

Getz takes lead for county’s veteran services

By Katherine Stickroth
For The Chieftain

There are approximately 1,000 veterans among Wallowa County’s 7,000 or so residents, and there’s a new officer in charge of helping those vets get the services they need.

Stan Getz recently came aboard as the county’s full-time Veteran Service Officer.

Local services from this office have been in transition for about year. The previous VSO, Charlie Neveau, was deployed. For a while, Marie Anderson filled that position. Upon her departure, Byron Whipple, VSO for Union County, was loaned to Wallowa County once a week to fill the need until Charlie’s return.

The position remained in a state of uncertainty until Neveau returned from deployment and indicated he was going to work full-time for the Oregon National Guard. Getz, who is fully accredited by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, was quick to apply for the job.

Whipple is pleased with the hiring of Getz, an Army veteran.



Stan Getz, left, is the new full-time Veterans Service Officer for Wallowa County. He was trained by Byron Whipple, right, the VSO who has been on loan from Union County.

Wallowa County needs a full-time VSO in order for the veterans to be served well.”

Byron Whipple
VSO for Union County and fill-in VSO for Wallowa County

“Wallowa County needs a full-time VSO in order for the veterans to be served well,” he said. “I served as Stan’s VSO when he entered the VA system and trained him when

he became the VSO for Umatilla County.”

Whipple, retired from the Navy, is known for his relentless efforts to research service-connected documents

that help substantiate a veteran’s claims.

“That’s how I train others,” he said.

“Every veteran is entitled to look at his or her benefits,” Getz said. “Even for hearing aids — four veterans got hearing aids this past year from the VA. And once the benefits are determined, they should be reviewed every five years because VA laws often change.”

Getz moved to Wallowa County from Pendleton; his wife Dena (Fordice) is from Enterprise. They have two grown daughters.

In preparation for his new position, Getz has met with Post 4307 VFW members in Enterprise. The VSO phone system has been reprogrammed, and his move to Wallowa is complete.

Getz looks forward to offering regularly scheduled

office hours throughout the week.

“I see veterans by appointment only,” Getz said. “This may be frustrating at first. But in time I hope they will see that by scheduling this way, it allows me time to review an individual’s case and be prepared to devote that full hour to his or her needs.”

He also encourages female veterans to seek VA benefits. Widows of veterans also may request for a review of possible benefits for them.

“If they are uncomfortable speaking to a male VSO, I can arrange for a woman VSO from Portland to meet with them here,” Getz said. “The veterans can expect private, confidential and personal service from me. I encourage them to come in and see what benefits may be coming to them.”

The Wallowa County Veterans Service Office is located at 401 NE 1st St. The entrance is the former ambulance entrance on the north side of the old hospital building. The VSO phone number is 541-426-0539. Office hours are: 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Wednesday and 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday.

Rollover accident sends Joseph woman to hospital

Driver treated for minor injuries

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

A single-vehicle rollover crash Thursday morning sent a Joseph woman to the hospital with moderate injuries and closed the highway for approximately 45 minutes.

At 7:52 a.m. Oregon State Police received a call of a single-vehicle, single-occupant accident at mile post 67 on Joseph Highway. OSP reported that Toviyah Lynn Lowe, 28, of Joseph was driving toward Enterprise to work in a 1991 Nissan Pathfinder when she drove onto the the right shoulder, then veered hard to the left, crossed the highway and overturned.

She was taken from the scene by ambulance to Wallowa Memorial Hospital for treatment of moderate injuries.

Although OSP is still investigating the accident, investigators believe driver distraction was a contributing factor in the crash. Lowe was not wearing a seat belt.



Steve Tool/Chieftain

Skid marks from Toviyah Lynn Lowe’s vehicle, taken from the vantage point of the right shoulder with the marks leading toward the point where the vehicle overturned on the left shoulder.

Imnaha-area calf killed by wolf, ODFW confirms

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife on Friday confirmed a wolf depredation on Harl Butte, about 15 miles east of Joseph. A local rancher contacted ODFW on Wednesday after finding a dead calf on private property, and wildlife officials investigated the incident later that day.

The investigation found wolf tracks in the area as well as numerous bite marks on the carcass. The bite wounds and severe tissue damage observed behind the left front leg, left flank and left hind leg above the hock indicated that a wolf was responsible for the attack, according to ODFW.

Investigators estimated that the calf suffered the attack three days earlier, on Sept. 25.

The most recent incident in that area was a confirmed wolf predation on a live calf on July 1, approximately 8 miles southwest of the Harl Butte site.

They have not attributed the attack to any particular pack.

So far this year, state officials have determined 18 possible depredation incidents as either “confirmed” or “probable” wolf kills and 10 of those cases occurred in Wallowa County.

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Births

A son,
Alder Luman Miller

was born September 15, 2016 in Enterprise to Dylan Edwards and Lindsay Miller of Joseph.

A daughter,
Abigail Marie Hale

was born September 22, 2016 in Enterprise to Gabriel and Cammie Hale of Enterprise. Grandparents are Denise and Todd Kuppinger, Sara Miller and Mike Hale.

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Student of the Week

Ben Lopez is a senior at Joseph Charter School and is the son of Jose Lopez and Angelica Zurita. Ben maintains a 3.7 GPA and takes upper-division classes such as aeronautical science, advanced biology, advanced art and pre-calculus. He is a three-sport athlete and is actively involved in FCCLA and Art Club. Ben is an amazing artist, a dedicated athlete and the kind of student that makes JCS a better place. The staff and administration would like to congratulate Ben Lopez.

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The Student of the Week is chosen for academic achievement and community involvement. Students are selected by the administrators of their respective schools.

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Candidate forum Oct. 13

Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club of Wallowa County are hosting a candidate forum on Thursday, Oct. 13 at Cloverleaf Hall in Enterprise.

Candidates from state and local races will answer written questions from the forum committee and the public during the moderated event scheduled from 6-8 p.m. The various pros and cons of state measures on the ballot also will be discussed.

Former Wallowa County Commissioner Mike Hayward will serve as master of ceremonies.

Candidates and elected officials expected to attend

include:

- District 58 State Rep. Greg Barreto
- District 29 State Senate candidates Sen. Bill Hansell and challenger Barbara Dickerson
- Uncontested Wallowa County Commissioner candidate Todd Nash
- Uncontested Wallowa County Sheriff candidate Steve Rogers
- Uncontested Wallowa County Treasurer candidate Shonelle Dutcher
- Enterprise mayoral candidates William Coffin, George Hill, Stacy Karvoski and Daniel Sticka

All other county-wide candidates for mayor and city council positions also have been invited.

Presenters also have been lined up to offer arguments for and against seven measures being considered by Oregon voters.

If you plan to attend, please notify the Chamber by calling 541-426-4622 no later than 5 p.m. Oct. 10 so that necessary preparations can be made.

Tuesday, Nov. 8 is Election Day. Wallowa County ballots are expected to be mailed out Oct. 19.

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