

# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

Enterprise, Oregon

www.wallowa.com

February 11, 2015 \$1

## Hospital steps up debt repayment

### Administrator says recent donations will help

By S.F. Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE—Wallowa Memorial Hospital Administrator Larry Davy announced the hospital's intention of reducing its long-term debt by early and more frequent loan repayments. Davy made the announcement at the Jan. 26 Wallowa County Health Care District board meeting.

The hospital holds five long-term loans. Three were for its own construction and one each for construction of Wallowa Valley Senior Living and the Medical Office Building. The loans, which total nearly \$19.5 million at present, break down as follows:

- USDA 30-year loan for hospital at 4.125 percent interest with current balance of

\$6,891,937.58.

- Community Bank 30-year loan for hospital at 4.75 percent interest with current balance of \$5,132,838.47.

- Community Bank 30-year loan for hospital at 4.75 percent interest with current balance of \$2,138,682.79.

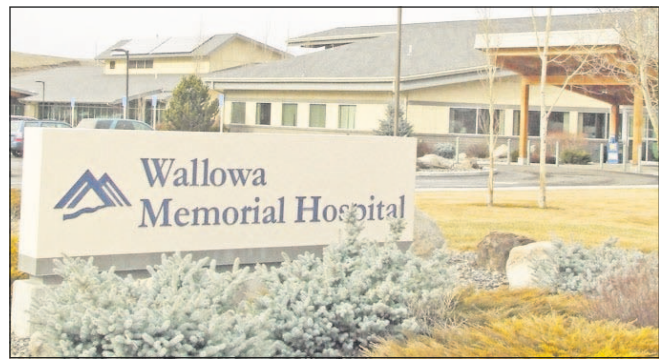
- Northwest Farm Credit loan for Medical Office Building at 3.15 percent interest with current balance of

\$2,310,163.59.

- Zions First National Bank loan for Wallowa Valley Senior Living at 1.2 to 3.7 percent variable interest with current balance of \$2,813,000.00.

Davy said that he and financial officer Joe Wanner recently started discussing the loans.

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Rob Ruth/Chieftain

Three of five loans that the Wallowa County Health Care District is trying to pay off early were taken out to build Wallowa Memorial Hospital.

## Board OKs water

### Cemetery's connection to be restored

By Rob Ruth

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Facing a groundswell of public sentiment pressing it to act, the Enterprise Cemetery's three-member board has decided to reconnect the cemetery to the Enterprise city water system, an expenditure of approximately \$5,000 and a necessary first step toward restoring irrigation at the facility, which has gone largely unwatersed the past three summers.

On Thursday, Feb. 5, midway through a nearly 90-minute session of the cemetery board that drew a standing-room-only crowd to the Wallowa County Courthouse's main floor meeting chamber, board chair Susan Roberts informed the audience of the panel's decision, which had evidently been made at the proceeding's outset and had escaped attendees' notice.

Minutes before Roberts' announcement, Ella Mae Hays, a founding member of Friends of the Enterprise Cemetery, a group formed last year mainly in response to the continuing absence of irrigation, had delivered a prepared statement.

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STORM COVERAGE ON PAGE A3

# WIND BROKEN



Rich Rautenstrauch/Chieftain

This shop building on North Lake Street in Joseph was one of the many locations in Wallowa County where property was damaged by high winds that began overnight on Thursday and continued throughout most of Friday.

## Community's residents pitch in for new helipad landing lights

By Rich Rautenstrauch

Wallowa County Chieftain

IMNAHA — It's often a good thing when two community members get together and talk. Occasionally the question may arise: What can be done to make the community a better and safer place?

This is precisely the course the conversation took when Imnaha resident Mellica McIntire visited with local friend Shari Warnock. They came up with a plan to install helicopter landing lights on the Imnaha Christian Fellowship parking lot, enabling Lifeflight transports to land in their isolated community at any time of the day or night.

It was sometime last summer when a case underscoring this need arose. McIntire, an experienced firefighter and medic, has worked with helicopters in the past. She recognized the need and today the lights are in place. Warnock became the facilitator and spokesperson for the project and it just "snowballed from there," Warnock explained.

Local ranchers Tim and Nancy Roberts became involved. Tim Roberts contacted Tim Peck, the Lifeflight base manager at Wallowa Memorial Hospital, and the two came up with a plan. Roberts researched the type of lights that were needed and was also responsible for contacting Avista Power, the largest donor to the project.

Peck said when Roberts first came to



Rich Rautenstrauch/Chieftain

Shari Warnock of Imnaha takes time off from sorting cows to show off the new helicopter pad lights that community members recently installed in the church parking lot. The lights are visible to wearers of infrared goggles and are placed in a pattern that Lifeflight pilots recognize.

him with the idea, Peck thought it was great. "Any time you can cut down response time in an emergency situation it really helps. We use night vision goggles

to find the landing zone. The lights chosen reflect downward on the pad itself.

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## WURA trail study report on schedule

By Rocky Wilson

Wallowa County Chieftain

Although the number of players is not large, Rails With Trail feasibility study Project Manager Dana Kurtz says, as a whole, work on that project is proceeding on schedule and she anticipates a final report will be shared with the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA) at that group's December 2015 meeting.

Kurtz is a graduate student at Eastern Oregon University and her counterpart on the study where invested time far exceeds invested dollars, Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation Trails Coordinator Rocky Houston, feels the effort is on pace as well.

According to Kurtz, the only element of the study currently lagging behind schedule is an economic impact assessment, and two students working on that portion of the study plus two economics professors from EOU will present early findings on the matter to a Student Internship Advisory Committee on Feb. 11. One month beyond that and the same foursome will announce the findings of their work.

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## BOC urges delisting of wolves

By S.F. Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa County Board of Commissioners has approved Resolution 2015-001 urging the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to remove wolves from the state's endangered species list.

The resolution cited the fulfillment of five points in the Oregon Wolf Management Plan that qualified the wolf for removal from the list:

- Unlikelihood of the wolf's endangerment or extinction in the near future.
- Reproductive potential not limited by population numbers or disease.
- Most range/habitat not in danger of imminent or active deterioration.

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