

# EPD review brings need for openness

Enterprise city government was prudent in its decision to hire an expert to review current functioning of the Enterprise Police Department. With the recent resignation of chief Wes Kilgore, who served in the post for 13 years, the city has a somewhat rare opportunity to undertake such an evaluation when circumstances are least burdensome to employees: at a time of transition, and when there's one job fewer immediately at stake.

Currently the department has only three full-time employees, but that'll bump back up to four if the city hires a new chief. Michele Young, the city's administrator, says the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police (and no, there's not an "of" missing from that), the organization the city has turned to for advice and referrals, doesn't even recommend hiring an interim chief until the city has results back from its planned departmental review. Fortunately, that review, to be conducted by someone the association recommends, shouldn't take longer than several days to complete, once it begins.

The possibility of course looms that Enterprise officials will learn the city hasn't been getting the most bang for its public safety buck. If such is the review's outcome, it's easy to imagine a lively debate ensuing, especially if it appears the easiest fix is to scrap the city department and beef-up the county sheriff's office.

But we get ahead of ourselves with these imaginings. Not only are we not there yet; "there" we might never be.

Regardless of whether the upcoming assessment spotlights the EPD as a wise bargain or a troubling waste, however, we hope city officials and their consultant strive mightily to educate the public well on this issue at every juncture. For starters, we'll want to know something about any important yardsticks that are applied to reach judgments about the police department. For example, the Center for Public Safety Management (CPSM), an entity under the umbrella of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), concerns itself with public safety staffing models and applies what it calls its "Rule of 60" in evaluating police departments. The rule stresses the desirability of having approximately 60 percent of sworn officers assigned to patrol.

Is the Rule of 60 the most appropriate evaluative tool for a very small department? Search us, but whatever the tool the city's hired expert deems most useful, we'd like to understand exactly how it works and why, exactly, it should be prominently factored into any decisions.

And while we're issuing this request for helpful spoon-feeding from the city's hired gun, we should add that it's imperative the city itself takes pains to clearly draft and communicate any price comparisons between city police services and whatever might be on offer from the sheriff's office, assuming that's solicited (and we rather assume it will be).

What if the county's policing service appears the better buy, but not by a wide margin? Here's where the really difficult part could begin — the self-searching, the probing of less tangible values.

This could turn into a difficult slog. Everyone, please keep all channels open.

## Correction

Former Enterprise police chief Wes Kilgore's March 23 letter resigning his position as chief stated his decision was "due to personal reasons." Our March 25 story incorrectly quoted that as "personal problems." The letter's complete text is as follows:

Dear Mayor Lear:

I hereby resign from my position as Chief of Police effective March 23, 2015. I regret

that I must leave my position at the Enterprise Police Department due to personal reasons. Despite my departure I hope we can keep an amicable professional relationship. I sincerely appreciate the opportunities I have been afforded at the Enterprise Police Department. I wish the department the best of luck in continuing to be as strong as ever.

Respectfully,  
Wes Kilgore



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Wallowa County's Newspaper Since 1884  
Enterprise, Oregon

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PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY:  
**EO Media Group**

Periodical Postage Paid at Enterprise and additional mailing offices

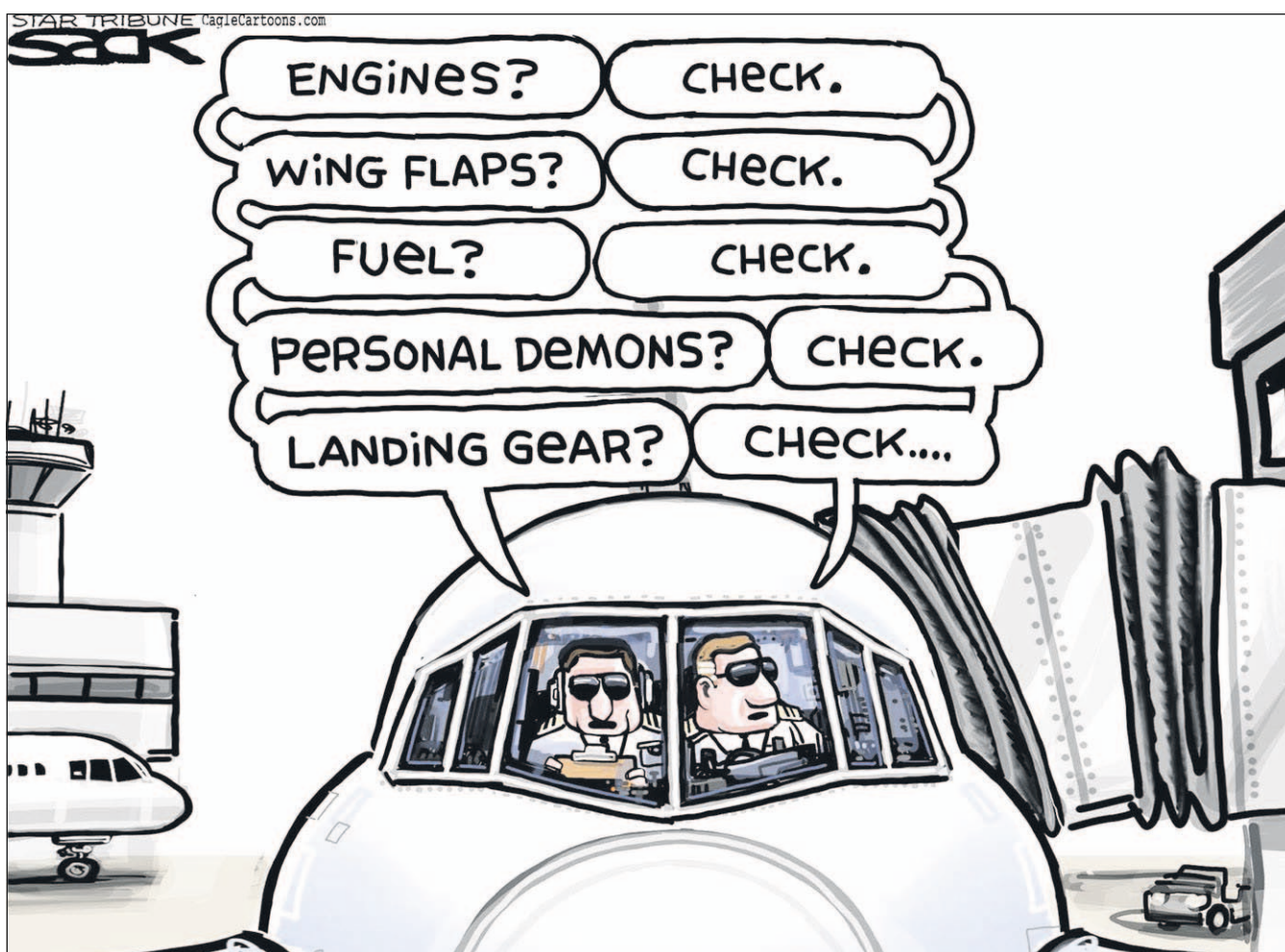
| Subscription rates (includes online access) | 1 Year  |
|---------------------------------------------|---------|
| Wallowa County                              | \$40.00 |
| Out-of-County                               | \$57.00 |

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

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POSTMASTER — Send address changes to  
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# Able pranksters preceded us

If anyone encourages you to do something today, anything at all, remember that it's more than likely an April Fools' joke, so just do the opposite. I don't fall for any of those tricks. If I get bills in the mailbox April 1 — boop — right into the paper shredder. The ol' fake bill on convincing-looking paper trick, eh? With return envelope, postage paid and everything, huh? Very elaborate ruse, whoever you are. Nice try, but save it for somebody who's at least a little gullible. I was born at night, but not last night. Last year this fake bill gag went so far that they even shut off my power a week later to make it seem more convincing.

The tradition of playing practical jokes on the first day of April dates back to Mesopotamian times, when a court jester named Kugel is said to have placed an inflated oxen bladder under the throne cushion of Roman emperor Constantine, in the first recorded use of what is now known as a whoopee cushion. The result was so popular among those in attendance that the event was commemorated the following year on the same day with further acts of mischief. Sadly, Kugel lived the rest of his life in chains and did not profit from future sales of novelty oxen bladders.

I did some research in the Chieftain archives for memorable pranks played here in the Wallawas. The first recorded practical jokes in the area were played by a dedicated local trickster named Coyote, whose exploits are remembered in some of the very first "Out of the Past" features.



Barn lowerings were an elaborate prank enjoyed by early Wallowa Valley residents. Community members would coordinate to lure a farmer into town under some pretense, then work together quickly to disassemble a barn while the farmer was away.

Another popular gag among early Grande Ronde and Wallowa Valley settlers was to sneak onto a neighbor's farm under cover of night and move a haystack back out into the field and place it neatly in rows. This practice was known as "har-har-vest," but was eventually outlawed by the Territorial Governor in the late 1800s after an Elgin area farmer did not see the humor in this little bit of fun, resulting in what became known as "The April 2nd Battle of the Pitchforks."

In the mid-1920s the local chapter of the Loyal Order of the Water Buffalo, Lodge 26, advertised Wallowa Lake Monster rides, departing from the paddlewheel dock at the north end of Wallowa Lake. Rides on the Wallowa Lake Monster cost two bits for adults, but kids got to ride for free. The joke was that two bits was only for a one-way ride. If you wanted to come back to shore you had to pay another two bits. A picnic lunch and pie social was provided by The East Moraine Grange Auxiliary and proceeds

helped finance the first sculpture along the dirt and boardwalk Main Street in Joseph. Bronze was not available at the time due to rationing, so the foundries had to retool and cast the sculpture in a fire-hardened mixture of local clay, horsehair and Mazama ash. The sculpture was controversial at the time, as it depicted a cowboy wearing short sleeves, which some thought was immodest. Also, the dog in the sculpture was not following commands, which some residents felt did not represent Eastern Oregon in the best light. A wealthy San Francisco banker later purchased the sculpture for the garden of his mansion on Telegram Hill. The house and grounds are now a museum and the sculpture, "Sit, Boy, Sit," is still on display and available for public viewing.

Visitors to The Wallowa County Museum can see photographs of the 1938 April Fools' Day prank when a group of loggers packed mule strings carrying barrels of beet juice from the local sugar refinery up to the ridge atop Mount Joseph and dumped the contents, turning the slopes pink. Bears could be seen licking the snow for several weeks afterward.

Wallowa County has a rich tradition of April Fools' Day practical jokes, and some that weren't useful at all. Keep the tradition going and see if you can pull a fast one today that's good enough to make it into future editions of "Out of the Past."

Jon Rombach is a local columnist for the Chieftain. He wasn't really born at night. That was just a joke.

# News consumers' habits shifting

By Rocky Wilson

On most days I'm confident that my Internet research skills exceed those of my 93-year-old father who neither owns, has owned, or ever wants to own a computer. But, today, the difference between my skills and his are not so great.

My goal was to research and write a sublime column on which sections of newspapers people most like to read, but was halted in my tracks. In technological jargon, if you don't have the proper key words you ain't going nowhere, and my research on the subject went nowhere.

Well, that's not entirely true because I did find what I was looking for regarding newspapers published in Australia, but such wasn't my intent.

In days arrears when I co-owned a weekly newspaper, I learned (probably at a newspaper conference and definitely not on the Internet) that the most-read section of newspapers was letters to the editor. I was hoping today to discover some important cultural trend, or paradigm that would indicate where our society might be heading — possibly even listing obituaries as the most-read section

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— but my way-too-lengthy, repetitious quests to punch the appropriate trigger on my computer proved fruitless.

So, instead, let's see what Australia has to say.

As a journalist, albeit one working maybe 8,500 miles away from Australia, the popularity of general news and sports as the two most-read newspaper sections Down Under sounded great, as those are two topics I most cover.

The survey I perused, taken from a year-long study that included more than 21,000 Australian participants, differentiated between newspaper readership during weekdays and readership on weekends, and the results were telling. Where coverage regarding holidays and travel was the fourth most popularly read newspaper section during the week, it was the most-read section on weekends. Business news, not even ranked in the top 10 during weekends, claimed the No. 5 spot during the week. Then again there was the section on real

estate that ranked No. 7 on weekends when people could have been seriously contemplating a move, yet real estate didn't even hit the charts during the week when those same people likely were buried in work to make such potential moves possible.

Next behind general news and sports, plus holidays and travel on weekends of course, were editorial and opinion, and letters to the editor.

But maybe the biggest trend-changer in the newspaper world is not what sections are being read, but instead how the news is being delivered.

Look around, and the overall number of newspapers in the U.S. and elsewhere is shrinking. And those that choose to remain in business in a highly competitive market are having to adapt to survive.

Although many hard-core individuals still contend that holding reading material in one's hands remains the way to go, such, at an ever-increasing rate, seems to be losing favor. More and more newspaper readers are turning to the Internet and smart phones to access news stories they have an interest in.

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# 'Local' food everywhere and undefined

Local food is great. What's not to like? Anyone would agree with the statement that buying from the farmer down the road is a good thing.

But during the past decade or so, since the advent of the term "locavore," we have found that "local" is in the eye of the beholder. While some consumers assiduously measure "food miles," others care only whether the food was grown within their state. Still other consumers consider "local" to be a synonym for a region — the Pacific Northwest, the West Coast or even just the West. Others believe "local" equals "Product of the U.S."

And so it goes. That's why we watched with interest as the Washington House of Representatives passed a bill calling for a "food policy forum" whose job it would be to promote "local" food. One legislator stated that local food

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will make people slimmer and healthier. And, we should add, it'll help them jump tall buildings in a single bound.

The lone advantage of food grown near the consumer is a smaller fuel bill for the truck. Beyond that, it's difficult to see how food grown across the region is any better, or worse, than any other food.

Rep. Vincent Buys, the ranking Republican on the House Agriculture Committee, summarized our thoughts.

"To somehow imply our large-scale agriculture products are unsafe or not as ... high quality as some of the locally produced agriculture products, I think, does a disservice to the state, and I think is offensive to a lot of those farmers

who work those long hours and create a high-quality product. They just don't do it on a smaller scale," he said.

Seasonality is another issue. Unless you live in California, try finding a locally grown strawberry in January. Other than what's available from a greenhouse, locally grown strawberries — or many other types of produce — are available only a portion of the year, usually late summer and fall. Some fresh fruits and vegetables store well and are available year-round, but the list is short.

In the meantime, a cornucopia of produce, products and meats are available, no matter what season it is, at the neighborhood grocery store. It is part of a "food system" that offers a vast selection of fresh produce and meats at reasonable prices and is the envy of the world.

The Capital Press, based in Salem, is a sister publication to the Wallowa County Chieftain.