

The Nugget

News and Opinion
from Sisters, Oregon

POSTAL CUSTOMER
PRE-SORTED STANDARD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Sisters, OR
Permit No. 15

Vol. XLIII No. 39

www.NuggetNews.com

Wednesday, September 23, 2020



Sisters got a reprieve from smoky conditions

PHOTO BY STEPHANIE CONNOR

Sisters got a welcome break from hazardous smoke conditions last weekend – including the hopeful sign of a symbolic rainbow.

Rainfall across much of Sisters Country helped to scour away smoke for the first time in many days last Friday, and Sisters enjoyed a couple of days of good air quality.

The return of blue skies and breathable air was welcomed by local folks, who took advantage of the change to get out for walks and bike

rides that had been impossible while air quality across the region was so hazardous that it ranked worst in the United States.

The smoke impact from fires across the western United States is not over, however. While rainfall helped firefighters make progress against wildfires that have burned a million

acres in Oregon and millions more in California, Washington, and other western states, fires continue to burn. By late Sunday, a smoky haze had crept back into Sisters Country and on Monday air quality was rated unhealthy for sensitive groups.

Conditions are expected to improve through the week,

and rain is in the forecast for Wednesday night, with showers persisting through Friday.

The impact from the massive, destructive wildfires on the west side of the Cascades will be felt for some time. Both Highway 22 and Highway 126 are expected

See CLOSURES on page 9

History museum is open to the public

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

Those who settled Sisters were a hardy bunch who overcame many obstacles to create lives for themselves and their families here in Central Oregon. The same could be said for the board of directors and volunteers at the Sisters History Museum who, amidst a pandemic and hazardous smoke conditions, persevered to offer a soft opening of the new museum on the corner of North Larch and East Cascade Avenue last week.

They sent out notices to their members and welcomed anyone who happened to stop by, of which there were several descendants of early Sisters families who just happened to be in town.

“We are very pleased with the reception from the public so far, as well as recent visitors with roots in the past,” said Karen Swank, board member.

The museum is now open to the public with winter hours: Fridays and Saturdays

See MUSEUM on page 22

City snapshot – new planner hired

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

• The City of Sisters has announced the hiring of Scott Woodford as the new community development director. Woodford comes to Sisters after seven years in Redmond as their senior planner. He has more than 20 years of land-use planning work and management of complex projects, including experience working in Colorado resort communities tackling unique issues they contend with, such as retention of community character, affordable housing,

traffic, lodging and managing growth — issues familiar to Sisters.

Woodford’s first major project as director is an update to the Comprehensive Plan that will begin this fall. His first day on the job was Monday, September 21. He can be reached at woodford@co.sisters.or.us.

• The City Hall ballot collection box next to the door will be open to accept ballots from October 14 through election day, November 3. Each day, the ballots deposited in the box are transferred

See CITY on page 21

Protecting conservation area

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

Sisters residents new and old may be unaware of the Trout Creek Conservation Area (TCCA), a special parcel of land adjacent to Tollgate and Sisters High School, which is owned and overseen by Sisters School District in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and the Deschutes Land Trust.

The TCCA encompasses 160 acres of juniper and pine forest directly behind the athletic fields at Sisters High School (SHS), a conservation easement that was formally established in 2003. The acreage provides a venue for hands-on



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

The Trout Creek Conservation Area is biologically sensitive and valuable for education. It is off limits to vehicles.

fieldwork for SHS students and is home to a variety of plant and animal species, according to SHS biology

teacher Rima Givot. Recent incidents and

See TROUT CREEK on page 8

Inside...

Letters/Weather	2	Artists Studio Tour	5	Fit for Sisters.....	8	Entertainment	11	Classifieds.....	19-21
Meetings	3	Obituaries	7	Announcements.....	10	Crossword	18	Real Estate	22-24