# **STA carves out new trail**

By Craig F. Eisenbeis Correspondent

of local trails.

Last week the Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) announced that they had just completed a new trail and invited me to check it out. This trail is so new that I could still see, in the fallen pine needles, the blue paint marks that were used to mark the trail's construction route. It was a great feeling to learn that the STA is continuing to expand on their already impressive inventory

Gary Guttormsen served as STA's host and guide, and we met at the new temporary trailhead for the Upper Whychus Creek Trail (see related story, page 3). The actual trail beginning is found across the Three Creek Lake Road from the (permanent) Whychus Trailhead, so we walked the road back to that official starting point.

STA's new trail, completed under the purview of the Forest Service, ascends Peterson Ridge to join up with the Peterson Ridge Trail (PRT) system, but starts out on completely flat ground. This is a narrow single track footpath only – no horses or cyclists, please; and it soon becomes apparent why it is unsuitable for any means other than foot travel.

This is a short connector trail, only about half a mile to the summit of the ridge; but the trail itself is rated as difficult, and for good reason. Because of the lava rock jumble that constitutes Peterson Ridge, there is no easy path up the rocky ridge. So, when the trail reaches the base of the ridge, it goes steeply up. Then, after a few short switchbacks, it gets really steep — almost handover-hand steep.

Because of Forest Service COVID restrictions, the STA volunteer crews were limited to a maximum of eight persons; and they were required to maintain social distancing. As a result, the project took a bit longer to complete than originally planned.

In fact, while the trail is substantially complete, more work is planned for the future. The plan for the very steep trail segment through the rocks includes a provision for rock stepping stones, but the rocks intended for the steps are too big to be handled by a single person. Therefore, the major rock work will have to be conducted in a post-COVID timeframe when workers can be close enough together to move them into place!

As a result, persons with mobility issues should not attempt this very difficult trail for the foreseeable future. Further, for safety reasons, this trail should not be attempted if there is

any significant snow or ice. There was a slight smattering of snow on our trip up the ridge last week, but it proved not to be a problem.

After passing through the rocks, the trail crests the ridge near a lone pine tree and joins up with the PRT-west at a marker post that wisely warns against equestrian or cycle traffic down the route we had just completed.

There is a rock promontory near the spot where the trails meet that makes a nice spot to lounge about and enjoy the vistas that take in all of Central Oregon's mountains and extend even beyond Grizzly Peak near Prineville. Just a few feet past the trail junction is a nice picnic table if you have planned for a more formal stop atop the ridge.

As nice as this trail is for providing another access to Peterson Ridge, the real advantage is the fact that it creates the opportunity for multiple loop trail options within the existing trail system. For example, continuing south of the ridge, the PRT connects with the Whychus Overlook Trail, which, in turn, can connect via the Whychus Draw Trail to the Whychus Creek Trail and a variety of other options.

It is hoped that this new option will alleviate congestion on the Whychus Creek Trail by offering alternative return routes that will reduce hiker encounters on the basic out-and-back route along the creek.

The Sisters Trails Alliance is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit community organization dedicated to outdoor recreation, education, and the planning, constructing and maintenance of walking, hiking, cycling, and equestrian trails in Sisters Country. Volunteer help and new members are always welcome.

For further information about STA or performing volunteer work on trails or other outdoor-related projects, contact the organization at 541-719-8822. Additional information can also be found on their website at www.sisterstrails.org or follow STA on Facebook at Sisters Trails Alliance.

To reach this new trail, simply head south on the Three Creek Lake Road (Elm Street in town) for a little over four miles. The trail begins on the east side of the road directly across from the Whychus Creek Trailhead parking lot on the right (west) side of the road. Due to construction from the Plainview Dam project, that parking lot is temporarily closed and a temporary lot is located about a hundred yards farther south.

## The Nugget Newspaper Crossword By Jacqueline E. Mathews, Tribune News Service

- 13 Franc replacers
- 16 Lawn mower brand
- 18 Surgery
- 21 \_\_ up; confess

- 27 Plot craftily
- 35 Kilmer of "Top
- 37 Like yummy

- 42 Portions
- 43 Acting awards
- 47 Cardiff language

- 52 High nav. rank
- 60 Suffix for assist or
- 61 Indiana-to-Ohio
- direction
- 62 Plato's "S"
- 64 Hurry
- 65 Hornet's home

### **DOWN**

- cry to a slowpoke
- reason why...

20

- 5 Tow along
- 15 Risqué
- 17 Former U.S.
- Senator Lott

- 23 Make \_\_; atone
- 26 Fruitcake
- 32 Monty & Arsenio
- symptoms
- Gun"

- salami & rye
- blunder

- 48 Seldom seen

- 58 Concur
- annoy
- 63 Examination

### 1 " \_ move on!";

2 "\_\_ is not to

### **ACROSS**

- 1 Asian desert
- 9 Performances

- 20 As flat \_\_ pancake
- 24 Midafternoon
- container
- 29 Astuteness
- 33 Arthritis
- cinnamon rolls
- 38 Leaving 39 Place to buy
- 40 Faux \_\_\_; social
- 41 Soup implement
- 45 Male feline 46 Connecting word
- 51 lowa's state tree
- 55 Cabinetmaker
- \_ beans; chocolaty pods
- 29 Zinfandel or Chenin Blanc

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3 Panting

5 Male bee

flush

14 Tempests

22 Very small

4 Charged atom

7 Part of a royal

8 Whirling about

9 Be present at

10 Penny or quarter

12 Family members

19 Wrong; haywire

said nothing

27 Clipper or tanker

\_\_ one's tongue;

11 \_\_ on; trampled

6 Ice Cube's music

- 30 Engage in price gouging
- 31 Island nation near Sicily
- 33 Whale groups 34 Feel poorly
- 36 Shopper's paper
- 38 Plant tender

## Last Week's Puzzle Solved —

58

62



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- 39 Water barriers
- 41 Cyclist Armstrong
- 42 Lively dances
- 44 Rug 45 Earl Grey
- product 47 Value

48 "Take a hike!"

- 49 Walking stick 50 Circle portions
- 53 Truman & Obama: abbr.
- 54 Veal or venison
- 56 Fraternity letter 57 Suffix for baron
- or lion 59 Martini ingredient

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