

HOUSING

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As a result, the county currently receives \$50,000 per year in grant money from the program, which was established by House Bill 3294 during Oregon's last legislative session to develop and track a program to handle probation issues and reduce the prison population.

HB3294 recognized that the cycle of repeated incarceration would be the answer to curbing criminal activity: interrupting that cycle and providing treatment, support and training is more effective.

Hacker seeks funds from "anywhere I can get them," he says, but the county only provides \$1,000 each year for transitional housing.

So, Hacker wrote the grant proposal for Wallowa County, which includes \$20,000 to be spent on mental health counseling and transitional housing. The rest of the money is spent on offender supervision, drug and alcohol assistance, managing the county work crew, and sharing \$10,000 with the non-profit Safe Harbors for victim assistance.

As it stands, since Wallowa County has no transitional housing, Hacker is obliged to spend the money for transitional housing to temporarily put probationers or parolees up in local motels.

"I don't like that," Hacker said. "It's not a good environment for rehabilitation."

Difficult choices

"With 110 on parole or probation in the county, how do you screen who you're going to help and who not?" Hacker asked. "Most of these people are not bad people, they're people who made a poor choice and are now labeled as bad."

When Isley volunteered to take in four individuals last year, Hacker gave a small portion of his \$1,000 county money to Isley "to at least help keep the lights on." This represented a savings from installing the individuals in hotels and gave them a much better chance of actually making life changes. The fact that Isley's tiny program is faith-based was an added plus.

"Isley's idea is more hands-on and faith-based than a county facility (would be)," Hacker said.

Services Isley provides in a sober setting that are not otherwise available in standard transitional housing include transportation to help residents get to work and appointments, going with them to help them re-establish family connections and accompanying them on visits.

"Many come out of prison with no car, no family, no provision for positive interaction," Hacker said. "I have tons of people who need a place to go to sleep at night. We didn't have any idea we needed a zoning change for (Isley to help). The Isleys, for years, have helped in the community. Period."

Certainly, there is no legal obstacle preventing any individual from assisting another, offering them a place to stay, or providing them with a faith structure to help them make better choices.

And without such a facility offering oversight and accountability, parolees may be left couch surfing wherever they can. There's no way to ensure

that they aren't staying with individuals who are involved in illegal activities and drug and alcohol use.

"I think if people truly understood who was (already) in their backyard with no place to live, they would be shocked," Hacker said. "I have 45 individuals I could put in a transitional housing situation immediately."

'It fell into our lap'

Paul Flanders, Mental Health Emergency Services supervisor for Wallowa Valley Center for Health, said Isley's inability to set up the transitional housing so far was "hugely unfortunate."

According to information filed by Hacker as a requirement for continued funding from State Justice Reinvestment Grant Program, approximately 40 parolees use mental health services.

The number should not be shocking.

"Essentially since the '70s we have discharged people from state hospitals and put them in the corrections system," Flanders said. "The departmental health provider (for mentally ill) in the nation is the correction system. They do the best they can. Ideally there's a place for (parolees with mental health issues) to go (when they are paroled) and I think Isley does a great job and has provided a great service for this community. (His program) creates additional structure of them."

Isley originally announced his intention to answer an unofficial request to help by probation officers in 2015. An article in the April 1, 2015 edition of The Chieftain reported that Isley originally started working in an unofficial capacity with Lt. Beth Hulse, a former Wallowa County Community Corrections officer, and Hacker, her successor, to start plugging holes in parolee reintegration and housing needs. Isley initially took in two people. That number eventually grew to four. All but one of the individuals he initially housed has since moved on to other options.

"We've kind of been doing this all along and that's how it fell into our lap," Isley said at the time. "Kyle (Hacker) was like, 'Hey, you've got this big building and I've got this person who needs a place, could you take him?'"

Isley now plans to make his next appeal to the State Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) within 30 days.

"We're going to take it as far as we can, said Isley, "Because this is a place where we as a society have created a huge problem and we won't address it."

BOATS

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There will be a booth for your dragon gear and jewelry at the Marina on Wallowa Lake to raise funds for the local club, which continues to recruit crew members and volunteers.

The creation of youth teams remains a goal, and spectators are encouraged to express their interest at the Dragons in the Wallowas booth and find out when the next "try it, you'll like it" paddle day is planned.

Participation is open to people ages 14-96. That upper limit can be extended and teams have welcomed blind and otherwise disabled folks — you just have to be able to paddle.

Wallowa Lake paddlers have reported excellent fitness results and several have met weight loss goals — despite the occasional celebratory beer after practice.

The dragon boat community has been abuzz about the Wal-



Kathleen Elynn/Chieftain

A few dragon boats were parked in front of the Outlaw Restaurant in May.

lowa County event and the Seven Wonder Cup Race from the moment it was announced, and coaches and boats have come to Wallowa Lake to help the new local team prepare.

Now it's time to put our homegrown dragons to the test and introduce hundreds of dragon boaters (there are 22 per

boat, plus all their support folk) to Wallowa County.

Events begin at 8 a.m. each day. Spectators may gather at the swim beach area to watch the boats come into the finish line.

Trials will take place Saturday to whittle the field down to the top four in each division,

and Sunday is the final race day for the top contenders. Medals will be given to the top three finishing teams in each category of the Sunday 500-meter finale and top three in the in the serpentine race — a slalom course unique to Wallowa County that also will be held on Saturday.

Citizens panel endorses corporate sales tax measure

By Paris Achen
Capital Bureau

A citizens' panel that reviews Oregon ballot initiatives for the voters' pamphlet has endorsed a controversial corporate sales tax measure on the November ballot.

Measure 97 would levy a 2.5 percent tax on certain corporations' Oregon sales exceeding \$25 million.

The citizens panel heard from both sides of the proposal before voting 11-to-9 on Sunday to endorse the measure. Its key findings will be published in the state voters' guide, which goes out to most voters by Oct. 19.

The tax would raise an estimated \$6 billion every two years in additional revenue at a time when the state faces an estimated \$1.4 billion shortfall to maintain existing services.

Supporters cited the shortfall and a study by Ernst & Young ranking Oregon 50th in the lowest rate of corporate taxation as reasons for the endorsement.

"We are currently in a crisis of underfunded public education, healthcare and senior services," the supporters wrote in a statement. "The passage of Measure 97 would

quickly fix this."

Panelists who voted against the endorsement cited a study by the Legislative Revenue Office that shows the tax would drive up the prices of daily items such as food and fuel for the typical family by \$600 a year.

That study also showed job growth would slow significantly in the private sector while public sector jobs would increase.

"A regressive tax takes a larger percentage of income from low income earners creating an unnecessary burden on many Oregon families," panelists wrote in a statement of opposition.

The endorsement marks another victory for the union-backed campaign for Measure 97. Earlier this month,

the measure won an endorsement from Gov. Kate Brown. Another research committee recommended last week that the City Club of Portland endorse the measure.

"It's clear that when Oregonians get the facts about Measure 97, they agree it's time to hold large and out-of-state corporations accountable," said Katherine Driesen, a spokeswoman for Our Oregon, the nonprofit backing the measure. "Oregon ranks 50th in the country in corporate taxes, leaving our schools and critical services badly underfunded."

The campaign against the measure said panelists ignored research that showed consumers would bear most of the burden from the tax.

"We disagree with the con-

clusions of the panelists who voted to support Measure 97 despite the fact that most of the \$6 billion measure will be paid by Oregon consumers through higher prices for the services and goods they buy every day — clothing, groceries, electricity, medicine, insurance, even medical care," said Rebecca Tweed, Defeat the Tax on Oregon Sales campaign coordinator.

Lawmakers approved the creation of the citizens panel in 2011 based on a concept developed by Health Democracy Oregon. The creation of the panel "marked the first time a legislature has made voter deliberation a formalized part of the election process," according to the Healthy Democracy Oregon website.

ENTERPRISE OREGON

HELLS CANYON MULE DAYS

EVENT SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 9-10-11, 2016

Wallowa County Fairgrounds
Enterprise, Oregon

Three Days of Family Fun!

FEATURING TENNESSEE MULE ARTIST BONNIE SHIELDS

Friday - September 9th

Please Note: Times may vary for Class Events

9:00 am - Gates Open

9:00 am - Driving Events: Singles, Teams & Youth Classes

9:00 am - Exhibitors, Vendors & Western Gear
The Green, Quonset Building & Exhibitors Barn

Noon - (To follow Driving events) Log Pull, Mule Races & More!

11:00 - 1:00 pm - Trail Class - Track in front of grandstands

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Timed Trail Class - Main Arena

6:00 pm - Max Walker Memorial Scholarship Cowboy Poetry Gathering
Indoor Arena • Admission is free, but \$5.00 donation suggested

Saturday - September 10th

Please Note: Times may vary for Class Events

8:00 am Gates Open

8:00 am - Halter and Showmanship

8:00 am - Exhibitors, Vendors & Western Gear
The Green, Quonset Building & Exhibitors Barn

9:00 am - Matt Fournier Mule Clinic - Warm-up Arena

11:00 am - Non-Motorized Parade - Downtown Enterprise

12:45 pm - Spectator Kids Events • Stick Mule Race & Boot Scramble • 4-9 years

1:00 pm - Grand Entry & Mule Show - Main Arena
Fun and Entertaining Events

4:00 pm - Private Treaty Mule Sale - Warm-up arena

5:30 pm - Pit B-B-Q Dinner \$10.00 (Scholarship Fundraiser) - On The Green

7:00 pm - Joni Harms Concert - "Let's Put The Western Back In The Country."
Cloverleaf Hall - Showtime: 7:00 pm • Doors Open at 6:30 pm
Tickets: \$10.00 Advance - \$15.00 Door - Children (12 & Younger) \$5.00
Ticket Locations: Favorite Finds on Main, Thompson Auto Supply, and The Bookloft

Sunday, September 11th

Please Note: Times may vary for Class Events

8:00 am - Gates Open

8:00 am - Cowboy Church Exhibitors Barn

8:30 am - 3:30 pm - English & Western Pleasure, Jump-Off Challenge, Ranch & Western Riding, Barrel Racing, Pole Bending, Team Branding & more.

9:00 am - Exhibitors, Vendors & Western Gear
The Green, Quonset Building & Exhibitors Barn

9:00 am - Noon - Dutch Oven Cook-Off,
Two member teams, *One pot cook-off* - Main Dish and/or Dessert
Buy your People's Choice Packet and be part of the tasting and judging.

10:00 am - Levi King Mule Clinic - Warm-up Arena

4:00 pm - Show Awards Presentation

SONDRA LOZIER 541-426-3271 / 541-263-0104 • Visit our website - HELLSANYONMULEDAYS.COM

Souvenir Admission Button - Return Privileges All 3 Days

Children 6 & Under - FREE • Youth 7-12 - \$3.00 • Seniors - \$8.00 • Adults - \$10.00

Daily Admission - Children 6 & Under - FREE • Youth 7-12 - \$2.00 • Adults & Seniors - \$5.00

Free parking • Covered seating

Retirement Reception!

Thank you for 18 years of Service Bonnie!

Bonnie Theabolt

Join Us Wednesday, August 31st at the Enterprise Branch of Community Bank to celebrate Bonnie's retirement!

10 am to 2 pm
Cake, Coffee & Punch will be served

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Enterprise, OR
541-426-4511

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Mon-Thurs 9 to Noon/1-5pm; Fri. 9-1

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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.