

# Candidates make their case at forum

By Stephen Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Several dozen interested citizens attended the Wallowa County Candidate Forum on Friday at Cloverleaf Hall in Enterprise.

Both remaining candidates for Wallowa County Commissioner — ranchers Todd Nash and Stephen Wolfe — answered questions and introduced their platforms.

Former commissioner candidate Dan DeBoie also spoke to explain to voters why he dropped his bid for the position. He also used the opportunity to warn against using the federal government as a scapegoat for all the county’s problems.

“We’ve got to get past that somehow,” DeBoie said. “If we want to make Wallowa County a better place, Oregon a better place, the U.S. a better place, we need to get on a positive bent and not just a gripe session, which is what I seem to see an awful lot of.”

State Rep. Greg Barreto of Dist. 58 also attended and addressed the audience. Incumbent Republican State Sen. Bill Hansell and his challenger, independent Barbara Dickerson, were scheduled to participate but neither attended.

John Williams, the county’s extension agent, served as emcee for the evening. He opened the event by outlining rules for the candidates, who were required to answer several questions submitted by the Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce. Audience members submitted questions as well.

Rep. Barreto, who is running unopposed for his seat, briefly addressed the audience about the latest goings-on in Salem. He was followed by Nash and Wolfe, who gave a brief biographical sketch and outlined their reasons for running. A question-and-answer session followed, and the candidates were given two minutes to answer each question. The candidates were asked



Stephen Wolfe answers a question Friday at Cloverleaf Hall.

whether they were familiar with commissioner responsibilities and how they would carry out those responsibilities.

Nash said his conversations with the commissioners and county department heads gave him an idea of commissioner responsibilities. He also cited a general lack of funds as a major problem that he said could be bolstered if the federal government were persuaded to open up the forests and allow for more timber harvesting.

Wolfe did not substantially differ from Nash on the question, though he added that the county’s voice needed to be heard in Salem.

Regarding which criteria the candidates would use to determine how to vote on an issue, Wolfe said financial considerations and the need of the citizens would guide his choices. Nash said he looked at the long-term consequences of decisions as a means of determining his vote.

Regarding budget prepa-

ration, both candidates relied heavily on their background as ranchers to indicate their budgeting experience. Both also pledged to make themselves available to the community as much as possible.

The candidates were asked whether they supported the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority decision to open the rail line for the Rails with Trails project from Elgin to Joseph.

Both candidates said they originally opposed the county’s purchase of the rail line because of the expenses involved in making the line a viable means of transport. Nash said he wasn’t familiar enough with the Rail with Trail project to offer an opinion, while Wolfe said he backed the project to a limited extent but wanted more input from affected landowners. He also said the project presented the possibility of carrying more fiber optic line and possibly a natural gas line as well.

When asked whether it



Todd Nash addresses the audience.

was good to separate cattle from streams designated as trout or salmon habitat, Wolfe said it hadn’t been proven to him that it would be “valuable” to fence such streams from cattle. He added that large congregations of cattle near such streams was unhealthy, but he didn’t see it as a problem where cattle grazing is properly managed.

“I think we have a lot more to learn on this issue,” Wolfe said.

Nash replied that for him, it depended on the scenario. Like Wolfe, he thought large concentrations of cattle near streams “isn’t good for anybody, sloughing dirt off in there or one thing or another.” He added that properly managed cattle were probably an asset to stream health.

When asked how they would address economic de-

velopment to keep viable employment in the county, Nash said natural resources were what the county did well. He pointed to the tourist trade and the cattle industry as well as the timber industry. Wolfe agreed with Nash about the resources and added that encouraging local business startups was also a viable option.

The final question asked the candidates about their ap-

proach to working with and overseeing county departments. Wolfe said he believes that communication with department heads and between departments is key to good management, as is allowing department heads do their job with minimal interference as long as results met expectations. Nash said he likes to communicate with both department heads and employees to understand department workings. Like Wolfe, he believes hiring someone to do a job implies a level of trust that they will do their job with minimal supervision.

The forum atmosphere was very congenial with no voices raised or any of the rancor of mainstream candidate forums on the national level. Afterward, Wolfe commented, “I really enjoyed it. I thought it went well, although I would have liked some different questions.”

Nash expressed similar sentiments.

“I think it was fine; I thought it went well.”

Annette Lathrop of the county’s Republican Central Committee said she appreciated the depth of questions.

“I thought we saw the different sides of the two commissioner candidates, and I appreciate the opportunity to have this forum before the election.”

Barreto saw the evening as a success for the county.

“I thought that Steve and Todd did really well answering questions. In the end, Wallowa County will win either way in this race because both candidates are stellar.”

# Soroptimists announce 2016 fellowship winner

Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa County Soroptimists announced during their April meeting that Danielle Nash is the recipient of the groups’ \$2,000 Fellowship Award.

Nash is co-director of Assertive Community Treatment and Psychosocial Rehabilitation at Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree in social work from Portland State University and will be graduating in 2018. She has a bachelor’s degree from Western Oregon University in community health education with a minor in human biology.

While an undergraduate student at WOU, she was selected by the faculty and staff as the Outstanding Undergraduate Health Education Major and selected by the American Association of Health Education as the Student Major of the Year. WOU’s vice president of student affairs selected

Nash to receive WOU’s Leadership Certificate as well as the Who’s Who in American Colleges and Universities award.

The Fellowship Award is presented to a woman who is continuing her education with a post-graduate program. Recipients receive a cash award of \$2,000 for educational expenses.

“I consider dignity, health and welfare, and equality to be basic human rights,” Nash said. “Because of this, I am interested in serving marginalized populations. Some people need help, and that doesn’t make them any less of a person to ask for it. I believe that it is the obligation of those who are able to help to do so.”

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*Thank You*

The family of the late, Darrell McFetridge, would like to thank the staff at Wallowa Memorial Hospital for the care they gave to Darrell during his stay in the hospital. We also want to thank the many people who visited Darrell in the hospital, brought food to our home after he passed away, sent flowers and cards, called to wish their condolences, and all of those who attended Darrell's funeral who we didn't get a chance to see. Darrell loved Wallowa County and all of the people. This outpouring of support in our time of loss has made us all feel blessed to be a part of Wallowa County.

*Sincerely,*

*Marlie, Steve, Jay, Dan, Carl, Terry,*

*Diane and their families.*

**HAPPY 98TH BIRTHDAY!**

**FRIDAY - MAY 6, 2016**

*Minnie Modrich Fregulia*

*Enterprise, Oregon*

*MOM, GRAMMY,*

*GREAT-GRANDMA, AUNT*

**BID REQUEST for**

**decked logs removed from OR**

**Highway 245 in Baker County**

The Oregon Department of Transportation is accepting bids for fire-killed, processed, and decked ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir timber in Baker County. Log decks are located on USFS property, on the west side of OR245, off USFS Road 11 approximately 0.3 mile from its junction with OR 245 at approximately milepost 29.

**Both ODOT and USFS-owned logs are present on the site. ODOT-owned logs are located on the east end and are marked with a spot of yellow paint.**

**Bids are being accepted for ODOT-owned logs.**

Tree removal operations are currently active and log decking will be completed May 15. This timber sale will be made on a lump sum basis. A \$5,000.00 bid deposit will be required to be submitted with the bid.

- Bid packages will be available **AFTER MAY 15.**
- Bids are due **MAY 25.** Logs may not be exported.

For more information, or to request a bid packet (available after May 15), call ODOT Forester at 503-508-1346

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