

Prom dress resales duo returns for a final round.

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# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



Enterprise, Oregon

www.wallowa.com

March 4, 2015 \$1

## For Joe Whittle, life is ONE BIG PICTURE

By Steve Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Many Wallowa County people know resident Joe Whittle. The question is, what do they know him for? Whittle wears a lot of hats, including photographer, U.S. Forest Service ranger, adventure/wilderness guide, contributor to outdoor magazines ... the list goes on.

Whittle's life appears enviable, and when asked about this, he laughed. "I try to make it look good for social media. You've got to get around a little bit." Kidding aside, it doesn't take long to realize Whittle loves what he does, and his life may be nearly as idyllic as it appears.

A Wallowa County native, Whittle graduated from Enterprise High School and worked in Chico, Calif., before attending Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton and subsequently attending Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, Calif. He graduated in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in advertising photography.

During these years, Whittle's then-wife gave birth to a daughter, Mia, who Whittle calls "the greatest gift of my life."

A quick look at Whittle's website (www.joewhittlephotography.com) confirms he learned his Brooks lessons well with photos ranging from the pastoral to big city nights. "I dabble in a lot of different types of photography. I majored in advertising because the plan was to make a good living," Whittle said.

An unexpected divorce immediately after graduation led Whittle to Seattle to start pursuing advertising photography, but after six months he returned to Wallowa County to be near his daughter again.

"The big aspirations for a glorious career in the advertising photography field turned into bartending, working on the tramway and about every odd job you can think of in Wallowa County," Whittle said with a laugh. He added that the odd jobs paid the bills as he built his photography career from the ground up.

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Joe Whittle takes a break from hiking in the Wallows.

Courtesy photo

I really wanted to be an artist like my dad, but I could never get the images in my head on paper, so I decided to try photography



Rocky Wilson/Chieftain

Wallowa County Commissioner Susan Roberts with two miles of turbo-fladry on rolls. At best, Roberts says, fladry can slow interaction between wolves and livestock.

## Payment for indirect wolf losses may not be made

By Rocky Wilson  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County Commissioner Susan Roberts says she expects "two really irate (livestock) producers" will speak their minds when they find out how little federal and state money is being made available to reimburse cattle and sheep raisers in Wallowa, Baker, Union and Umatilla counties for losses attributed to wolves in the past year.

While a total of \$3,920 is coming for four wolf depredations in Wallowa County that were confirmed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), payments for most indirect losses apparently won't be made unless the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) intercedes. Since March 2014 in Wallowa County, indirect losses that should be reimbursable total \$33,200, and the figure for Baker County is even higher.

Although much more federal and state money, a maximum of \$106,000, is available for proactive investments in non-lethal deterrence measures, livestock producers who put their animals out to pasture and record significantly fewer returns at season's end — a phenomenon associated with growing wolf numbers — aren't guaranteed any reimbursement money.

Roberts sent her annual wolf depredation reports for Wallowa County to the ODA last week, and expects a final determination about how that agency will disperse funds in mid-April. Roberts, who declined to name the two producers she believes are being hit hardest by the lack of funding to reimburse indirect wolf kills, was nonetheless animated in describing the predicament they face.

She estimated maybe nine or more livestock producers in the county have stock in wolf-patrolled territory and have maintained excellent livestock records over at least the past 10 years, qualifying them to seek indirect wolf-loss payments.

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## Numbers continue to rise

By Rocky Wilson  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Counting wolves is far from an exact science, hence the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) presents "minimum total" figures, meaning the count most recently announced Feb. 24 for 2014 was for wolves "verified by direct evidence" and likely falls short of actual wolf numbers.

Statewide, the annual "minimum count" has steadily risen from 14 in 2009 to 21, 29, 48, and 64 until, in numbers released last week for the year 2014, the "minimum total" had reached 77 wolves. Of that total, nearly 50 most commonly roam the wilds of Wallowa County.

The largest of the six known packs here, at least at the beginning of the year, was the Wena-ha Pack in northern Wallowa County that had 11 wolves.

Wolves, some tracked because they've been equipped with radio collars, can travel long distances in short periods of time. Wallowa County Commissioner Susan Roberts said one collared wolf was in Baker County one day, then traveled through Wallowa County and was in the state of Washington three days later. Shortly thereafter, she said, and the same collared wolf had returned to the southern reaches of Wallowa County.

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WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN  
Wallowa County's Newspaper Since 1884  
Volume 132 Issue No. 46  
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## Joseph council revises street repairs bond

By Steve Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Joseph City Council held an emergency meeting on Feb. 24 to revise several portions of the street repair bond levy set for the May ballot. Along with Mayor Dennis Sands and city recorder Donna Warnock, council members George Ballard, Pearl Sturm and Sharon Newell attended

the meeting. Katie Schwab, of Wedbush Securities, attended by conference call.

Mayor Sands opened the meeting explaining to Schwab and the council that the wording of the bond proposal needed final revision in order to fulfill the public notice time requirement. Among needed changes is a slight increase to the proposal's \$1.2 million outlay. "I originally said \$1.2

million to cover the streets, but we've got bond costs, etc. etc.," Sands said.

He added that now the company handling the bond has expanded the proposed levy intake to \$1.265 million to cover those costs and suggested a levy total of \$1.3 million for a cushion even if the city didn't issue a bond for the entire amount.

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## Man dies walking away from vehicle stuck in snow

The Wallowa County Sheriff's Office received a public report of a deceased man on Upper Innaha Valley Road near Forest Service Road 39, on the afternoon of Sunday, March 1. Sheriff's Deputy Joe Reeves and Enterprise Police Department officer T.J. Miller

answered the call.

The deceased man was identified as William Lee Fox, 78, of North Powder. Upon investigation, the two officers determined Fox had apparently walked some nine miles with a cane from where his pickup had become stuck

in snow.

Sheriff Steve Rogers said Fox suffered from several medical conditions including a chronic lung disease. The sheriff's office believes the death occurred from natural causes. Fox was taken to Bollman's Funeral Home.

