

LODGE: Investors want to keep building interests local

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It's an idea that the current owner, Marc Zwerling, likes a lot.

"I would love it," he said. "Steve and I got involved with the lodge because we fell in love with the area. We've spent most of the last 10 years trying to find local people who would be involved. We tried as hard as we could. I welcome this development enthusiastically."

Monteith has already contacted the Oregon Department of Forestry, State Parks, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Nez Perce Tribe, and Eastern Oregon University to inform them of developments

and elicit goodwill. These agencies would not be financial supporters, but would be cooperative agencies, he said.

"They would have a direct interest in what would happen at the head of the lake," Monteith said.

The plan, such as it is in the current embryonic state, is that the lodge would remain an operating lodge and the lands around would continue to provide some public access.

"The general consensus is that we keep the lodge as much as original as possible — to not develop," said Monteith. "We are planning on keeping the land around the lodge, 8.5 acres, open and

preserving the habitat the land represents; fish habitat and wetlands for instance."

This is right in line with the values of both Marc Zwerling and the late Steve Larson.

In fact, when the two acquired the lodge in 1989 it was shortly after Wallowa County had passed a comprehensive new zoning plan that would have allowed "massive development on all sides of the lake," Zwerling said. "Steve was appalled by that. Steve wanted to do what he could to stop that plan."

The two filed an action that became known as Larson versus Wallowa County and found further support from 1,000 Friends of Oregon and

the Nez Perce Tribe.

The litigation made its way through Land Use Board of Appeals and the Oregon Court of Appeals and Larson won.

"I fancy we played a prominent role in slowing down the development around the lake," Zwerling said. "Steve and I are very proud of the part we played in that."

Zwerling remains committed to seeing the lodge in the hands of preservationists, but he also means to sell the lodge.

The deadline for submitting a sealed bid on the lodge is July 29, and Monteith and his group are still "getting a sense of whether there are

legs for this or not," he said.

There seem to be legs. Monteith reported that he gets calls almost daily and so far there is a brisk trade in "if you will, I will" pledges.

"There's an immense amount of interest in doing something locally with the lodge," said Monteith. "There may be a meeting or two coming up in the next week, taking input and comments from people. I don't know if anything will come of this but there is enough interest to find out. We have 12 people who have committed money at five or six figures. We're looking at a broad array of investors. We're going to have \$500

investors and we're going to have \$150,000 investors."

The investment, said Monteith, would not need to be an altogether altruistic one. "This is not a losing proposition," he said. "Usually such a lodge would be in bad shape and unprofitable — that's not the case with the Wallowa Lake Lodge. Investors might not make a ton of money but it's a viable business. Investors can know those are not problems we have. You can obviously make more money doing other things, but for people who care about the lodge, this is not a losing proposition."

Monteith can be contacted at 541-432-3044.

WYDEN: Senator talks trade, tourism

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He added one of his biggest concerns in that area was the spiraling costs of specialty drugs not covered by Medicare section D. Wyden said he worried the costs could threaten the budgets of several health care programs. Wyden said he is currently investigating the phenomenon with Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa.

Wyden was at his most animated defending the controversial TPP act, which significantly reduces tariffs from 12 countries representing 40 percent of world markets. Participating countries include several from both Asia and South America as well as Australia and New Zealand. The act also covers intellectual prop-

erty rights, environmental standards and labor concerns.

Wyden argued that Oregon is economically dependent on trade with one in five Oregon jobs directly linked to trade. He also said, "My concern has always been that if we walk away from 40 percent of the global economy, the Chinese will step in and write the rules. We're a force for boosting standards up in this effort with tougher environmental enforcement, and for the first time, this has human rights as a priority. I think people who have criticized trade agreements in the past had some very valid points, and I've tried to incorporate them in this new approach."

Wyden also said that for the sake of transparency, he

insisted the TPP be made available for public inspection for 60 days before the president signs it.

In other matters directly related to the area, Wyden said he was working hard with the FCC to ensure that Internet and cell service carriers in rural areas can obtain low-spectrum wireless and high-speed fiber optic Internet.

Wyden also said that as a member of the Healthcare subcommittee, he is working on legislation in relation to Critical Access Hospitals (such as Wallowa Memorial Hospital). "Sen. Hatch and I are working closely to lift the ridiculous restrictions the government puts on Critical Access Hospitals. They need to be able to do their job of

serving their rural communities," Wyden said.

County Commissioner Mike Hayward later remarked that the town hall was "one of the better town hall meetings I've been to. I thought there was a good range of questions, and the senator gave good answers in that he gave us his perception of things, even if everyone didn't agree with them."

LOTS: 20 building areas planned

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As for the property near the highway, "they should keep that area by the big dance hall open for Alpenfest," he said.

Thornberg, who wrote a letter in advance of the hearing, said his primary concern was that he did not see designated parking on the plan. "They're subdividing property that is now existing parking lot. I didn't see any proposed parking other than what exists now in the upper parking lot," he said.

As Thornberg points out, portions of the property along

the highway have served as overflow parking during peak tourist season. In response to parking concerns the owners, through Anderson, indicated they would continue using the bottom four lots as overflow parking and further pledged to improve parking if need be.

"Their own well-being with regard to their business is directly connected to having parking," said Anderson. "They would be foolish to do anything that would hamper that. The decision of the owners is that there will be no net decrease in parking with this development as

long as they own the place."

The tram corporation owns additional property along the front of the Edelweiss building and property south of that as well that could be developed for more parking if need be, Anderson said.

In addition, "There's always the possibility that the Edelweiss building might disappear one of these days," said Anderson.

BOWLBY: Event Saturday

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Art demonstrations are scheduled and sidewalk chalk art is encouraged. There will be games, music throughout the day, and downtown walking tours. The Tour Through Time tours are guided and tourists will learn about the history of the Bowlby Stone and how it impacted the architecture and buildings of the Enterprise community.

Also, stop by the Odd Fellows Hall between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. and view the silent auction items that Enterprise

Community Connection will have on display for your highest bid. Proceeds will benefit the Meals on Wheels program.

The Bowlby Bash is an all-inclusive, free family-oriented event. Mark your calendar on July 11th to "Celebrate Community" at the Bowlby Bash in historic Enterprise.

For the event schedule, exhibitor and vendor information contact Sondra Lozier at Favorite Finds on Main Street: 541-426-3229 or cell number 541-263-0104. Visit www.bowlbybash.org, like and follow Facebook.

The family of
HUBERT ALLAN 'AL' SLINKER,
would like to thank all the friends for the outpouring of sympathy, cards, food and prayers. Thank you especially to the Wallowa Memorial staff and nurses for their unfailing attention and loving care in his final days. And to Dr. Boyd and the Wallowa Mountain Medical staff for his care. At Al's request, no funeral will be held.
A Celebration of his life will be held on
July 18 from 1 pm til 4 pm
at his airport hangar in Enterprise.

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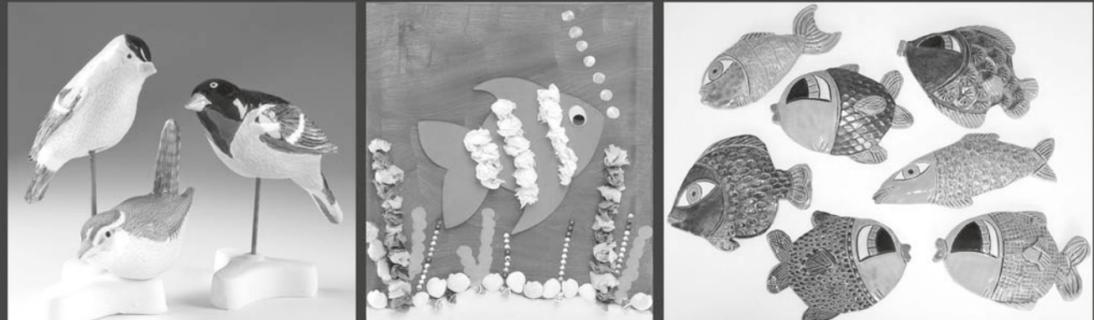
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BULL AND BUCK TAGS

To be donated to local charities by the Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is currently seeking applications from Wallowa County charitable organizations interested in receiving a Landowner Preference Tag (LOP) for Bull Elk or Buck Deer on the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve property for the 2016 season.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of community members and ranked based on the following considerations: the benefit to the community; the marketing plan for raising funds with the LOP tags; and the ability to use the tags to leverage additional funds or support.

Interested organizations should request an application from Justin Jones at 850-982-9224 or e-mail jjones@tnc.org. The application deadline is August 7th, 2015.

Each year The Nature Conservancy donates LOP tags to qualified local organizations. The LOP tags for the 2015 season were donated to Divide Camp, Eastern Oregon University Range Club, Enterprise Elk Lodge, Enterprise Public Library, Hurricane Creek Grange, and the Wallowa Land Trust. Since 2002, this program has raised approximately \$320,000 to support charitable organizations in Wallowa County.

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