

O P I N I O N

Adapting to provide musical magic...



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Melanie Rose Dyer and Daniel Cooper played for neighbors in their Tollgate Village – with plenty of room to spread out and maintain physical distancing.

Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is 10 a.m. Monday.

Clarification

In *The Nugget's* July 8 editorial "Wear your mask," the daily death toll from coronavirus was cited as totaling about 1,000 for all age groups. It is more accurate to state that – allowing for a couple of spikes well above 1,000 – the daily number has hovered between 500 and 1,000 through most of June and into July (down from peaking at 4,900 in a single day on April 16).

That positive trend may be shifting as there has been an uptick in deaths in recent days as a lagging indicator in a significant surge in cases in many states.



To the Editor:

I just read of the future workforce housing

planned for the Forest Service property.

This is excellent news for the City of Sisters, for the future Sisters' employers and their workforce and for Downtown Sisters. I have long felt that workforce housing was the very best use for most of that section of the Forest Service property. Its location is perfect for residents to walk or bike to work, to grocery shopping and to downtown events, activities, dining, socializing and shopping.

The news comes with the additional bonus of the investment by Laird Superfoods CEO. This speaks to the long-term and strong commitment of one of Sisters' most promising and high-profile employers to the city and to the workforce they foresee needing as they grow.

The City will eventually realize a huge

See **LETTERS** on page 23

Inspiring community members to get involved

By Janel Ruehl
Guest Columnist

In 2018, hundreds of Sisters Country residents weighed in on a shared vision for our future. Through surveys, community meetings, and town hall forums, community members suggested dozens of strategies to support a more Prosperous, Livable, Resilient, and Connected Sisters Country.

With the help of a committee comprised of 31 community members, the Vision Action Team, and led by local consultants those strategies were turned into a plan, called Sisters Country Vision Action Plan. Since completion of this plan, a group of organizations, community teams, and local agencies have diligently worked to bring those strategies to life. In July 2019, representatives from those organizations formed the Vision Implementation Team (VIT) to help provide oversight and coordinate projects to implement the new vision. As the VIT wraps up their first year working together, they've paused to reflect on what has been accomplished over the past 12 months, creating their first Annual Action Plan Update now available at www.sistersvision.org.

Progress has been made on all 20 strategies included in the original action plan in the past year. Strategies that saw the most progress in the past 12 months include:

- Prosperous Sisters: Development of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Property.
- Livable Sisters: Improved Trail System.
- Resilient Sisters: Wildfire and Disaster Preparedness.
- Connected Sisters: Multi-purpose Community Center.

Development of the large parcel of land long owned by the USFS happened fast after many years of uncertainty. The City of Sisters, EDCO, USFS and other stakeholders met with private developers in early 2019, resulting in the largest portion of the property entering escrow in late 2019. To support the sale, the City of Sisters updated their Buildable Lands Inventory and completed a Housing Needs Assessment. Meanwhile, USFS was debating options for the location of their new Ranger Station, even considering moving out of the area. Instead, they decided to use proceeds from the sale of the main parcel to retain the smaller, north parcel of the property and build a new

station onsite! Finally, the City of Sisters and ODOT are currently working on a multi-stakeholder agreement to purchase the remaining "east portal" with the goal of developing a community gathering space.

Sisters Country's recreation trail system also saw major improvements in the past year. USFS partnered with Discover Your Forest to establish the Deschutes Trail Coalition (DTC). To help identify new areas for potential trail development, DTC is in the process of creating a new spatial siting tool. Once sited, new trail development may get a boost in funding from a Deschutes County grant proposal to the State of Oregon, currently pending.

The County is also preparing to update their Transportation System Plan, which will provide opportunities for community input on a multi-use, regional trail system. Existing trails got a facelift this year when USFS, in partnership with the Sisters Trails Alliance, replaced the bridge over Indian Ford Creek on Sisters Tie Trail, authorized construction of three new connectors to the Peterson Ridge Trail, and finished construction of a state-of-the-art gateway trailhead to the Peterson Ridge Trail System.

Sisters School District, Sisters Park & Recreation District, and Citizens4Community worked together to make progress on the long-term goal of developing a multi-purpose community center. C4C facilitated a series of meetings with potential user groups – from the Pickleball Club to the Chamber of Commerce. Together, these groups discussed their desired uses, and how to develop a versatile space. The group is now exploring options for funding a feasibility study next year.

The Vision Action Plan Update includes a number of new "action items" this year, as community groups and organizations have found creative ways to contribute to the 20 strategies. The VIT hopes more community members will feel inspired to get involved next year, and is looking forward to planning a community celebration this fall (depending on COVID outcomes). The celebration is a chance to recognize those groups and individuals who have been true "vision champions" over the past 12 months and to share the Vision, progress to date, and goals for the next year with the entire Sisters Country community.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Sunny 91/57	Mostly Sunny 87/53	Sunny 83/49	Mostly Sunny 85/51	Sunny 87/56	Sunny 91/56

The Nugget Newspaper, LLC

Website: www.nuggetnews.com
442 E. Main Ave., P.O. Box 698, Sisters, Oregon 97759
Tel: 541-549-9941 | Email: editor@nuggetnews.com



Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Nugget Newspaper,
P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759.
Third Class Postage Paid at Sisters, Oregon.

Editor in Chief: Jim Cornelius
Production Manager: Leith Easterling
Creative Director: Jess Draper
Community Marketing Partner: Vicki Curlett
Classifieds & Circulation: Lisa May
Owner: J. Louis Mullen

The Nugget is mailed to residents within the Sisters School District; subscriptions are available outside delivery area. Third-class postage: one year, \$55; six months (or less), \$30. First-class postage: one year, \$95; six months, \$65.

Published Weekly. ©2020 The Nugget Newspaper, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. All advertising which appears in The Nugget is the property of The Nugget and may not be used without explicit permission. The Nugget Newspaper, LLC. assumes no liability or responsibility for information contained in advertisements, articles, stories, lists, calendar etc. within this publication. All submissions to The Nugget Newspaper will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication and copyrighting purposes and subject to The Nugget Newspaper's unrestricted right to edit and comment editorially, that all rights are currently available, and that the material in no way infringes upon the rights of any person. The publisher assumes no responsibility for return or safety of artwork, photos, or manuscripts.