

# Pushing hard through adversity

By **Jim Cornelius**  
Editor in Chief

Nobody who knows Jerry Baldock is surprised to see that not even a serious health crisis can keep him down.

The 79-year-old photographer is still out on the streets of Sisters documenting the life of his community, despite a tough cancer diagnosis.

“It is what it is and you do your very best with it,” he told *The Nugget*, the newspaper to which he has contributed for over a decade. “In that way, my life hasn’t changed at all... I think you can be an example for people. I think you can be an example just not to be fearful.”

While he worked with great success as a fire medic, a home inspector, and a contractor, Baldock came to his greatest calling relatively late in life.

“My interest in photography started shortly after my youngest son passed away in 2005,” he told *The Nugget* in 2018. “My son Brian was a coach and trainer at Marshfield High School, but more than that, he was a mentor for Marshfield’s athletes. He was truly a gift from God in the way he mentored young people and

encouraged them to challenge themselves. I found that through photography, I could make a difference in the lives of young people by capturing their greatest or most memorable moments in a picture... That’s how I started; then I came here.”

Baldock feels deeply invested in the community he chose.

“What a godsend Sisters, Oregon, was to us,” he said.

Asked why he chose to work so hard at his photography instead of retiring and taking it easy, he said simply: “My job wasn’t done yet.”

He acknowledges feeling driven by “something inside me.”

“My family thought I was crazy,” he said. But “this is what I really want to do. I haven’t been sorry a moment.”

Jerry acknowledges the support of his wife, Marlene, who understands his drive to capture moments — and

never let one pass him by, from a Habitat for Humanity home dedication to a touchdown on the football field.

“She let me do this all these years when we were in our prime time,” he said. “There were a lot of times she had to sacrifice things maybe she wanted to do because I was working for Habitat or something.”

Baldock feels a particular connection to youth sports, inspired in large part by his son’s legacy.

“He was an amazing example to the community,” he said. “You want to live to that example.”

He worries about the effects the coronavirus pandemic shutdown is having on young people who are missing big moments in their lives. He acknowledges that he has modified his activities due to the threat of the disease, especially to a cancer patient, but — typically — he is more concerned for the kids than he is for himself.

“For a man 79 years old, that’s not so hard as it is for them,” he said.

Baldock just recently flipped the calendar on his 79th year, and his birthday provided an indication of how much

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Jerry Baldock is a familiar sight in Sisters as the man behind the camera shooting all kinds of community events.

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students and parents in the community value what he has given over the years.

He has a tall stack of birthday cards noting, “that they missed what I was doing and they appreciate the moments I captured in their children’s lives. I was caught off guard when I got that stuff.”

Baldock was out on assignment for *The Nugget* a week ago, shooting at the

Sisters Street Festival and the Sisters Farmers Market.

“It was really fun doing what I did last Sunday,” he said. “I had a great time.”

And he plans on keeping on having a great time doing the work he loves, no matter what the obstacles.

With his trademark grin, he told his editor: “I don’t really see an end to what I do.”

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