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Checking in on emotional wellness of youth

By Charlie Kanzig
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Everyone has been impacted in some way over the past year as a result of COVID-19 and much has been written about the challenges in regard to emotional well-being among school aged-children, whose “normal” lives have been taken on a wild ride.

From school closures to the shutdown of activities, from the shortage of social opportunities to being cooped up at home, young people have been asked to adapt in unprecedented ways.

For some these difficulties have taken a significant toll leading to feelings

See **YOUTH** on page 15



Sisters cross-country skiers took advantage of a nice dump of snow to get out on the streets.

PHOTO BY BILL BARTLETT

Sisters improves from ‘Extreme’ to ‘High Risk’

As of Friday, February 12, indoor dining and other activities returned to Sisters, as Deschutes County moved from the “Extreme Risk” category for COVID-19 spread to the “High Risk” category.

Governor Kate Brown announced Tuesday, February 9, that 12 counties improved in risk level, with 10 improving from “Extreme Risk” for the first time since November, effective Friday, February 12.

County risk levels under the state’s public-health framework aim to reduce transmission and protect Oregonians from COVID-19. The framework uses four different risk levels for counties

See **‘HIGH RISK’** on page 21

Wilderness-permit program to move ahead

Those venturing into the Sisters Country wilderness may need to secure a permit as a long-delayed program goes into effect this summer.

The Deschutes and Willamette National Forests announced last week that the two forests will move forward with implementing the Central Cascades Wilderness Permit System this year. The initial implementation of the permit system was delayed last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beginning Friday, May 28 and ending on Friday, September 24, day-use permits will be required for 19 out of 79 trails in the Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Washington, and Three Sisters wilderness areas. During the same period, overnight-use permits will be required for all trails in those same three

wilderness areas. There are some exceptions for Pacific Crest Trail hikers, volunteers, and hunters.

According to the Forest Service, the permitting system is being implemented to manage the impact of increased wilderness traffic, which has exploded in recent years. According to the Forest Service — and many wilderness adventurers — human impacts are significantly degrading the environment and the experience of the wilderness.

More information about the permits can be found at www.fs.usda.gov/detail/willamette/specialplaces/?cid=fseprd688355

Reservations for the permits will open at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at www.Recreation.gov.

See **PERMITS** on page 22

SHS football gets green light to play

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

Sisters High School football players, coaches and fans got a welcome message last Friday, when Governor Kate Brown announced that outdoor contact sports for the upcoming “fall” season

will be allowed for many teams in Oregon, including Sisters.

Not surprisingly, there are strings attached, including the need to offer on-site responsive testing for symptomatic individuals and close contacts, protocols in place for contact-tracing

purposes, and written waivers identifying health and safety risks, as well as a commitment to isolation and quarantine if exposed to COVID-19.

Schools, like Sisters, that have returned to in-person

See **FOOTBALL** on page 22



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Members of the Sisters High School football team practice in the snow last week prior to the news that they will be able to play in the upcoming season that officially begins February 22.

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