forums with local safety information.

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Helping Hands To Feed Your Family

The Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank is open and we welcome your visit!

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The Sisters Kiwanis Food Bank is open every other week and you are encouraged to anticipate your food needs for two weeks at a time between visits to the food bank.

The next pick up date is Thursday, May 14, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We are located at 328 W. Main Ave. in Sisters