

McFetridge, Curtis named national FFA honorees

By Rocky Wilson
Wallowa County Chieftain

Although 20 FFA Chapter members from Enterprise, Wallowa, and Joseph will be named to the highest FFA state degree level March 20-23 in Silverton during the FFA State Convention, Myranda McFetridge and Jacob Curtis from the Enterprise Chapter earned even higher honors than that when they were named FFA American Degree recipients at the National FFA Convention, held in Louisville, Ky., in October.

McFetridge, the daughter of Carl and Deena McFetridge, currently attends Eastern Oregon University where she's pursuing a degree in agricultural science.

She owns her own beef herd and works for JS Angus and McFetridge Ranch. Her FFA résumé includes winning state awards in forage production and raising numerous grand champion steer winners at the Wallowa County Fair. At EOU, McFetridge remains an active member of that school's FFA program.

Curtis is the son of Roger and Debbie Curtis, also attends EOU, and is studying Sociology and military science. Curtis is also in ROTC. His FFA project includes working for Diamond D Ranch where his activities ranged from running equipment to changing pipe. A multi-year FFA chapter officer while in high school, Curtis also works for Mountain Auto Repair.

A special FFA accolade to be named at the state level in Silverton could go to Wallowa FFA member Calli Miller, who has won the Eastern Oregon FFA District Star Farmer competition for her sheep production project and is a finalist for the FFA State Star Farmer honor in that same sheep production category.

In addition, again at this weekend's FFA State Convention, two members from the Joseph Chapter have advanced beyond sectional competition in public speaking and are among eight finalists in their respective categories vying for state honors. Annie Story, a freshman, will compete in the beginning public speaking category and senior Anna

Rinehart in the advanced public speaking category. Story will speak on the topic of genetic engineering and Rinehart on the topic of agricultural literacy.

District proficiency winners who will be competing at the FFA State Convention include, from Wallowa, Ashley Starner in specialty animal production; Jordan Ferré in nursery operations; and Maddi Tracy in poultry production. District proficiency winners who will compete at the FFA State Convention from the Joseph Chapter will be Anna Rinehart in ag education proficiency; Lindsay Kemp in food processing proficiency; and Claire Beck in diversified livestock production proficiency.



Courtesy photo
Myranda McFetridge (left) and Jacob Curtis are the most recent American FFA Degree recipients from the local area.

CUBS: Opponents also losing their starters

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Young of Wallowa hope to resume the heavy hitting they furnished last year, and Joseph's Anna Rinehart brings back her proficient defense in the field. Senior Taylor Harshfield of Wallowa suffered an arm injury and is questionable for the season. Three junior returnees will add further experience to the roster: Natalie Williams and Kendal Kreutzer of Joseph, and McKenzie Gray from Enterprise. Five sophomores — Ashley Starner, Becca Bateman, Darby Gasset, Jordan Ferré and Taylor Grote — will also suit up. Starner, Bateman and Ferré are

new to the team. Also joining the ranks are freshmen Madison Plew, Rachel Frolander, Ashley Exon and Josie Scott.

Coach Jeff Edison said on the field at practice last Thursday he researched the Cubs' opponents from last year and it seems other teams, like the Cubs, have lost most of their starting pitchers from last year. He thinks this will help out the Wallowa County team, taking a little pressure off his two new starters, Natalie Williams and Madison Plew.

The Cubs will start their season this Thursday, March 20, playing an afternoon game against the La Grande JVs in La Grande.

Outlook bright for Cougars baseball

By Rich Rautenstrauch
Wallowa County Chieftain

With the recent successes of the Wallowa High School boys' athletics, reaching the state playoffs in both football and basketball, it's no wonder baseball coach Thomas Wenke is optimistic about his team's prospects for a successful season.

"We are a young team, but we have a solid group of athletes this year and I think realistically we'll finish up in the upper part of our league," Wenke said.

Seven players are returners from last year and most of the kids coming up have experience playing Babe Ruth baseball.

Two senior infielders on this year's team include a returning player, Gareth Murray, and someone new to the squad, Michael Pendarvis. All of the team's juniors played last year. This group includes Koby Frye, Noah Allen and Josh Rummell, all expected to play infield, and Robert Delancey, projected for an outfield spot.

Sophomores Travis Haga and Austin Lindross will

each play both infield and outfield.

Rounding out the roster are three freshmen: Daniel Delancey, infield and outfield; Danny Areya, outfield; and Cameron Salmon, the catcher.

Wenke recalled that last year's team struggled on the mound. "We walked too many players last year, but this year I think it will be different." The coach said he has at least six players on this team he thinks are capable of solid pitching. They're also likely to see some pretty good offensive backing. "We have a good group of hitters," says Wenke.

The Cougars are scheduled to start their season March 30 at Weston/McEwen, where they'll also face the Griswold JVs. In Wallowa's division this year are Enterprise/Joseph, Grant Union, Burns, and Union/Cove.

Last year, after the season was over, the team and local community members laid new sod on the infield at Wallowa's Kirk Jones Field, where further improvements are planned, according to Wenke.




Rich Rautenstrauch/Chieftain
Wallowa Cougar Travis Haga hits the ball during a practice last week at Kirk Jones Field. Haga hit well for the Cougars last year.



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Student of the Week



Daniel Delancey is a freshman at Wallowa High School. He is the son of Gabriella and Tim Delancey. When Daniel puts his mind to accomplishing a task, he not only finishes it - but excels. Academically he is at the top of his class with a 4.0 GPA. He plays baseball for Wallowa and serves as the freshman student body president. Most notable is his character. He is a genuine, kind, hardworking and helpful student.

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EAGLES: New season's first game takes place March 19 at Heppner

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team into the winner's bracket. "Justin Exon is my junior center fielder who will be instrumental in our pitching, as will Sam Beckman and Will McCadden — and Tate Olsen as well. In fact, all my guys out here are very good ball-players. I have a good group and I'm very pleased with them."

The team fields no seniors, and Word named juniors Beckman, McCadden and Exon as team co-captains.

The team's first game is March 19 at Heppner, and although he likes what he sees with his squad, Word won't make any predictions about the team's performance potential until at least two weeks

into the season. "I really like the way our pitching's looking though," the coach said with a smile.

Word doesn't prefer any one particular game strategy, preferring to shift it to individ-

ual opponents. "We have some speed and some power, and we're going to play good ball. We can play short ball or long ball if we need to. Right now, we're just trying to smooth out some rough edges," Word said.



Steve Tool/Chieftain
Springtime is baseball time in Wallowa County. The Enterprise/Joseph team is already hard at work preparing for their March 19 season opener against Heppner. Coach Calvin Word gestures at far right.

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