

COMMUNITY: Residents and organizations stepped up to help

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was the scene of a “paint-in” last Friday morning with about 40 adults and children gathering to create 75 signs thanking the firefighters and support personnel on the Grandview Fire. Citizens4Community organized the event and artist Kit Stafford rounded up the art supplies and provided guidance for the effort on Friday. Superintendent Curtis Scholl and Sisters School District provided the venue. Volunteers posted the signs throughout Sisters and the surrounding area where fire personnel would see them.

A group of eight girls aged 8 to 12 from Sisters Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had planned a bike ride for Friday. When they heard about the sign-making project, they decided to ride their bikes to the high school and participate.

Cheryl Scheer, Yvonne Suckow, and Ben Cogdill were the adults riding with the girls. The bikers were: Kate Cogdill, Elin and Kinley Faldmo, Fiora Dunham, cousins Paige and Campbell Lydell, Riley Davis, and Wyatt Keifer.

Two stories to come out of this fire event began with negative situations, but ended with remarkable acts of caring and generosity:

Glen Corbett, longtime resident of Camp Sherman, has been a summer fire lookout since 1990, serving in Central Oregon lookouts atop Henkle Butte, Black Butte, Wolf Mountain, Green Ridge, and Lava Butte. After many years, she retired but returned this summer to Henkle Butte, which is located north of Sisters, off Wilt Road.

A day after the Grandview Fire erupted on July 11, Corbett left her post and went home for the night. Two teenage boys from the surrounding neighborhood climbed Henkle Butte for a view of the fire.

Trespassing over the second story railing of the lookout and through the locked trap door, they climbed to the roof.

While on the deck, they apparently stole a pair of West Marine binoculars, purchased by Corbett for her work. The boys were spotted by two radio techs who had come up to the butte to install a communication system for the Grandview Fire personnel so they can communicate with dispatch and each other.

The techs yelled at the boys to get off the roof, and as they left, the techs noticed that one young man had a pair of distinctive blue West Marine binoculars. In response to a question about where they lived, the boys pointed off to the community below Henkle lookout. The next morning, another lookout reported to work, only to discover the binoculars were missing. Having no binoculars puts a fire lookout at a distinct disadvantage for spotting new wildfires.

But there was a happy ending. A family in the adjacent neighborhood heard about the missing binoculars, went into Bend REI, bought a new pair of the exact same binoculars, and were waiting for Corbett to arrive at the butte the next morning to present them to her.

The thieves should know that Corbett reported the theft to Lt. Chad Davis, of the Sisters Deschutes County Sheriff’s substation. She doesn’t intend to press charges because she “doesn’t want the boys to have a record.” She would appreciate a face-to-face meeting with the boys so they could admit what they did was wrong and apologize for their actions. She would also love to have the binoculars returned. She is asking everyone to keep their eyes open for a pair of blue binoculars.

Former fire lookout and U.S. Forest Service employee

Maret Pajutee shared her thoughts about the theft.

“Lookouts keep an eye out for you and your home,” she said. “Stealing the tools of those who protect your home is especially wrong.”

The owner of Chops Bistro, Tracy Syanovitz, had a special opportunity last week to show her appreciation for the work being done to protect Sisters from the Grandview Fire.

On Tuesday evening, July 13, Syanovitz and her employees were just finishing up for the night around 9 p.m. Her chef, Troi Frankheizer, made a quick trip to the Chevron station at about the time a group of 22 firefighters were attempting to buy dinner at McDonald’s, the only restaurant open at that time. The crew had just come off a 15-hour shift.

They were not able to get food, so Frankheizer called Syanovitz to see if she could bring some firefighters to have dinner. The reply was a resounding yes.

The chef returned and opened the kitchen. Employee Jade Kennedy stopped her cleaning and created 22 Caesar salads. She and server Brian Goly, Syanovitz, and her friend Mary served the firefighters 22 flat iron steak dinners, which can be ready in



PHOTO COURTESY GLEN CORBETT

Former Forest Service employee Rod Bonaker and longtime fire lookout Glen Corbett, with her blue West Marine binoculars, scan the forest.

10 minutes.

“Those guys were exhausted and so appreciative of the dinner,” Syanovitz said. “Call me naïve but I thought everyone would do what we did.”

Due to limited staff because of the pandemic closure, Chops has had to limit their hours and days of operation. They are now fully staffed and open six nights a week, being closed on

Wednesday. The lounge opens at 4:30 p.m. and the restaurant at 5 p.m., with the last reservation taken for 8 p.m.

Syanovitz said her phone hasn’t stopped ringing with calls thanking her, making reservations, with families of firefighters saying they will come for dinner after the fire season. She has also received copious emails and Facebook posts. Oregon Senator Betsy Johnson gave her a donation.

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