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Young Life hosts tree hunting expedition

— By Bill Bartlett —

All over town you can spot cars and trucks with trees strapped to the roof or truck bed, fresh from being hunted and cut in the woods. This has been a Sisters tradition for as long as there has been a Sisters — even before. By now folks know you need a \$5 permit to harvest a tree on public lands. You can save as much as \$170 against the current Lowe's or Home Depot price for a 12-foot fir.

Trekking into the forest to find that perfect tree is a family affair with rewards greater than the tree itself. Young Life of Sisters has made it even easier with some added benefits. Last weekend from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and this weekend (December 4 and 5) at the same time, the 80-year-old organization allows visitors to come to Kalamataca Ranch on McAllister Road, the first left past the entrance to Black Butte Ranch heading westbound.

Kalamataca is not a tree farm. It is, however, an 80-acre spread full of natural Christmas trees. Once your trophy is bagged, you are treated to hot cocoa and the chance to sit around a fire roasting marshmallows. There is also homemade chili with corn bread, including gluten-free options.

Young Life has made it impossibly easy. Even if you don't have a saw or rope, they will supply it. They issue a no-charge permit in exchange for a simple waiver. The yellow-colored permit attaches to the tree as evidence that you didn't poach it. They'll even cut the tree for you and bring it back to

the car park if navigating the terrain is a bit much. That's a hard deal to pass up.

While there you can make your own greenery swags or centerpieces. At the craft table make a peanut butter or pinecone bird feeder.

What Young life really wants you to do is have fun, the old fashioned way.

There's a good chance you've heard about Young Life, or at least the name. In over 100 countries the organization has interacted with two million lives. 348,000 kids are involved weekly in the founder's mission to introduce adolescents to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith.

They have multiple programs for middle (WyldLife) and high school (Young Life) students and teen moms. Best known are their summer camps. There is the week-long family camp at Trails West in Colorado and regionally, Washington Family Ranch in Antelope, Oregon. (For more information about Young Life programs in Sisters, call Shannon Miller at 206-356-0972.)

When *The Nugget* went to Kalamataca — whose name is derived from combining the initials of the owners, Kevin and Laurie Adams and their children Matt, Tiffany and Christopher — we were greeted by families from as far as Prineville, Powell Butte, and Bend. We trailed the Oak family — mom and dad, Rena and Johnny, Halle and Rylan, 12 and Cleo, 9.

They typified the many enthusiastic adventurers as we headed up the ridge in



Youth gathered round a firepit to roast marshmallows.

PHOTO BY BILL BARTLETT

Sisters Apothecary

Since she opened her doors in June, Sheree Vance has been gratified at the public response to Sisters Apothecary.

"I love it that it's everybody's favorite new store," she said.

And it's no wonder. Sheree curates her offerings carefully, and she's knowledgeable and enthusiastic about every hand-picked product in the store — from popular cocktail infusions to U.S. Apothecary and Dani lines of skincare products, to winter candles.

The men's section is continually growing, and there's an expanding selection of Ayurvedic and essential oils; Tea Forté loose-leaf and single-steep teas; bath elixirs, soothing salts, and lotions; honey tonics from Mickelberry Gardens out of Portland, and more. Everything Sisters Apothecary offers makes a wonderful gift for well-being, comfort and quality Sisters living.

The experience of shopping at Sisters Apothecary is enjoyable — you can explore and find all sorts of products to enhance your life, and the lives of those on your gift list.

