



## Of a certain AGE

Sue Stafford  
Columnist

### The benefits of sharing

There is a current public service announcement being shown on TV, sponsored by the nonprofit program Home Share Oregon whose mission is “to prevent housing instability, foreclosure, and homelessness through home sharing.”

Services include rental listing service, roommate matching, secure message and background screens, and lease generator and rent-payment processing. For a single, older man or woman, or a couple, with a more than big enough house, house sharing could provide a great way to avoid loneliness and social isolation, create a new friendship, and provide a new stream of income.

Such an arrangement could allow an older resident to stay in their home longer by having a roommate who could help with chores and maintenance and ensure that the homeowner is not alone in case of an emergency.

For the person seeking a place to live, they can move into an established home, possibly not needing a lot of furniture and other household accoutrements, while paying less than full rent for an apartment.

Over the years, I have had a variety of family and friends live with me for various lengths of time and it has always

been a positive experience. While living in Bellevue, Washington, I had a woman from Argentina live with me for over a year. We met in a training program in California, and she was working on her master’s degree, getting her Green Card, and hoping to stay in the U.S. That was a fun time and resulted in a longtime friendship. I had a great roommate to talk and laugh with and a knowledgeable, multilingual traveling companion who broadened my world by sharing her culture with me.

By opening your home to someone you are compatible with, you can have someone to share the housekeeping and maintenance chores while receiving additional income. I know I worked on smoothing some of my own rough edges with someone else to bump up against.

With the continuing shortage of affordable housing in Central Oregon, and specifically in Sisters, if you have room, you might consider sharing your home with someone facing housing insecurity, social isolation, foreclosure, or an uncertain tomorrow.

In our changing world, with rising prices and shortages of all kinds, perhaps returning to a model of shared housing, which is common in many other countries, makes a lot of sense, offering numerous benefits to all involved.

Home Share Oregon provides assistance with creating a home-sharing profile, has tools for creating alternative rental agreements, and can help match compatible homeowners and renters/roommates. They can also provide a certain level of security not available with running an ad in the classifieds.

For more information, go to the Home Sharing Oregon’s website, [www.homeshareoregon.org](http://www.homeshareoregon.org).

# Sisters moves to protect heritage trees

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

A little housekeeping in Sisters’ codes will provide some extra protection for Sisters’ most prized trees.

On recommendations from the Urban Forestry Board and the Planning Commission, Sisters City Council unanimously voted to approve amendments to ordinances of the Sisters development code and municipal code pertaining to urban forestry and protections for heritage trees.

Sections in the development code having to do with the Urban Forestry Board and public trees were updated and moved to the municipal code, adding protection for heritage trees. The benefit of shifting the language out of the development code to the municipal code is that tree removal on public property and public rights of way will become enforceable both during and outside of land-use applications and proceedings. The move will provide greater clarity to staff and members of the public.

Sisters’ public works director will be responsible for management of the City’s public trees and oversight of the Urban Forestry Board, rather than the Community Development Director.

The change will not impact the City’s ability to comply with the Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree City requirement (Sisters has been a Tree City for 14 years) relating to review of existing trees on private property during development and street trees associated with development.

A heritage tree has been defined as a tree that, because of its age, size, type, historical association, and/or horticultural value, is of special importance to the city.

Some of the key points related to heritage trees include:

- The preservation of



PHOTO BY SUE STAFFORD

Sisters is known for its trees. The City of Sisters is trying to shore up its codes to make sure they’re protected.

mature trees within the city is a preferred alternative to removal and replanting. Mature trees reduce air and water pollution, provide summer shade and wind breaks, and require less water than establishing new landscaping plants.

- The Public Works director, Urban Forestry Board, City Council, or any individual or group of individuals interested in identifying and preserving heritage trees

may nominate any public tree for heritage status. The Urban Forestry Board will review all nominations and may recommend to the City Council that any nominated tree be designated as a heritage tree. They will consider certain criteria in determining whether to recommend any particular tree for heritage designation.

- The City will maintain an inventory of all heritage trees as part of the Urban Forest Management Plan.



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