

Fair board appoints three new members

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa County Commissioners were pleased to appoint three fair board members during their Dec. 21 meeting.

Mike Falk, who was appointed last year to fill June Colony's position, was appointed for a full term; Velda Bales returned for a second term; and Grady Bronson replaced Tim Keisecker, who retired due to other commitments.

"We're glad they're willing to serve," said Commissioner Mike Hayward, who also serves on the fair board. "It's good to have people who are committed to the fair and fairgrounds. We think it's a great facility for the county."

The board is considering tackling a number of new projects in 2016.

Construction projects under discussion include replacing more seat- and foot-boards in the grandstand, Hayward said.

"We've had the foundation and bracing checked out and it's looking good," he said. "We will replace some timber, but it's got some big timber in it, stuff you don't see anymore."

Other projects include building perimeter fences and putting down mats in the beef barn.

"We're (also) working on bringing in some live music for the kickoff Saturday," said board Chairwoman Brinda Stanley.

The following Friday will feature a performance by KC Kunkle, who is returning for the second year. Kunkle also DJs the teen dance at the fair. Kunkle, an Enterprise High School graduate who now lives in La Grande, is a professional musician and has just released a Christmas album.

The Wallowa County Fair still relies heavily on volunteers.

"It's wonderful to have people donate their time to make sure the fair and fair board are successful," she said.

Chamber promotion works for all of us

By Kathleen Ellyn
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I've been wanting to write something about the work our Wallowa County Chamber does for us — and this week I've got the opportunity to mention just a few of the ways our county chamber promotes the area.

Our county chamber is one of six regional "destination marketing organizations" that send a representative to sit on the board of the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association (EOVA) and help decide how to promote our area.

EOVA develops a plan and often that results in Travel Oregon featuring our events and amenities. Needless to say, our best example of this was the Seven Wonders campaign that named the Wallowas as one of the seven wonders of the state. That campaign was amazingly successful at boosting tourism statewide (up 10 percent and millions of dollars in one year) and Travel Oregon won a Mercury Award for "Best Branding and Integrated Marketing Campaign" during the U.S. Travel Association's annual Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations conference in Portland last summer. Yeah, that's how good it was.

A close second in promoting our area — especially considering the potential-



Kathleen Ellyn

ly lucrative bicycling market, was the 7 Bikes 7 Wonders campaign which placed a one-of-a-kind, custom designed, high-end bike in the Wallowas for a bicyclist to win. A Baker resident who bikes in our area frequently (and who has numerous connections in the biking world) won that bike. You can't buy that kind of mad publicity.

Two more recent examples: Travel Oregon is featuring "Winter Get-Away" ideas and one of their recommendations is a visit to Historic Enterprise House. The beautiful presentation features a picture, describes the setting, our stunning backdrop of mountains, the nearness of Wallowa Lake and other tourism destinations (that's all of our businesses) and the delicious breakfasts served.

Yet another Travel Oregon feature is the "Winter Beers" list. No surprise, our often-feted Terminal Gravity Brewing in Enterprise makes the list. The beer featured as a Winter Beer is their Festivale brew. "... in the tradition of strong, dark British Ales. Savor this dark brown,

creamy headed brew with the pub's Corriente Beef Burger made with beef from nearby 6 Ranch," the article reads.

These final folks I'm mentioning are still getting settled and haven't joined their chamber, yet, but they love Wallowa County and will no doubt become part of the business community more completely in the near future.

I'm talking about the new owners of the Ponderosa Motel and Wilderness Inn in Enterprise. The new owners are Kris and Darin Naisbitt, who moved here from Utah this summer and took over the motels in September.

"Darin had always wanted his own business and we got looking around and found the Ponderosa and Wilderness and they were promising and here we are," Kris said. "We love Wallowa County. It's great. Business has been good. We're in the process of getting a website up and going. (So far) we've gotten a lot of repeat customers and people who drive in and drive by and see us."

Those people driving by and returning may have been tempted to visit our county for the first time thanks to the promotional skills of our chamber, Eastern Oregon Visitors Association and Travel Oregon.

Please send your Biz Buzz news tips to Kathleen Ellyn at kellyn@wallowa.com.

FOR THE RECORD

Dispatch log:

Monday, Dec. 21

- 7 a.m.: Burglary reported in Joseph
 - 1:50 p.m.: Pigs loose in rural Joseph
 - 6:33 p.m.: Sheriff's deputies arrested Brandon Matthews, 28, of Enterprise, Joshua Rhodes, 28, of Enterprise, Michael Olsen, 41, of Joseph and Will Rogers, 35, of Joseph for probation violations. All transported to Union County jail.
- #### Tuesday, Dec. 22
- 5:42 a.m.: Semi-truck jack-knifed at top of Minam Grade.
 - 6:31 a.m.: 911 call reporting barking dog in rural Joseph.
 - 12:37 p.m.: Vandalism reported in Wallowa.
 - 1:51 p.m.: Stray brown pit bull reported at Wallowa Lake.
 - 2:19 p.m.: Traffic stop in Enterprise.
 - 8:45 p.m.: 911 call for harassment in Enterprise.
 - 11:01 p.m.: 911 report of restraining order violation in Wallowa.
- #### Wednesday, Dec. 23
- 7:58 a.m.: Report of possible wolf deprecation in rural Joseph.
 - 8:17 a.m.: Meth possession in Enterprise.
 - 10:13 a.m.: Vehicle off the road in rural Enterprise.

Thursday, Dec. 24

- 1:48 p.m.: Tracy Elizabeth Passantino, 46, last known address in Wallowa, arrested in Dallas, Ore., on a Wallowa County Bench Warrant for resisting arrest, disorderly conduct II and harassment.
- 3:12 p.m.: 911 report of possible assault in Lostine.
- 11:55 p.m.: Vehicle in a ditch in rural Enterprise.

Friday, Dec. 25

- 1:36 p.m.: Civil issue in Enterprise.
- 4:52 p.m.: 911 report of domestic disturbance in Enterprise.

Saturday, Dec. 26

- 8:46 a.m.: 911 report of traffic complaint in rural Wallowa.
- 9:58 a.m.: 911 report of dispute in Enterprise.
- 2:46 p.m.: Information on possible civil dispute in Enterprise.
- 9:26 p.m.: Pendleton police arrested Kyle Edward Wisdom, 36, of Lostine on a Wallowa County parole and probation retainer. Transported to Umatilla County jail.

Sunday, Dec. 27

- 7:45 a.m.: 911 report of disturbance in Enterprise.
- 10:09 a.m.: Report of possibly injured large, white dog on Highway 82.
- 11:33 a.m.: Search and Rescue called out for possible search; turned out to be false signal.
- 1:54 p.m.: Vicious dog reported in Enterprise

PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Monday, Jan. 4
 - Enterprise school board in the Home Economics classroom at Enterprise High School. <http://enterpriseschool-istrict.com/>
- Wednesday, Jan. 6
 - Lostine City Council, 7:30 p.m. at City Hall.
- Jan. 14
 - Joseph City Council, 7 p.m. <http://www.josephoregon.org/>
- Monday, Jan. 11
 - Joseph School Board, 5:30 p.m. at

the school library. <http://www.joseph.k12.or.us/>
 • Wallowa School Board, 7 p.m. at the high school library.
 Tuesday, Jan. 12
 • Wallowa Union Railroad Authority Board, 5 p.m. at the WURR Depot in Elgin. Agenda: Rail with Trail project.

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Community Bank's charity raises \$24,000

Community Banks throughout northeast Oregon tallied up a total of \$24,116.03 in donations and bank matches during their Charity Drive that ran November through Dec. 18.

Community Bank matches up to \$500 per branch at 50 cents on the dollar. The goal this year was to raise a minimum of \$1,000 at each branch location in order to have the maximum bank match achieved and to provide at least \$1,500 for each charity. The goal was reached in 6 of the bank's 13 participating branches: Elgin, Wallowa, Enterprise, Joseph, Milton-Freewater and Baker City.

Some local service organizations that benefited from the drive are: Community Connection Food Bank (Enterprise & Joseph branches); Wallowa Food Bank (Wallowa branch): \$3,038; EOU Foundation Scholarship Fund for regional need-based scholarships (La Grande downtown & Valley branches): \$1,105.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thursday, Dec. 31

Ring in the New Year at the Wallowa Lake Lodge with live music, libations and a New Year's Eve buffet from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Homemade Jam bring their old-time country music to the lodge. Al Bell and Todd Kruger will play into the new year from 9:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Admission is \$20 at the door for live music and hors d'oeuvres. Beer, wine, beer and cocktails are available for sale.

Rooms and cabins are available. For more information call 541-432-9821. Breakfast will be served New Year's day.

Friday, Jan. 1

The Annual Wallowa Lake Polar Bear Plunge, 10 a.m. at the foot (north end) of Wallowa Lake. Don't arrive late, and be sure to bring a towel!

Tuesday, Jan. 5

Preparation for the next Wallowa Valley orchestra concert will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Enterprise High School band room. Dates for Tuesday rehearsals are as follows; Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26, and Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23. A concert is scheduled for Feb. 28 in Elgin. For more information contact the Inland Northwest Musicians, 541-289-4696 or associate conductor Randy Morgan 541-426-3593. More information about the WVO and INWM can be found on our facebook pages or by visiting our website, inlandnorthwestmusicians.com.

Wednesday, Jan. 6

Northeast Oregon Network (NEON) will host an open enrollment event from noon to 7 p.m. at Wallowa Resources, 401 NE 1st St., Suite A, in Enterprise. For more information, contact Vixen Radford at 541-398-2539 or vradford@neonoregon.org.

Sam Collett hosts a twice-monthly still life drawing gathering, complete with a live model every first and third Wednesday of the month from 7-9 p.m. at the Josephy Center. \$5-10 suggested donation for model. All skill levels welcome.

Sunday, Jan. 11

Enterprise Mayor Steve Lear will be hosting his bimonthly meeting, "An Afternoon with the Mayor," 3 to 5 p.m. in the Tomas Building Conference Room, 309 S. River St., Enterprise. The purpose of the meetings is to get local residents more actively involved and to move their issues forward.

Tuesday, Jan. 12

Community Connection is hosting free Energy Education Workshops with door prizes and giveaways from 1-3 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. at Joseph Fire Hall. Energy Education workshops are free and will give you some useful information on how to save money on your energy bills.

Saturday, Jan. 16

Old-Time Community Dance (Squares, Reels, Circles, Waltzes, Contras) with Live String Band and caller from 7-10 p.m.

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at Hurricane Creek Grange Hall, between Enterprise and Joseph. \$5/person, under 12 free. Beginners welcome. No partner or special clothing required. All dances taught and called. For details, call Laura at 541-398-0800.

Lower Valley Farmers' Market, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 301 E. 1st St., Wallowa.

Wednesday, Jan. 20

Sam Collett hosts a twice-monthly still life drawing gathering, complete with a live model every first and third Wednesday of the month from 7-9 p.m. at the Josephy Center. \$5-10 suggested donation for model. All skill levels welcome.

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Saturday, Jan. 23

Hurricane Creek Grange is hosting a Bunco tournament from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. No experience necessary. \$10 buy-in. Baked potato and side salad lunch. Bring money for the Dutch auction during lunch break. Proceeds to help fund GWA committee projects. For details, call 541-426-8015.

Lower Valley Farmers' Market, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 301 E. 1st St., Wallowa.

Wednesday, Jan. 27

Community Connection is hosting free Energy Education Workshops with door prizes and giveaways from 1-3 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. at Wallowa Senior Center. Energy Education workshops are free and will give you some useful information on how to save money on your energy bills.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We wish you and your family a wonderful new year in 2016!
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The Wallowa County Chieftain

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