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Integrated care facility nears completion

By ELLEN MORRIS BISHOP
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — A single medical facility that integrates physical, mental, behavioral and dental health care has long been a dream of both Winding Waters Community Health Center and the Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness. That dream will come true when the new Hearts for Health Integrated Care Center opens Sept. 10, in Enterprise.

The \$7.4 million, 18,932 square-foot facility has been taking shape on Medical Parkway since construction began last year. Now, the interior walls and electrical and communications wiring are nearing completion, and floors and ceilings are mostly in place. It's ready for the interior and exterior finishing followed by installation of equipment. The center will host a ribbon cutting in September.

Although some construction finishing work is ongoing, HHICC is offering public tours on May

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Oregon gets sixth congressional district

By GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon will add a sixth congressional seat in the 2022 election, the U.S. Census announced Monday, April 26.

Where it will go is to be determined. Monday's announcement is the apportionment of the 435 House seats to the states. Based on population changes in the past 10 years, states can gain or lose seats.

Oregon is one of the winners, receiving its first new congressional seat in 40 years.

Among the losers is California, which will have to give up one of its 53 seats in Congress — the first time in its history it hasn't gained seats or stayed the same.

Six other states will get new seats. Texas gets two seats. Colorado, Florida, Montana and North Carolina each received one new seat.

New York, Illinois, Michigan,

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Housing futures



A shopping cart sits alone on the sidewalk Monday, April 26, 2021, at the empty lot along East Q Avenue between 26th and 27th streets, La Grande, the site of the forthcoming Timber Ridge Apartments, a low-income, 104-unit housing complex.

Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Timber Ridge Apartments to be subject of research project

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The construction of Timber Ridge Apartments, a proposed \$23.7 million, 104-unit housing complex for low-income residents, might begin in less than three months.

Construction will likely start in early July after finalizing all the financing for the development, said Dan Steffey of Community Development Partners, the Portland firm developing the project, which the Northeast Oregon Housing Authority likely will own. The La Grande apartment complex, to be built on East Q Avenue between 26th and 27th streets, will take between 12 and 18 months to complete.

The apartments will help address a housing shortage in La Grande, Steffey said.

"There has been a lot of excitement about it," he said. "We have received a very positive response."

The La Grande Planning Department has approved the site plan for the project, which includes the layout for the

parking lot, drainages and landscaping, said city Community Development Director Mike Boquist. Now the city building department is reviewing the Timber Ridge plans.

Boquist said because the cost

He explained it does not appear that any portions of the plan will not conform to city codes, which would require the planning commission to grant an exception.

"It does not appear that an exception or variance will be

communities where there is a wide range of ages, he said. This has led to increased social isolation, especially for communities with many seniors. Isolation and the corresponding lack of human interaction, he added, takes a noteworthy physical toll on people's health.

Steffey said he would like to create an environment at Timber Ridge Apartments in which senior isolation would be limited because younger people would be reaching out to older people, not only out of concern but because seniors have much to offer.

"We want to create a culture, which will help people realize their own strengths by working together," Steffey said.

He said Oregon Health & Science University and Portland State University plan to do a research project involving Timber Ridge and the other apartment complexes using the Community for All Ages Model to determine how effective they are at drawing generations together.

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"We want to create a culture, which will help people realize their own strengths by working together."

— Dan Steffey, of Community Development Partners, the firm developing the project

of construction and materials has gone up significantly since the Timber Ridge plans were first created, changes are in the works to lower costs. He said the city's building department is making sure the changes are meeting city codes and performing other checks.

Boquist said it is unlikely the La Grande Planning Commission will have to approve any portion of the Timber Ridge plan.

required at this point," Boquist said.

Steffey and Engage, a consulting group, are developing a Community for All Ages model for Timber Ridge. That plan also is to be in place at new low-income housing complexes in St. Helens, Gresham and Oregon City, which Community Development Partners is helping create.

The Community for All Ages model is a positive reaction to

Iconic moment: Wienermobile visits last Blockbuster

By KYLE SPURR
The Bulletin

BEND — Two cultural icons converged in Bend on Saturday, April 24, when the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile parked in front of the last Blockbuster video rental store on Earth.

The Wienermobile, the rolling orange and yellow symbol of Oscar Mayer hot dogs, pulled into the Blockbuster parking lot off Third Street to a crowd of about two dozen people taking pictures and singing, "I wish I were an Oscar Mayer Wiener."

Some people were busy picking out movies inside the Blockbuster and were startled when the 27-foot-long hot dog

on wheels parked outside.

"I saw it pull up through the window, and I just started yelling and ran to the window," said Esty Pittman, who was visiting from Salt Lake City with her boyfriend, Jacob VanOteghem.

Pittman, 31, and VanOteghem, 30, stopped on April 24 to visit the Blockbuster and had no idea the Wienermobile was scheduled to visit.

It was a flashback to childhood for Pittman, who remembers singing the Oscar Mayer song in the grocery store with her mother and looking for the Wienermobile on road trips



Jason Loesche takes a picture with his family Saturday, April 24, 2021, while stopping to look at the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile in Bend.

Ryan Brennecke/The Bulletin

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight **39** LOW Patchy clouds

Wednesday **71/43** Partly sunny

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La Grande, Oregon

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More contact info on Page 4A.



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THURSDAY UNION COUNTY WEED LEVY

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