

# The Nugget

News and Opinion  
from Sisters, Oregon

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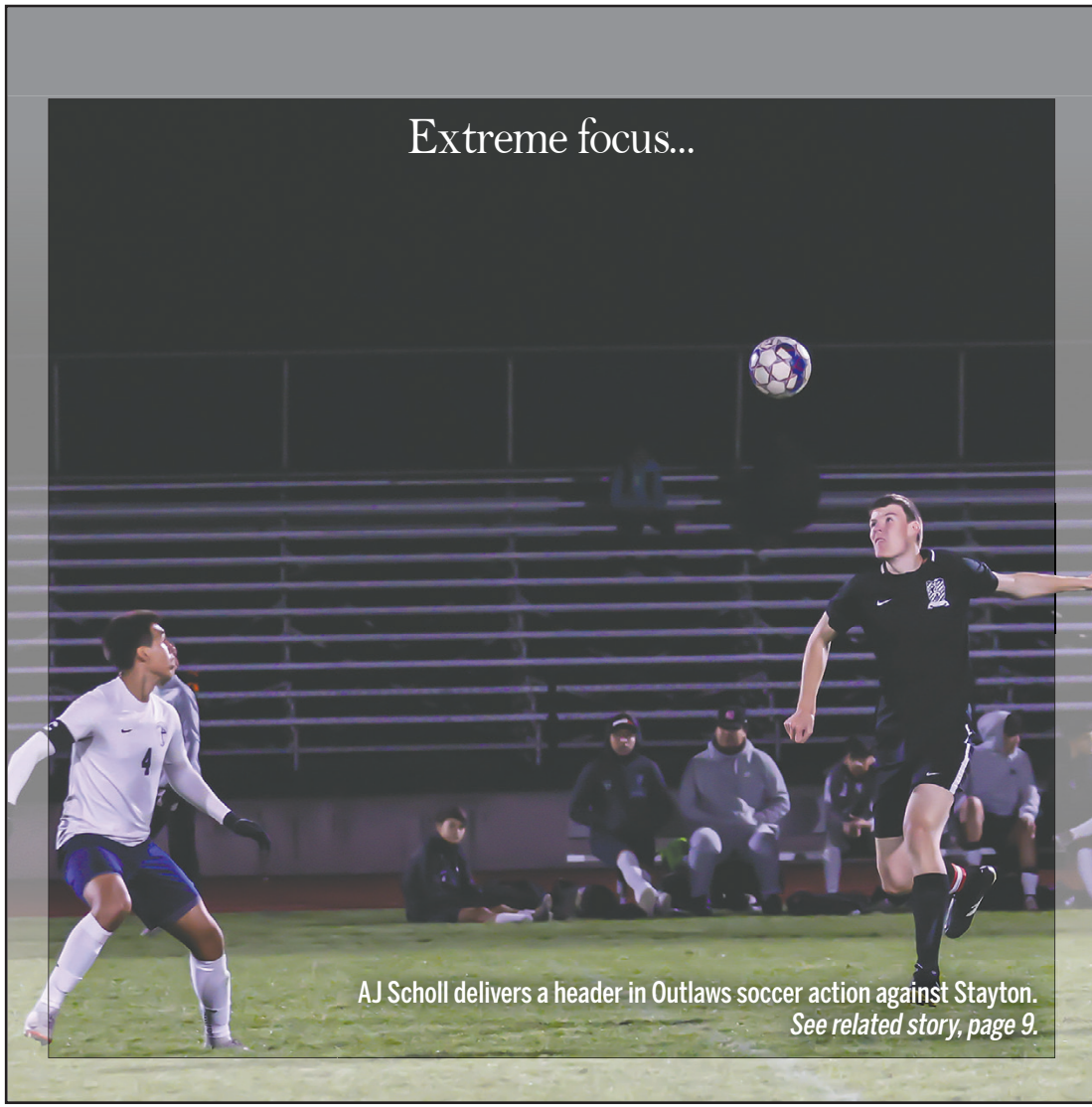
## SPRD seeks more staff for preschool

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

The rooms at Sisters Park and Recreation District (SPRD) preschool are cheerfully bright, with mini tables and chairs for the pint-sized students. Everywhere is evidence of the fun, yet important, learning and creating that takes place in these rooms every weekday. The only thing missing? Two and a half more teachers.

Valerie Selig and Carissa Gascon, both well-qualified, experienced, and dedicated teachers who love their jobs, are each responsible for up to

See **PRESCHOOL** on page 22



Extreme focus...

AJ Scholl delivers a header in Outlaws soccer action against Stayton.  
See related story, page 9.

PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

## Sisters rental market is very tight

By Bill Bartlett  
Correspondent

Stories about the housing shortage in Sisters, often reported as a crisis, appear regularly on these pages. The focus is usually on the lack of so-called affordable inventory and escalating prices of single family homes, which is pricing nearly all entry-level workers out of the market.

Little attention is given to the rental market, in particular the lack of affordable apartments. There are literally none in the traditional sense — rents equal to 30 percent of living wage.

See **RENTAL** on page 18

## Housing at forefront of government's minds

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

One thing everyone could agree on at last week's joint Sisters City Council/Deschutes County Board of Commissioners meeting, is that houselessness in Deschutes County is increasing. One of the major factors in that rise is the increasingly high cost of housing.

Colleen Thomas of Deschutes County Health Services, the County's Houselessness Coordinator, presented to the joint meeting what she and Katy DeVito are doing to meet the houseless population where they are, whether that is in camps out in the forest, in shelters, along city streets, or at the local libraries, where they are able to access the internet. Their goal is to have direct outreach, face-to-face, to provide food benefits, propane, mental health services, case management,

and connections to necessary services. With the direct contact, they are better able to assess who is without housing and what their needs are.

Two people to cover all of Deschutes County presents a herculean task that requires more personnel and monetary resources. For now, Thomas and DeVito are visiting homeless camps from Sisters to LaPine as well as managing the isolation motel established to house homeless COVID-19 patients.

In theory, they are supposed to spend one day each week in the Sisters area, where a majority of those experiencing houselessness live within five miles of Sisters, mainly out in the Deschutes National Forest. During three days in September, they attempted to do a survey of all the camps and make some determinations. They were

See **HOUSING** on page 23

## Controlling speed in a neighborhood

By Sue Stafford  
Correspondent

Traffic volume and speed are increasing all over town, especially in the downtown core. In an attempt to bypass that bottleneck, residents and tourists alike are using neighborhood streets as alternative routes, especially on Jefferson, Washington, and Creekside Drive. Instead of traveling at the posted speed of 25 mph, drivers often far exceed that limit.

The residents in the Timber Creek and Creekside neighborhoods will tell you that, now that the bridge on Creekside Drive over Whychus Creek has been discovered, any number of vehicles, many inappropriate for a narrow neighborhood street, use that route to cut through from town to Highway 126, avoiding the intersection at Highway 20 and Locust Street.

In the last traffic safety study conducted by the City, data substantiated the concerns of the surrounding



PHOTO BY SUE STAFFORD

New speed humps have been installed in the Creekside neighborhood to slow down traffic using the bridge as an alternate route to and from Highway 126.

neighbors: Too much traffic, traveling too fast. The Timber Creek homeowner's association voted to install three speed "humps" on their private Timber Creek Drive, which has signage indicating it is private and not for through-traffic use. People ignore the sign, so the homeowners decided to install the humps to hopefully

discourage cut-throughs.

The City agreed to install two speed humps on either end of the Creekside Drive bridge. All five humps were installed last week.

Public Works Director Paul Bertagna indicated that the bridge humps are 10-mile-an-hour humps and

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