

Celebration brings ideas to lodge

Construction of conference center under consideration

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Investors and fans alike gathered at the Wallowa Lake Lodge on Saturday for the much anticipated "We Saved the Lodge" celebration.

Through the combined efforts of local investors and support throughout the Pacific Northwest, the newly formed Lake Wallowa Lodge LLC raised \$3.1 million to purchase the lodge and cover the expenses of a nine-month campaign.

It was a whirlwind, history-making endeavor, led by managing director James Monteith.

Lake Wallowa Lodge LLC was created specifically to preserve a popular tourist area from excessive development while still proudly embracing the Travel Oregon 7 Wonders of Oregon designation.

On Saturday, the lodge kitchen staff served 141 of the investors (and more interested parties). There were champagne or cider toasts hailing the work of the core group and the



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Lodge Manager Laura Cosgrove concentrates as she pours out the champagne for the celebratory toasts at the "Save the Lodge" community gathering Saturday at Wallowa Lake Lodge.

staff at the lodge — and more investors stepped forward.

"We actually got six more investors," Monteith said.

A board of nine managers has been appointed and seven committees or working groups designated according to the interests of the investors.

"There's going to be opportunities for contributions (of talent) in those committees," Monteith said. "They're intended to be portals for people who have various interests."

There are three legs to the plan going forward, Monteith

said.

The first leg is the completion of the remodel of the Cattleman's Bar downstairs in the lodge, perhaps connecting it by circular stair to the lobby and back porch. Nothing is decided at this point. It's all brainstorming, but architects have offered their time and many exciting ideas were kicked around.

The second leg of the plan is considering whether to add a few more cabins and a couple more rooms to the lodge. Again, no decisions have been

made, but ideas are being considered.

The third leg of the project is the construction of a small conference center.

"The conference center could go over where the shop is now, on the edge of the parking lot," Monteith said. "This is just a possibility. A walkway or breezeway could connect the lodge and conference center."

All of the plans are designed to "preserve the Wallowa experience," while providing opportunities for more



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Wallowa Lake Lodge Board Chairman Jay Graves and "delusional dreamer" James Monteith toast to the completion of a dream Saturday evening.

people to have that experience, Monteith said.

Investor Alexandra Jordon of Walla Walla explained that Wallowa experience this way:

"The first time I came to this area the hair on my arms stood up and I knew this was a very special place. I think what this group needs to do next is to decide what is the experience we want to provide — and let's do that."

Dave Albion of Lebanon, treasurer of Lake Wallowa

Lodge LLC, reminded investors to think carefully.

"We have the chance to write the next chapter of Wallowa Lodge," he said.

Whatever that chapter looks like in detail, the investors are committed to preservation in hand with more community involvement.

For a comprehensive investor's packet with prospectus, call 541-398-0305 or send an email request to info@lake-wallowalodge.com.

Admirers, treasure-seekers beat a path at Joseph's annual Art Walk

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

Perfect weather greeted art aficionados who ventured into Joseph to take part in the city's 10th annual Art Walk on Saturday. Several galleries went out of their way to make this year's event special, serving hors d'oeuvre and libations.

Rhea Jeffreys-Salas of Valley Bronze at 18 S. Main St. said her gallery prepared for the event by displaying work of new artists such as Val Freeman's impressionistic, kiln-fired works as well as that of Union metal fabrication artist Tracy Case.

The gallery also brought in bronze works from Oregon automotive bronze artist Sam Wanlass for the show, as well as for next weekend's Oregon Mountain Cruise car show.

"We're really excited to be featuring his stuff," Jeffreys-Salas said.

"The tourists have been amazing," Jeffreys-Salas said. "We open at 10 (a.m.), and I had people peering in the windows and trying to get in at 9:30."

She added that she hoped to have about 200 people perusing the gallery throughout the day.

Missy Marshall of Missy's Uptown Art at 13 S. Main St. celebrated the Art Walk at her new space she's semi-sharing with famed Western landscape and cowboy photographer Robert Dawson, who



Steve Tool/Chieftain

The ball with sprouting horns was just one of Scott Foster's pieces attracting attention at Stewart Jones Design.

moved to the Wallowa Valley area from Cave Creek, Ariz. Dawson rents the space next

door. Marshall has represented Dawson in her gallery for more than a dozen years.

"Robert wanted a space, and next door became available," Marshall said. "Since we overlap anyway, Robert surprised me and took the wall out, which we'd talked about. We've worked together for so long that it was an easy evolution."

Both spaces feature examples of Dawson's work.

Down at the Stewart Jones Designs gallery, Jones' wife Catherine Matthias, who designs the gallery's displays, brought in the work of Portland sculptor/fabricator Scott Foster especially for the event on the recommendation of Matthias' daughter.

Many of Foster's pieces have a mythological feel with a half-man, half-beast motif,

Matthias said. Foster's work is featured in the gallery's display windows as well as inside the gallery.

The work of local wooden bowl designer and creator Tom Clevenger was prominently featured in the SJD gallery as well.

By 6:30 p.m. the sidewalks of Joseph contained a large number of people, many carrying the art work they purchased, making their way from gallery to crowded gallery in search of more treasures.

From that vantage point, the Art Walk looked like a complete success.

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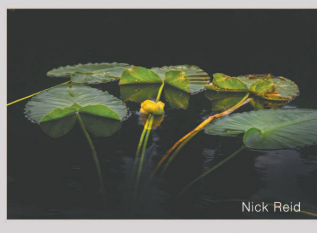
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