

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



PHOTO BY CODY RHEAULT

A bonfire lit up the slopes during Hoodoo's annual celebration of the spirit of winter.

Winter Carnival celebrates season

Hoodoo's premiere annual event kicked off on Saturday, February 8, amid winter's fury, but that didn't deter crowds.

Festivities began at 9 a.m. where families participated in a number of activities ranging from face-painting, pie-eating contests, axe throwing, tubing, and the famous Dummy Downhill contest.

For those seeking the pleasures of the mountain, skiers and boarders enjoyed a fresh powder day after the previous night's and early morning snowfall.

Jean Wells Keenan honored with award

Jean Wells Keenan is renowned in Sisters as an artist, a quilter, an entrepreneur and savvy businesswoman — and the founder of the Sisters Outdoor Quilt Show (SOQS). At heart, she is a teacher and mentor, wife, mother and grandmother. Last Wednesday night, she added the title Recipient of the Eighth Annual Ben Westlund Memorial Award.

Jean believes that 'If you can dream it, you can do it.' Jean's leadership has inspired the SOQS to expand its vision from a local event to an international attraction. An author of 30 books, Jean is widely recognized in this country and around the world.

Shooting is major forest recreation activity

Recreational target shooting is an increasingly popular activity on the Deschutes National Forest. That popularity has an impact on local residents who are not happy hearing frequent gunfire.

Shooting is allowed across the Sisters Ranger District, except within 150 yards of residences or developed campgrounds and across roads. The Forest Service does not maintain shooting ranges or even recommend specific shooting areas — but it has identified numerous areas as suitable for safe, responsible shooting.

A good backstop is the top criteria for a safe shooting environment, District Ranger Ian Reid told *The Nugget*.

New Sisters development can move forward

The road is cleared for development of a six-acre parcel of land located behind Bi-Mart at the west end of Sisters, though such development has raised concerns among local residents about the impact on Sisters' character and quality of life.

With a unanimous vote of 5-0 following a public hearing last Thursday, February 20, the Sisters Planning Commission approved the 5.911-acre Master Planned Development (MPD) for the proposed Threewind project. Two commissioners were not in attendance.

The proposed development includes up to 28,000 square feet of commercial building area, up to 28,000 square feet of ground-floor multi-family building area, a public street, and associated site improvements.

Chamber, City negotiate future marketing funding

City of Sisters and Sisters Area Chamber of Commerce are plotting a course into the future for marketing Sisters as a tourist destination.

The contract between the City and the Chamber is expiring June 30, 2020. Negotiations have begun to craft a new visitor information and marketing contract with the Chamber serving as the destination marketing organization (DMO) and Sisters Country Visitors Bureau.

Limited wilderness entry starts this spring

Beginning this May, the Deschutes and Willamette national forests will implement the limited-entry permit system for day and overnight use in the Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Washington, and Three Sisters wildernesses. Permits will be available at www.Recreation.gov beginning April 7.

Outlaws swimmer is state champion

Senior Lydia Bartlett capped a stellar high school career in her final event at the OSAA 4A/3A/2A/1A state swimming championships in record-breaking fashion.

Bartlett led wire-to-wire in the 500-yard freestyle and set a new 4A/3A/2A/1A state meet record in the process with a time of 4:58.58, breaking the previous record of 4:59.12 set in 2015 by Lucie Davis of Sweet Home.

Making the effort even more impressive is that Bartlett was never challenged and won by nearly 22 seconds.

Attendance in focus for Sisters students

Sisters School District is implementing an initiative called "Strive for 95" this year to encourage students to have no more than two absences a quarter, which equates to eight total in a school year to achieve a 95 percent attendance rate.

Work started on the goal from the beginning of the school year, with a number of incentives and initiatives put in place to help encourage good attendance and draw attention to its importance.

Local filmmakers win movie awards

In 2019 Nathan and Emily Woodworth, both award-winning actors and writers, finished crafting a short film that honored absurd ideas and themes that were hugely influenced by Monty Python. The brother-sister team from Sisters recently won three awards for their surreal comedy, "The Purse: A Dream In Two Acts," from Maverick Movie Awards, one of the most widely respected film competitions in the world.

MARCH

Contract will give Sisters more deputies

More deputies will patrol Sisters under a contract that is currently awaiting approval by Sisters City Council.

In a workshop on February 26, council members weighed two contract options — one that would provide for a dedicated Sisters lieutenant and four deputies and one that would provide for a lieutenant and three deputies. The consensus was to go with the three-deputy option for an annual contract cost of \$771,200. The current contract costs the City \$661,000. Going with four deputies would cost \$852,300.



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