

# Are your animals secure?

We ask a lot of our local law enforcement officers, particularly those in the Enterprise Police Department and the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office. Even when those agencies are at full staff, which is rare these days, they're tasked with handling so much and covering so much ground that it's a wonder how they manage to do it all.

**EDITORIAL**  
Voice of the Chieftain

We count on them to keep the bad guys behind bars amid an ever-rising crime rate. That's their No. 1 job and we're betting that if you asked them they'd say they simply don't get enough time to focus on that top priority.

Meanwhile, this week's Dispatch Log (Page 3) is packed full of animal-response calls, an important but far too frequent responsibility of local officers and deputies. Just in the seven days from July 11-17, there were three calls of horses loose, one report of a loose cow, two animal complaints (often barking or neglect), three reports of dogs missing and three reports of other dogs found.

Those are just the cases that were reported to the county's dispatch center. Go online and you'll find social media pages devoted to returning stray animals home and to finding homes for those that have been abandoned.

And it's not simply a law enforcement issue. The local Humane Society does incredible work with no permanent shelter and on a shoestring budget. Much of this work is done by unpaid volunteers. While chasing down loose animals is a big part of their job, again there are other areas where there time could be put to better use.

There's no doubt that Wallowa County is an animal-friendly area. Every truck has a dog and every road is lined with livestock, pets and working animals of all sorts.

It's also true that we get a lot of visitors in the summer, which may help account for our recent summer spike in incidents — it's easy to lose a dog when you're on vacation.

Unfortunately, we can't just blame the tourists. This is a year-round problem, and we can do a much better job of keeping our animals penned up.

Animals are crafty. They find ways to get loose. We can't simply decide we're going to keep our animals on our property and poof, it's done. But we can do our part to secure our yards and pastures before the escape, not after.

This county doesn't have a bunch of money to throw around. If we're going to own animals, the least we can do is keep them secured. It's the neighborly thing to do and the easiest way we all can ensure our precious county tax dollars aren't being wasted.

— Scot Heisel



# 45 Years on Main Street

For decades Ben Weathers held important positions in Wallowa County — postmaster, judge and county humorist, to name a few. His column in The Chieftain was called "50 years on Main Street."

And now I've hit 45. A century or two ago most men didn't live to age 45. And in many places in the world, given the current situations of war, unrest, islands sinking into the sea and landscapes drying up or flooding away, millions — maybe billions — of people are scrambling to get enough to eat to make it that long.

But 45 years ago I had the good fortune to land in Wallowa County, not knowing the place from Alberta, Canada, or Queensland, Australia. And unlike many of the young and restless fleeing American cities in the "back-to-the-land" movement, I had a job — with the Extension Service as a Community Development agent. My job was to find and develop jobs for others.

I wasn't worried about getting enough to eat; in fact, soon I was planting big gardens and worried about making sauerkraut that would beat Margie Voss' at the county fair.

But that was later. On the first day of work, fresh from a week of meetings in Corvallis with the experts from Oregon State University, I showed up in suit and tie. I got to the Extension Office on the



**MAIN STREET**  
Rich Wandschneider

second floor of the county courthouse (where the county attorney is now) early on a Monday morning and met secretary Ruth Makin, who told me that the boss, Chuck Gavin, probably was having coffee at Homan's Drug Store across the street.

I looked out those big windows at the people crossing River and Main streets, many funneling in to the courthouse. None had ties. I shed mine — and hid it and the jacket in a closet. When Gavin came in he introduced himself, told me to sit down and asked me where I'd grown up. When told him Minnesota, he asked how big a town. When I said about 1,500, he allowed I might make it in the county.

And then we were off on a 10-hour tour with Ranger Keith Zobell to Buckhorn and Billie Meadows, Flora and Lost Prairie. We saw Civilian Conservation Corps water troughs, logging shows, cow herds and wheat fields. And when we got back to town my "low shoes" were full of chaff and stick-tights — I'd need some boots.

It was a great introduction to this place. I worked and learned alongside

Chuck for five years, went to granges and fairs, bull sales and county planning meetings. Then, in 1976, I moved across Main Street to start the bookstore. We started upstairs of where it is now, in Dr. Clark's old dental office. Thus the "loft" part of Bookloft.

After Chuck retired he hid a pack of cigarettes behind the used books (we still smoked in public in those days) in the backroom, which had become Judy's Kitchen, and became a regular, along with retired Imnaha school teacher Jack Finch and musician Max Bauer, who'd come home to take care of his mother, Ethel Wade, and her entourage — another story.

We found solutions to most of the world's problems in Judy's Kitchen and worked on some local ones: a coop art gallery with Eve Slinker, Gary Wisheart, Ted Juve and Dave Jensen; Don Green and Malcolm Dawson came in to launch the local Arts Council. One year Kim Stafford came to be a writer in the schools, and with Alvin Josephy retiring and spending longer summers here, we got together to launch Fishtrap in 1988.

I moved again, up Main Street, to share a space and new-fangled computer with engineer Ralph Swinehart. And then Fishtrap got the Coffin House and I moved off Main Street to Grant.

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# Where can travelers stay in Joseph?

I am a property owner in Joseph who is interested in making a property into a nightly rental. I have earned a master's degree in health administration and a bachelor's degree in business with a minor in agriculture.

I am going to give you my beliefs so you understand my position: I am a Christian; I am a believer in the U.S. Constitution; I am a strong believer in personal property rights; and I believe in the U.S. democratic system of government. From these beliefs I accept the decision of the City Council to ban nightly rentals but it doesn't mean I have to agree with the decision.

From The Chieftain's July 5 Out of the Past column: "70 years ago, July 11, 1946. Rooms will be needed to accommodate a large number of visitors during the celebration of Chief Joseph Days. Anyone who can make available an extra room is asked to list it at the Caton Hotel in Enterprise or the Chief Joseph Hotel in Joseph. A rate of \$3 for a room with a double bed has been recommended."

I imagine Wallowa County gearing up for the Chief Joseph Days celebration and the hotel or inn owners saying, "We are all filled up; we have no more room at the inn."

Rather than put a damper on those travelers coming to the area, the business owners did the following: 1) solicited

## GUEST COLUMN

Jeff Whitaker

people who may have extra rooms; 2) did the marketing for them by making a list at the inn; and 3) even recommended what to charge.

Wow. Can you imagine that happening today? The common sense of it all, allowing people to live in a home that isn't even theirs for money. This was just 70 years ago.

So let us go back a little farther in history with a couple named Joseph and Mary who were traveling to a town named Bethlehem.

"The inn was overcrowded, and Joseph accordingly sought lodgings with distant relatives, but every room in Bethlehem was filled to overflowing. On returning to the courtyard of the inn, he was informed that the caravan stables, hewn out of the side of the rock and situated just below the inn, had been cleared of animals and cleaned up for the reception of lodgers. Leaving the donkey in the courtyard, Joseph shouldered their bags of clothing and provisions and with Mary descended the stone steps to their lodgings below. They found themselves located in what had been a grain storage

room to the front of the stalls and managers. Tent curtains had been hung, and they counted themselves fortunate to have such comfortable quarters."

So another story where the inn was full and Bethlehem was filled to overflowing. The story doesn't state what the fee was to stay at the inn or whether the inn was in a residential zone or commercial zone, but I am sure there was a charge. Doesn't this sound very similar to modern day Chief Joseph Days?

So the City Council voted to ban short-term rentals within the city's residential zones on a 4-3 vote. According to Mayor Dennis Sands, 99 percent of the people he queried favored a ban of nightly rentals in Joseph. Given the same scenario as Jesus' parents today, Mayor Denis Sands would tell Joseph and Mary that there is no room at the inn, no room in Joseph, they must leave. Does anyone feel punched in the gut that the council members and mayor would give the boot to Jesus' parents? People did what they could to help people out, even 2,000 years ago. I know the council got the current nightly rentals who have been collecting the bed tax grandfathered in following the ban. I have to give the credit here to the city attorney and not the council.

Regardless, history is not aligning with the council's decision to ban.

Jeff Whitaker resides in Joseph.

# Vote suppression silences voices

The 2016 presidential election is fast approaching. A question every voter should ask is, "Will my vote for a president count or will it be a victim of vote suppression?" Because of the all-or-nothing approach we use with the Electoral College results, many votes don't matter.

If you vote for a candidate who does not win the majority of popular votes in your state, your vote is not reflected in the Electoral College results.

Because of vote suppression, many experience their political voices (votes) silenced if they're not among the majority of their state. 56,431,932 votes (both Democrat and Republican) in 2012 were not part of the Electoral College results

## LETTERS to the EDITOR

because of vote suppression. Your vote is your voice and it should matter regardless of whom you vote for or where you live. Vote suppression is real, non-partisan and it affects everyone.

Equal voice voting is a proportional voting approach that is the fairest offered, closely aligning Electoral College results with the popular vote on a state-by-state basis. It does not require a constitutional amendment to implement, and it helps curb vote suppression.

The first step for any change is to become aware of an issue. A free book is

available at [www.equalvoicevoting.com](http://www.equalvoicevoting.com) that reviews the last nine presidential elections and shows what could have occurred if Equal Voice Voting had been used instead.

Second, simply talk. Sharing your views with others in an honest dialogue is essential for change.

Third, encourage your legislators to put their constituents first and stop vote suppression. Get your state to participate in this cause that affects so many.

Finally, be sure to vote, regardless of which presidential candidate you favor. Other political offices and local issues need you to be involved. Voting matters.

Jerry Spriggs  
West Linn, Ore.

## LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor are subject to editing and should be limited to 275 words. Writers should also include a phone number with their signature so we can call to verify identity. The Chieftain does not run anonymous letters.

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