



City shuts door on pot

All marijuana
businesses,
even medical
dispensaries,
banned in
Enterprise

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Enterprise City Council has reversed its direction on the licensing of medical marijuana.

In the regular Dec. 14 City Council meeting the councilors unanimously adopted an ordinance (No. 582) banning all marijuana-related businesses in the city of Enterprise. They made no exception for medical marijuana. They had previously voted to approve medical marijuana dispensaries provided they met with state requirements.

The decision required much discussion. The initial document under consideration stated that the Council found marijuana a “danger to the citizens of Enterprise, particularly the youth of the City.” However, although he totally supported opting out until the state determined rules more firmly, Mayor Steve Lear declared himself uncomfortable with the language that declared marijuana (including medical marijuana) a danger to the citizens.

Councilor Dave Elliott, for his part, made clear that he felt strongly that the evidence of the dangers was in. He referred to a 180-page document, produced by the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, which cited National Highway Safety Administration, hospital and law enforcement statistics for a multi-state area showing the effect of legalization of marijuana on health and safety.

See CITY, Page A11

2015 WINTERFEST WOWS

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Chestnuts roasted by an open fire, Frosty the Snowman danced on Main Street and kept spirits high, Yuletide songs were sung by a choir, and folks dressed up like Eskimos.

It was another Winterfest Celebration in downtown Enterprise and shoppers and revelers braved the blustery winds and enjoyed some new features to the traditional two-day celebration.

The trees along Main Street were a-twinkle with Christmas lights, every storefront dazzled with decorations, fire barrels crackled to welcome chatting groups of neighbors, Christmas bargains abounded in Enterprise shops and a new “pop-up” Christmas store sprang up around the corner on River Street.

See PARADE, Page A11



A Christmas band accompanies the Wild Carrot Herbals “float” carrot car. Left to right: Becky Nash, Joella Arment, Sara Crawford and Kim Barton.



Enterprise Winterfest mascot Frosty the Snowman keeps spreading the cheer in the parade.

MORE PICTURES ON A8 and A14

You don't have to navigate health care alone NEON, Community Health Workers can help secure coverage, find solutions

By Scot Heisel
Wallowa County Chieftain

When it comes to health care, finding solutions can be a daunting task. Fortunately, Wallowa County is full of trained professionals who can guide you through the forest of red tape free of charge.

Many of those professionals have direct or indirect ties to Northeast Oregon Network (NEON), a 501(c)3 nonprofit rural health collaborative of regional providers, agencies and community members.

NEON representatives have trained more than 90 Community Health Workers — expert navigators of the health labyrinth — throughout Northeast Oregon.

“They’re the boots on the ground,” said Vixen Radford, Outreach & Enrollment Specialist at NEON. “They help with application enrollment, patient navigation, connecting to services needed outside of health care, such as housing and food security.”

With open enrollment for 2016



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Free resources are available to help you navigate the health care enrollment process and find the best deal for your money.

coverage underway in Oregon, now is a particularly apt time to reach out to health professionals for help. Tuesday was the enrollment deadline for people

who want coverage to start Jan. 1, but open enrollment continues through Jan. 31. Those who met Oregon health plan income guidelines can enroll and

have their coverage start on date of request once they’re processed.

Community Health Workers also can help people apply for Medicaid, which can occur any time of the year.

However, Radford and fellow NEON staffer Pepper McColgan stress that their work goes far beyond paperwork. The nonprofit also is about education and self-reliance.

“We do a lot of advocacy for people with complicated health issues,” said McColgan, network development coordinator for NEON. “It’s not just fill out the forms. Everything we do always is with an eye toward empowerment. ... If I can teach you something, you’re no longer reliable on me.”

Beyond health coverage, NEON also assists people with serious medical conditions who might be overwhelmed by the health care system and their own recovery plans.

“We can walk them through steps they don’t even know exist,” Radford said.

See NEON, Page A11

