

# The Nugget

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## Don't expect a drought-buster this winter

By Ron Thorkildson  
Correspondent

Last summer's record-setting heat was adversely impactful here in the western U.S., leading to numerous wildfires that burned well into the fall. The heat worsened already severe drought conditions in our region.

Many residents are hoping for the upcoming winter season to produce generous amounts of precipitation and cool temperatures. Is this likely to happen? Is it even in the cards?

The winter of 2021-22 is forecasted to feature the second of back-to-back La Niñas (though weaker than that of last year). Most of the prognosticators foresee a winter similar to last year's.

Temperatures should average about normal to slightly below, with precipitation levels modestly above normal. But even if the rain/snowfall is heavier than expected, it cannot possibly result in a drought-buster. That is not in the cards.

Of the various cyclical climatic phenomena that occur over the globe, the El Niño Southern Oscillation



PHOTO BY SUE STRATER

New snow is on the Sisters. How much will they get this winter?

(ENSO) remains the most useful for forecasting weather on a seasonal time scale. The ENSO describes the condition of the tropical

Pacific Ocean with regard to water temperature and the strength of surface winds, and it comes in one of three phases. When the

ocean is sufficiently warm, an El Niño is said to exist; when cool, a La Niña is in

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## SHS welcomes new teachers

By Charlie Kanzig  
Correspondent

It's a year of change at Sisters High School (SHS), with the addition of six new certified staff members along with a new principal.

Steve Stancliff, most recently the principal at Pilot Butte Middle School in Bend, took over the helm at SHS this fall, replacing longtime principal Joe Hosang who is doing administrative work at the District office.

Stancliff welcomes six new teachers to the building for the 2021-22 school year.

Liz DeFranco is working as one of two counselors for SHS. A graduate of Oregon State University's Master of Counseling program, DeFranco spent two years overseas in Vietnam (2018-2020) and last year worked for Oregon Online Schools.

"I love Central Oregon and it feels wonderful to be part of a community

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## St. Charles to require vaccination for visitors

Starting next week, all visitors to St. Charles Health System hospitals or clinics will have to be fully vaccinated.

Effective October 18, visitors will only be allowed if they provide acceptable proof that they are fully vaccinated. On October 18, health care workers are also required to be fully vaccinated by the state of Oregon.

"We know what an important role visitors and support persons play in a patient's healing process," said Dr. Jeff Absalon, the health system's chief physician executive. "However, throughout this pandemic, safety has been

our top priority. With this as our guide, we have had to make changes to our visitor policy to keep our patients, caregivers, and others safe."

A person is considered fully vaccinated if at least two weeks have passed since they received their second dose of a two-dose series (Pfizer or Moderna) or a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson).

Acceptable proof of vaccination is:

- A COVID-19 vaccination record card.
- A copy or digital picture of the vaccination record card.
- A printout from the

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## Sisters homes damaged by fires

Two separate incidents last week left homes in Sisters damaged by fire.

Working smoke alarms alerted a homeowner Tuesday afternoon, October 5, of smoke and sparks shooting out of the exterior of his home on Fox Ridge Circle north of town. Law enforcement and the homeowner attempted to extinguish the fire while the fire department responded.

When firefighters arrived on scene, smoke and flames were visible from under the house, on the first floor near an electrical meter, on an overhanging roof above the entry, and slowly pushing out of the attic space. A total of 32 firefighters responded from Sisters-Camp Sherman, Black Butte Ranch, Cloverdale, and Alfalfa Fire



PHOTO COURTESY SISTERS-CAMP SHERMAN RFPD

A fire at a home north of Sisters caused significant damage. It was one of two structure fires Sisters firefighters battled last week.

Districts. They worked on both the exterior and interior of the home to extinguish the fire.

All occupants and two cats were safely evacuated.

The homeowner stated that a new hot water heater had been installed recently, however a cause has not

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