

Michele Hammer wraps up teaching career in Sisters

By Charlie Kanzig
Correspondent

When Michele Hammer started working for the Sisters School District in 2005, she couldn't really picture the varied positions she would hold over the next 16 years. Now, after officially retiring in June, she looks back with a feeling of satisfaction as an educator who served where needed, and as an advocate for students.

Hammer came to Sisters well equipped to handle the variety of roles she ultimately took on. After spending her youth in San Francisco, she attended the University of Puget Sound, where she earned a degree in American Studies/secondary education and followed up with law school in San Diego. The antitrust work Hammer did as an attorney did not hold her passion, so she turned to the love she held for "working with kids and being outside," leading her to enter a master's program at the University of Oregon in therapeutic recreation.

Though family obligations kept her from completing that degree, she had enough training and experience to be hired as a recreational therapist operating an animal therapy program and day camps in the Lake Oswego area, where she stayed for 10 years. Hammer spent another 10 years at a day-treatment facility, where she got her first experience in a classroom.

"I found that I really enjoyed working with kids in

an educational environment," she said, "so I went back to school once again, attending Concordia University during the evenings, and earned my master's degree in teaching in order to have the option of moving into the public school system."

“ I found that I really enjoyed working with kids in an educational environment. — Michele Hammer ”

Hammer had gotten a taste of Central Oregon earlier in her life after spending eight summers from 1974 to 1982 working at Camp Tamarack west of Sisters, and she wanted to reside in the area. She moved to Bend in 1998 and actually commuted to Portland for over five years.

"I would leave Bend at the crack of dawn on Monday mornings and return Friday evenings, while also working to complete my master's in teaching," she said.

An end to the crazy commuting schedule came in 2005 when Hammer, thanks to all of her experience and education, got hired in Sisters to develop the alternative education program for Sisters School District.

In the ensuing years, Hammer found herself in a variety of roles and also continued her own education.

"My jobs for the Sisters School District have been many and varied," she said.

In 10 years with the high school, Hammer served as the alternative education director and teacher, taught special education, worked as the leadership teacher, and held the titles of activities director and dean of students.

"And, in the midst of all that, I also completed my administrative license," she said.

Hammer moved to Sisters Middle School in 2015 where she taught U.S. History and held the position of dean of students. In 2017, she served as temporary principal for more than half the year when the principal had to step down. Hammer served outside the regular school day as well.

"I had the privilege of helping to coach the high school swim team with Isolde Hedemark and working with Bill Rexford to develop a girls lacrosse program in Sisters, which led to coaching the high school program for seven years," she said. "Those were activities I loved doing, along with putting on the Mr. SHS Pageants, helping students organize fundraisers, and other activities. I hold fond memories for all those things."

As someone who cared deeply about her fellow staff members and worked to



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

Michele Hammer spent the final 16 years of her career in education in Sisters, and she is now ready for some summer fun.

advocate for them, Hammer served as the president of the teacher's union for the past three years.

Hammer spent much of her long career working with young people who

faced particular hardships or challenges.

"I think the most memorable and satisfying moments are those where I am still

See HAMMER on page 16

WE TAKE YOUR VISION FROM DESIGN TO COMPLETION

541-549-0968
Custom Doors
Windows
Skylights
Millwork & Trim

541-588-6201
Window Blinds
Shades
Shutters

Call for an appointment today!
www.lakeviewmillworkssales.com
261 E. Sun Ranch Dr., Sisters
— CCB# 210187 —

Check Out THIS WEEK'S NUGGET INSERT!

RAY'S FOOD PLACE

Assorted Pork Chops
\$1.99 per lb.

Washington Fuji Apples
\$1.69 per lb.

Gold Peak Tea
2 for \$5, 52 oz. selected

Naked Gluten-Free Plant-Based Cookie Dough
\$4.99, 9.5 oz. selected

Large Sweet Cantaloupe
\$3.49 ea.

Chicken Drumsticks or Thighs, Value Pack
\$1.69 per lb.

Touch of Class Tours
www.touchofclasstours.com
connie@touchofclasstours.com

WINNEMUCCA, NV
AUGUST 13-15, 2021 | \$124 PPDO
Includes deluxe motorcoach transportation, 2 nights hotel, \$20 free slot play, \$15 food coupons.

SAN JUAN ISLAND CRUISE
AUG. 22-26, 2021
STARTING AT \$2,249 PPDO*
Includes 1 pre-night in Bellingham, 1 post-night, air, taxes, transfers, 4 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 dinner, guided island and wildlife tour.

GRAND CANYON
OCT. 2-6, 2021
STARTING AT \$1,999 PPDO*
Includes air, taxes, transfers, 2 nights Amtrak, 2 nights land, Hollywood-area tours, 2 breakfasts, 2 dinners.

CHRISTMAS SEASON IN BRANSON, MO
NOV. 3-10
STARTING AT \$2,349 PPDO*
8 days, 7 nights, includes air, taxes, transfers, 14 shows/14 meals

LEAVENWORTH AT CHRISTMAS
NOV. 29-DEC 1 | \$699 PPDO
Includes 2 nights, 2 dinners, 2 full breakfast buffets, and sleigh ride. Enjoy the Bavarian village shops and holiday lights and sounds.

PEARL HARBOR
DEC. 3-9, 2021
STARTING AT \$4,799 PPDO*
Commemorating the 80th anniversary, includes air, taxes, transfers, 7 days/6 nts., VIP admission to Pearl Harbor & special events, USS Missouri, USS Arizona, & much more! \$20 meal/beverage credit per person per day.
*subject to air availability

Connie Boyle
541-508-1500
Box 615 Sisters, OR 97759

SISTERS FARMERS MARKET
BY SEED TO TABLE

FIR STREET PARK
SUNDAYS 11-2PM
JUNE 6-OCTOBER 3

LIVE MUSIC
KIDS ACTIVITIES
LOCAL PRODUCE
ARTISANAL GOODS

SNAP/EBT ACCEPTED

WWW.SISTERSFARMERSMARKET.COM

SUPPORTED BY

BLACK BUTTE REALTY GROUP