

**Commentary...**

# Unfathomable losses across our beloved state

By Carol Statton  
Columnist

Unfathomable.

That is the word that continues to describe all that has and is happening within our beloved state. As I continue to read updates and pray for all who have been affected by the fires, I think back to my own special places. Many of us have created important memories and rituals in the areas affected; areas that also contained unique and beloved businesses and communities that became a part of us. So many lives have been affected and there has never been a more necessary time to respond.

How many of us here on the east side of the mountains always stopped at Rosie's in Mill City when traveling towards Salem? (According to the *Statesman Journal*, Rosie's is still standing). How many of us heading to Eugene waited to have breakfast until arriving in Vida, to eat at the Vida Café (which appears to have survived)? How many families made it their annual ritual to buy a new cherished ornament at Christmas Treasures or find their Christmas tree at the beautiful Spring Creek Holly Farm? How many

people simply looked forward to the drive west on any of these two main highways, because of *all* the beauty that encompassed every single mile. *Every single mile* held some of the most tremendous beauty one could hope to find.

Just recently, my husband and I traveled both of these highways while going to and coming home from the coast. Heading towards Mill City, and despite not even being hungry, we planned our stop at Rosie's. There was simply no question of if we would stop — we always stopped. And, we almost always ran in to someone we knew from our area. This day was no different and we saw our friends, the Weston family. We visited for a few minutes and then continued on. My husband turned off Highway 22 and drove towards Scio, en route to Lebanon so that I could visit the farm of my early childhood. The beauty of the land was captivating but we also noticed how dry all of the areas were. Uncharacteristic for the "wet" side of the mountain. We couldn't have imagined that many of the areas were about to sustain unfathomable losses.

So many people have lost their homes and

businesses; so many are still at risk of loss. Lives have been taken, precious belongings and irreplaceable keepsakes have been destroyed, people's sense of security has been shaken, and yet through the kindness of strangers, reborn on some level. We've been here before and no doubt will be again, but this time the level to which our state is suffering, along with all of our fellow states in the West, is unparalleled.

All of this is happening just as we remember another unparalleled attack, devastation and tragedy: 9/11. I remember thinking that there would never be anything equivalent to that in my lifetime; no equivalent threat, fear, challenge or loss. I truly believed that our country would never have to walk through, heal from or overcome anything even close to those events. And yet, although very different, here we are in 2020, walking through unparalleled times.

Do you remember the beginning of this year? Many of us were planning our vacations and celebrations, many had wedding dates secured with invitations sent out. So many people making so many plans... without any idea

that *everything* earthly was about to change. We could never have imagined a pandemic shutting down our country and taking so many lives throughout the world; we could never have believed that unresolved racial tension would catastrophically worsen and send some into a state of violence the likes of which we couldn't believe still possible... and then, the fires came. All of these events are still impacting and threatening life as we know it.

*However...* there is so much more happening within it all. And just like 9/11, the darkness will only be parted by the light of the human spirit responding to the needs of others. God designed us to respond, to reach out from the depth of our spirit to take care of one another, to right the wrongs, to heal the wounds, to meet the needs of all who are suffering. We are capable of being a light that will pierce through even the darkest of times. God's light, hands and heart... responding where needed and without thought to how we may or may not feel qualified. We are all qualified to respond; we are all qualified to be the love that provides a healing balm to any wound, no

matter how deep.

We must remember what we have walked through, we must remember the lessons and examples, we must treasure the special places and people, while striving to rebuild when all seems lost. We must go on while helping others to go on. We must meet the needs of those who have lost so much... we must be the light in this seemingly impenetrable darkness. It is only when coming together that we will find our way through the unfathomable... when the human spirit can meet unparalleled needs through response, compassion, kindness and selflessness. It is our mindful response that creates hope even in the worst of times and defines us most clearly. I pray that at times such as this, we remember enough to compel us to do all that we can do, for others.

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## 2020 Sisters Artist Studio Tour



### Celebrate the Arts in Sisters, September 26-27, 10-4

Take a self-guided tour to meet 36 artists, up close and personal, explore their studios, learn about their work, and buy art you can't live without. This is a rare chance to visit artists in their own private work environments. Using masks, hand sanitizing, and social distancing, you can experience the beauty and raw energy of the arts in Sisters Country. This event is in accordance with state and county health guidelines. Here is a roster of our artists for 2020:

- Mel Archer:** Glass Art
- J. Chester Armstrong:** Wood Sculpture
- Len Babb:** Oil, Ink, Watercolor, Sculpture
- Kay Baker:** Oil, Pastel
- Paul Alan Bennett:** Gouache, Watercolor, Printmaking
- Clarke Berryman:** Oil
- Art Blumenkron:** Furniture, Wood Art
- JoAnn Burgess:** Pastel
- Kim Chavez:** Bronze Sculpture
- Gary Cooley:** Sculpture, Oil, Watercolor, Acrylic
- Scott Cordner:** Landscape Photography
- Mitch & Michelle Deaderick:** Ceramic Art
- Terri Dill-Simpson:** Watercolor
- Janice Druian:** Oil
- Sandy Dutko:** Oil, Acrylic, Mixed Media
- Marianne Fellner:** Ceramic Sculpture
- Stephen Gasior:** Charcoal Portrait
- Winnie Givot:** Watercolor

- Jennifer Hartwig:** Scratchboard
- Jim Horsley:** Oil
- David Hough:** Pottery
- Bill Hunt:** Wood Duck Sculpture
- Anne Hunter:** Ceramic Sculpture
- June Jaeger:** Textile Art
- Steve Mathews:** Illustrator, Painter
- Scott McAllister:** Watercolor, Pastel
- Sandi Melchiori:** Acrylic
- Danae Miller:** Sculpture, Printmaking
- Mary Moore:** Clay Art
- Chris Nelson:** Oil, Acrylic
- Linda Peck:** Metal Solar Yard Art
- Kelley Salber:** Book Art
- Kaia Sieffert:** Jewelry
- Terry Solini:** Acrylic
- Jean Wells:** Textile Art
- Susie Zeitner:** Glass Art, Sculpture



**Studio Tour Guides** are available at art galleries, hotels, restaurants, the Chamber of Commerce and online at [sistersartsassociation.org/sistersstudiotour](http://sistersartsassociation.org/sistersstudiotour)

