

Lawmakers introduce outdoor recreation bill

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

When Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden visited Wallowa County last July 3 along with Travel Oregon staff and met with tourism and business folk at Wallowa Lake Lodge, he was listening more than he was talking. And, turns out, he was paying attention.

At that meeting he asked for ideas and advice about what Wallowa County most needed and what he could do to help meet those needs. Throughout the meeting, Wyden repeatedly reminded the crowd of business owners, foresters, boosters, commissioners, artists and citizens that he needed to hear what a man on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee could do — not what local agencies ought to be tackling.

Now Wallowa County and Oregon is seeing what the tandem team of Wyden and Rep.

Earl Blumenauer can do.

On March 17, Wyden and Blumenauer introduced legislation to increase outdoor recreation access for visitors and boost rural economies in Oregon and nationwide.

Based on input from Oregonians about how to remove bureaucratic roadblocks to public lands, the “Recreation Not Red-Tape Act” (RNRT) expands outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans, especially underserved communities such as veterans, seniors and young people. It also holds federal agencies accountable for making outdoor recreation a priority.

The bill is based on draft legislation Wyden released last fall after he and Blumenauer took a statewide tour of Oregon’s Seven Wonders.

“The RNRT Act puts to work the creative ideas I heard from Oregonians about how to streamline the process when it comes to opening up

access to our great outdoor places,” Wyden said.

The act will expedite the permitting process for recreation guides and make it easier for visitors to get recreation use permits by making all park passes available online.

The bill also focuses on encouraging all military branches to provide service members and veterans with information about outdoor recreation; encourages more outdoor recreation and volunteer opportunities for people 55 and older; enhances the role of the Public Land Corps — the National Park Service’s work and education program for volunteers ages 15 to 25; and makes a certain number of free park passes available



Wyden

to low-income schools.

It also requires the Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to promote recreation when making land and water management decisions. It also directs the federal and management agencies to find new ways to extend recreation seasons in a sustainable way. And it helps maintain public lands by encouraging more volunteers to assist with trail maintenance projects and by requiring the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service to choose up to 15 trails for prioritized maintenance.

In his introductory speech to the House, Wyden called Oregonians “the true experts on outdoor recreation — it is in our DNA.”

The bill is supported by more than 50 state and national organizations, from American Alpine Club to Vet Voice.

No E. Oregon reps on nature task force

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Money will be found to fund a move to connect Oregonians with nature through outdoor recreation and education. How it will be funded, the extent of the funding and which counties will benefit most remain in question.

The governor-appointed, 16-member legislative task force on Funding for Fish, Wildlife and Related Outdoor Recreation and Education was created by House Bill 2402, which was passed by the 2015 Oregon Legislature.

Not one of its members is from Eastern Oregon and that lack of representation has not gone unnoticed by the governor’s office, according to Scott Jorgensen, legislative aid to Sen. Doug Whitsett of Klamath Falls, a member of the task force.

During the task force’s Feb. 29 meeting, Brett Brownscombe, Natural Resources Policy Advisor to the Gov. Kate Brown, said that a 17th member from the east side of the state would be named to the task force. The governor’s office has a few names in mind, but Brownscombe, said he was open to suggestions.

Task force members include representatives of the outdoor recreation business community, government officials and conservationists. Their recommendations on how to move forward with the project are due to the Legislature by Sept. 15 for possible consideration during the 2017 legislative session.

The focus of the task force began with hunting and fishing, but after hearing testimony from a number of agency representatives and focusing on “out-of-the-box” thinking, the group realized a broader approach was necessary to reach all residents. Discussions continue with conservation, arts and conservation, art and wine and more as possible connectors. Conferences with tribal members also are planned.

“I think it’s a good-faith effort so far,” said Jorgensen. “The agency started with hunting and fishing as a primary focus, but now we’re looking at best practices in other states.”

Wallowa County Interim County Commissioner John Lawrence said that no agency had informed the commissioners of the work or makeup of the task force.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Thursday, March 31
Community BINGO at St. Pius Church Hall, 407 S. Pine St. in Wallowa; Doors open at 5:30 p.m.; beverages and snacks available; 100 percent of proceeds paid out to winners; sponsored by the Ladies of St. Margaret’s Circle.

The Best of the 42nd NW Filmmakers’ Festival Tour: Ben Popp will be at the Joseph Center to show nine short films. Doors open at 6:30; suggested donation of \$8 is encouraged. Watch the trailer at: <http://festivals.nwfilm.org/nwfest42>.

Friday, April 1
Project Heartbeat will be conducting a first aid/CPR/AED class in Enterprise to train lay responders to assist those suffering medical emergencies, both minor and major, until the ambulance arrives. Upon completion of the course participants will get two-year certification from the American Red Cross. Cost of the seven-hour class is \$45. For more information, the location of the class or to register, call 541-432-0259.

Saturday, April 2
Lower Valley Farmers’ Market, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 301 E. 1st St., Wallowa.

Monday, April 4
Missoula Children’s Theatre is holding auditions for “Peter and Wendy” from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the OK Theatre in Enterprise. “Peter and Wendy” will be presented in two performances at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. the OK Theatre on Saturday, April 9.

Tuesday, April 5
Joseph Center for Arts and Culture brown bag lunch: falconer Getty Pollard of Lostine will talk about his art and science. Brown bags start at noon and are free and open to the public. For more information, call Cheryl or Rich at 541-432-0505.

The County Caregivers’ Support Group will be sponsoring a class on relieving stress through yoga. Presented by Esther LaPointe of Salutations Studio. 3 p.m. in the Wallowa Hospital Conference Room. 541-432-0419

Kindergarten Roundup will be held in the kindergarten room at Wallowa Elementary School. Registration from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Parents need to bring birth

certificate, social security number (voluntary), and immunization records. Child must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1. Babysitting will be furnished in the first-grade room.

Friday, April 8
Fishtrap’s final Fireside event of the season features Abbie Amabisca, Cameron Scott and longtime Fishtrap favorite Janie Tippet. An open mic reading will follow. 7 p.m. at Fishtrap, 400 East Grant St. in Enterprise. Admission is free. For more information go to Fishtrap.org or contact Program Manager Mike Midlo at 541-426-3623 or mike@fishtrap.org.

Saturday, April 9
Lower Valley Farmers’ Market, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 301 E. 1st St., Wallowa.

The Music Alliance presents Tunsmith Night, featuring songwriters Lewi Longmire, Steve Gibson and Andrew Esquibel, 7 p.m. at Lear’s Main Street Grill in Enterprise. Doors open at 6 p.m. All ages welcome. Admission is \$10 at the door or by season pass.

Tuesday, April 12
Joseph Center for Arts and Culture brown bag lunch: “Bird songs.” Brown bags start at noon and are free and open to the public. For more information, call Cheryl or Rich at 541-432-0505.

Thursday, April 14
How to Have Your Bees: M Crow & Co. in Lostine is hosting a beekeeping presentation from 6 to 7:30 p.m. There will be a question-and-answer session following the presentation. Call 541-569-2285 to sign up.

Saturday, April 16
Lower Valley Farmers’ Market, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., 301 E. 1st St., Wallowa.

Joseph Farmers Market Vendors Symposium from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Fishtrap, 400 E Grant St. in Enterprise. Learn about the new season and take advantage of a new slate of valuable resources for veteran vendors and anyone who is interested in testing the farmers market waters. Following presentations by sales specialist Kathy Bingham and Jody Berry of Wild Carrot there will be a panel discussion and a question-and-answer session on all things related to the market.

Tuesday, April 19
Joseph Center for Arts and Culture brown bag lunch: folks from Blue Mountain Wildlife in Pendleton will be here with birds. After the noon brown bag, we will invite schools to bring students in to see the birds. Brown bags start at noon and are free and open to the public. For more information, call Cheryl or Rich at 541-432-0505.

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

Wallowa County Humane Society Volunteer orientation, 10:00am at the Wallowa County Humane Society Information Center, 104 S. River Street, Enterprise.

See CALENDAR, Page A12



Catch the Bus!

- **Intercity Transportation to La Grande** Monday and Thursday Weekly ~ Cost \$5.00 each way. Free access for veterans medical appointments in La Grande.
- **Mealsite Bus** ~ providing transportation to Senior Center for lunch ~ Cost \$1.00 round trip.
- **Tuesday & Thursday Shopping Bus** provides transportation for shopping and errands throughout Wallowa County ~ Cost \$3.00 from Wallowa/Joseph, \$2.00 Enterprise only.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION OF WALLOWA COUNTY



-Up Town Art-



13 S. Main St., Joseph
541-432-0203



Best secret in the County!

OPENING DAY

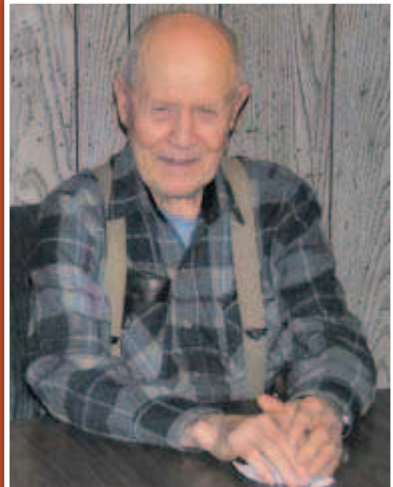
Currie's Clubhouse Cafe opens APRIL 1st

Not a golfer? No problem. Come taste!

FREE Menu Samples 6-8PM
Public Invited • No Host Bar

66098 Golf Course Road • Enterprise, OR • 541-426-3246

Otis Varney



celebrated his 95th birthday
March 23, 2016 with family and
a sunny afternoon drive to Imnaha!

Wallowa County

HEALTH LINE





Wallowa Valley Eye Care
519 W. North Street, Enterprise
541.426.3413
Mon-Thurs 9 to Noon/1-5pm; Fri. 9-1



MOTIVATIONS Fitness Center LLC
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Weight Room • Cardio
Women's Circuit • Tanning
202 W. Main, Enterprise
541-426-0313



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Specializing in Anti-Aging Skin Therapy
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Waxing Services, Brow Sculpting
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Wallowa County Health Department
758 NW 1st Street, Enterprise, OR
(541) 426-4848
We offer services to all ages and income levels including: WIC, family planning, immunizations, flu shots, restaurant and hotel licensing, community tobacco prevention and education, chronic disease prevention. We provide equal opportunity programs.

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

matinee performance

SUNDAY APRIL 10TH

The evening performance is sold-out so they've added a matinee show so you don't have to miss out!

3:00 PM

OK Theatre
208 W Main St - Enterprise

9-Time GRAMMY Award Winners • Voted Best Country & Western Band by Rolling Stone • Lifetime Achievement Award from AMA

Tickets available at Joseph Hardware, The Dollar Stretcher, M. Crow and online at Eventbrite.com

