

STUDENTS PERFORM 'CHARLOTTE'S WEB'



Mrs. Christman's third grade class from Enterprise Elementary performed their annual play, "Charlotte's Web," directed by retired teacher Judy Sanders. Students were responsible for learning lines, singing songs, choreographing dances, and creating scenery. It was a full house for the opening performance with family and friends attending.

Courtesy photo



Chieftain file photo

At 100 years old, Deer Creek Bridge needs to be replaced with a span that can accommodate greater weights.

# Deer Creek Bridge moving

By Rocky Wilson  
Wallowa County Chieftain

A 100-year-old county-owned historic bridge soon will be hauled to Wallowa and put in place over the Wallowa River connecting Wallowa Union Railroad Authority (WURA) property and the Tamkaliks grounds to the east. Once that's accomplished, a second, shorter historic bridge already on the Tamkaliks grounds will be abutted to the first and straddle a flood plain, creating two linked pedestrian bridges totaling 190 feet in length.

The 20-foot wide, 100-foot-long Deer Creek Bridge that spans the Wallowa River near Minam is 100 years old, owned by Wallowa County, and ready to be moved, then replaced. A complicated transaction will transfer bridge ownership to the Wallowa Band Nez Perce Tribe Interpretive Center (WB-NPTIC).

Wallowa County now owns the bridge, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is facilitating and paying for the bridge's replacement, and yet — explains ODOT's regional public information officer Thomas Strandberg — ODOT cannot in this situation enter into an agreement with the nonprofit WB-NPTIC.

To makes things work,

says Strandberg, ODOT must enter into an intergovernmental agreement with Wallowa County and the county must then transfer ownership to WB-NPTIC.

To protect county interests, Wallowa County commissioners have instructed county counsel to draft an agreement with WB-NPTIC to legally divest the county of any interest in the historic Deer Creek Bridge once it's moved.

A bid to remove, haul, and then set up the historic bridge in Wallowa across the Wallowa River will be let March 5, and bids will be closed March 26. Strandberg says \$800,000 is ODOT's preliminary estimate for overall completion this summer because no in-water work will be necessary.

The new Deer Creek Bridge near Minam will be the same size as the old one, but will support higher weight limits, the chief reason for the change.

Strandberg says whether the old bridge will be dismantled or not to make the 13-mile trip to Wallowa will be determined by the successful bidder.

Mary Hawkins, office manager for the WB-NPTIC, says that nonprofit will invest \$44,100 to install the smaller, 80-foot-long bridge that once spanned Bear Creek.

## SIGN: Funds sought

Continued from Page A1

Once funding is secured, the sign will be built and installed by Ray DeLury Construction, of Joseph, Joseph Electric, and Hayes Printing and Graphics. Don Swart Sr., member of

a WVAC committee promoting the sign, says the sign's message will read, "Enjoy the Arts in Joseph: Oregon's first designated City Arts & Cultural District."

The site selected for the sign is on Highway 82 just north of Stein Distillery.

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