

# Educational opportunities abound

By S.F. Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

It's not always easy to come by educational opportunities for adults in rural areas, and Wallowa County is no exception. However, with a little effort, our county affords more educational opportunities than one may expect.

It's easy to get confused with colleges of varying repute hawking their classes on television and the Internet. However, Wallowa County Education Service District (ESD) offers legitimate and accredited college courses mainly through Eastern Oregon University (EOU).

The ESD, located at 107 SW 1st St., Suite 105 in Enterprise, offers a number of

accredited courses and online degrees through EOU. Rhonda Harguess, an EOU adviser who works in the ESD office two days per week, said EOU offers 12 bachelor's degrees in subjects ranging from Anthropology/Sociology to Business Administration. EOU also offers 12 minors in Communications to Public Administration.

Business Administration is one of the more popular degrees, along with Liberal Studies where students can tailor their degree from two minors. In addition to the minor list, the local area also has a partnership with Southern Oregon University (SOU). If a student is interested in Criminal Justice, for example, that minor from SOU can be



Rhonda Harguess, adviser of Eastern Oregon University, is available to assist with accredited courses and online degrees at the ESD office in Enterprise.

combined with Psychology or Anthropology/Sociology (through EOU) for a degree.

Harguess offers test proctoring services through EOU and many of the online classes offer online tutoring.

One thing the ESD no longer offers are GED classes. "That was something Blue Mountain Community Col-

lege did before they pulled out. It's a service we really needed," Harguess said.

EOU offers an online GED program, but Harguess said she's found that many, but not all, GED students need face time with an instructor or a small group for successful completion of the certificate.

"When the Training and Em-

ployment Consortium offices were open (in Enterprise) they were able to provide some support for GED students. They didn't do the classes, but they provided the testing locally," Harguess said.

If a prospective student is unsure of what course of study to pursue, Harguess can help. "I love talking to peo-

ple and trying to figure out the best match for them. I'm pretty confident that together, we can work something out," Harguess said.

Prospective students can visit Harguess' office from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays or call 541-426-4997.

**Fishtrap House**, located at 400 E. Grant St., offers accredited college level courses in the writing realm as well as writing classes for personal enrichment.

Ann Powers, Fishtrap executive director, said, "Probably our most ambitious adult education opportunity we offer is a year-long creative writing workshop that starts in July and goes for 13 months. It's for people who are really serious about writing a book-length project such as a novel, memoir, or collection of poems."

Powers added the workshop is not accredited, but intended for people who want sustained coaching from a quality coach. The program has an application process and requires acceptance into the program. "It's for a very specific interest, but it's very popular. The application process is open right now," Powers said.

Fishtrap writer-in-residence Alyssa Halton is starting a six-week Winter Writing Workshop open to all Feb. 15 for a \$50 fee. Halton also teaches an Oregon State University-accredited creative writing class open to high school juniors, seniors, and adults. Summer Fishtrap also offers a number of week-long workshops with different instructors.

For registration of any Fishtrap writing offerings or more information, contact Powers at 541-426-3623, email info@fishtrap.org, or visit the Fishtrap website at fishtrap.org. Fishtrap is located at 400 E. Grant St., in Enterprise.

**Northeastern Oregon Economic Development District (NEOEDD)** offers classes and workshops that straddle the line between personal enrichment and education. Sarah Miller, NEOEDD's development specialist, outlined several opportunities for local citizens, particularly in the business/investment realm.

"We've offered from a foundation of business class to a business planning course. These can be taken by someone who either plans starting a business, or someone who already has a business," Miller said.

NEOEDD also offers occasional classes in marketing or seminars on specific topics. "We have classes in community capital and local investing. These classes reach out to either potential investors thinking of investing locally or local businesses thinking about accepting community investment loans," Miller said.

NEOEDD offers the classes in the tri-county area of Wallowa, Union and Baker counties. "We are also working in community food systems and our volunteer Laurel Johnson organizes classes around food and nutrition," Miller said.

Some other entities offering personal enrichment courses include the Joseph Center, the Extension Office and various churches and the Buddhist temple.

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