

The Nugget

News and Opinion
from Sisters, Oregon

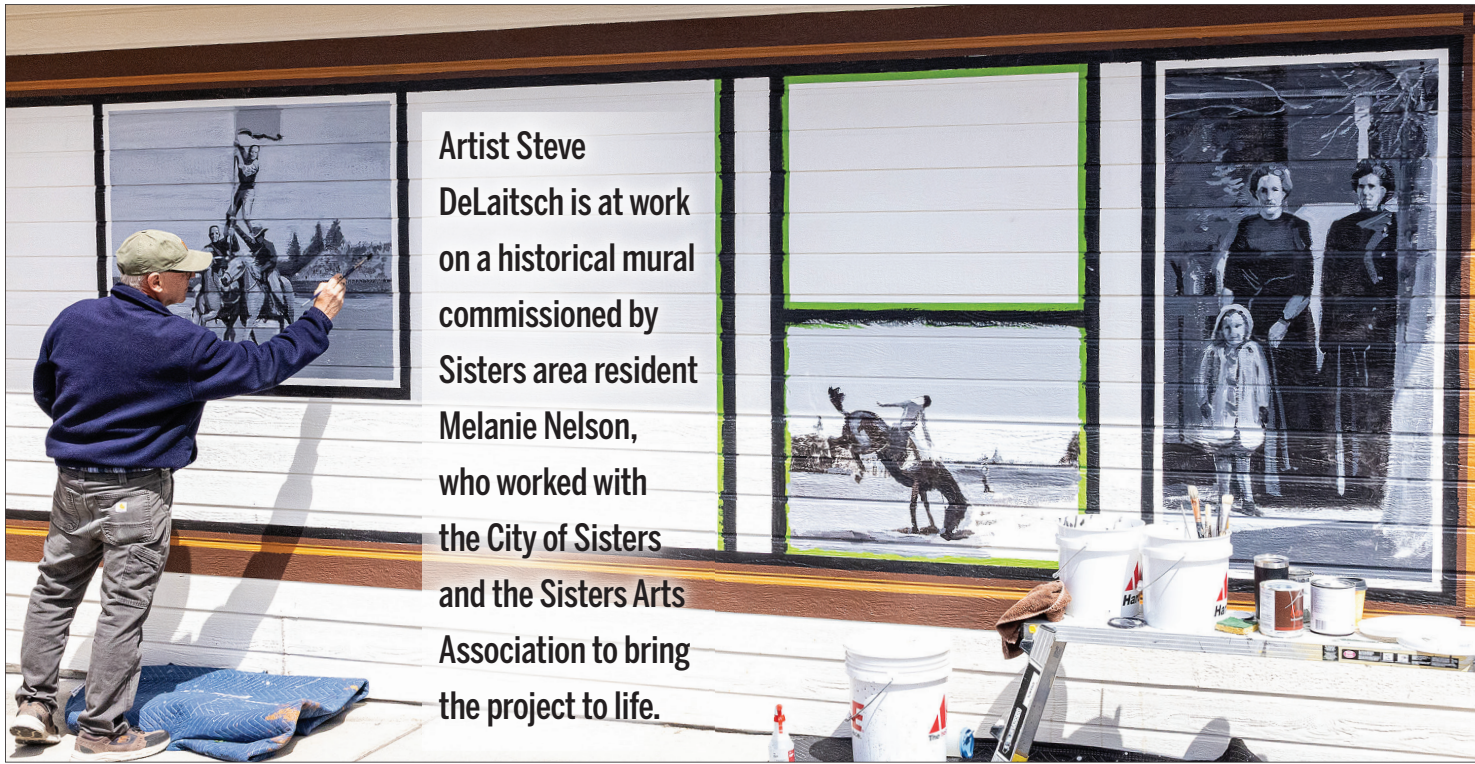
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Local woman donates historical mural



Artist Steve DeLaitch is at work on a historical mural commissioned by Sisters area resident Melanie Nelson, who worked with the City of Sisters and the Sisters Arts Association to bring the project to life.

PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

Sisters is celebrating the 75th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Sisters with a new historical mural on the South Fir Street side of the Habitat for Humanity Thrift Store.

Sisters resident Melanie Nelson contacted Minnesota muralist Steve DeLaitch and his assistant Scott Duffus for the project. Nelson formerly lived in Owatonna,

Minnesota, and worked with them both on previous mural projects.

Nelson has been coming to Black Butte Ranch over the last seven years and “fell in love with Sisters.”

“I decided to invest last September and found the perfect duplex. I am a happy homeowner,” Nelson told *The Nugget*.

She is also a happily married woman after meeting Oregon author Phillip Margolin on a blind date and

marrying him. He is a frequent presenter at Paulina Springs Books and is currently working on his 26th thriller, due out in March 2022.

When Nelson read in *The Nugget* about the 75th anniversary, she approached the City about the possibility of funding a mural depicting important moments in the history of Sisters. The City put her in touch with the Three Sisters Historical Society and Sisters History

Museum, keepers of historic photographs and stories. They, in turn, contacted the Sisters Arts Association, because the project aligned with one of their goals — to create a stronger public art program in Sisters. The SAA negotiated with Sisters Habitat for Humanity to place the mural on the side of their thrift store, which was originally the Leithauser Grocery Store.

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Voters approve school bond

By Jim Cornelius
Editor in Chief

There will be a new Sisters Elementary School in a new location in a couple of years — thanks to a resounding “Yes” vote from the Sisters community on Measure 9-141 in the May 18 election.

The passage of the levy with a tax rate of 93 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value will allow the creation of a \$33.8-million fund for construction of the new school. Construction of the school is the primary focus of the endeavor, but any funds left over could be allocated to renovations and upgrades on other district property. The levy approved by voters picks up from the retired bond that funded Sisters High School.

The new construction is being driven by increasing elementary school enrollment. Sisters Elementary School is currently at 106 percent of

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Habitat can build at higher density

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

Sisters Habitat for Humanity has won approval to build at greater density in a neighborhood at the west end of town.

The Sisters Planning Commission voted 4-2 to approve — with conditions — an application from Habitat for Humanity to make 10 lots from an existing six lots to accommodate attached or detached single-family houses in the Village Meadows subdivision.

The vote came at the end of a 2-1/2-hour hearing covering a number of issues, not necessarily relevant to this hearing, that the Planning

Commission can expect to be addressing more and more often as Sisters continues to grow within its existing Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

The property is located in the northwest section of Sisters, sitting south of West McKinney Butte Road and bordered by North Brooks Camp Road to the east and North Desert Rose Loop to the west. The property was originally approved as part of the entire Village Meadows Master Plan and Subdivision application in December 2005, which enabled construction of 30 single-family lots and 48 multi-family units.

See DENSITY on page 31

Drought worsens, raising fire concerns

By Bill Bartlett
Correspondent

You don’t have to be a hydrologist to know that we are in the midst of a drought, worsening by the week. A look at the snow cover on the mountains, streamflows in nearby rivers, and reservoir levels reveals tell-tale signs of what forest and fire district managers see as potential danger signs as the summer progresses.

Nearly 70 percent of Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties are in level D3 (extreme drought) as of May 13, according to the National Weather Service. Parts of southwestern Deschutes County are at the top level — D4 (exceptional drought). The problem is statewide and



PHOTO BY BILL BARTLETT

Water in the West is always a precious commodity. The region is facing serious drought, which impacts everything from fire danger to forest health and the price of hay.

the governor has already declared Klamath, Jackson, and Lake counties disaster areas.

The implications for stressed vegetation, crop

irrigation, and low streamflow negatively impacting fish habitat, are of deepening concern. Effects on wildlife

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