

# FACE

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Thanks to the modern upgrades and commercial partnerships, students taking CTE courses can come out of Wallowa High School with marketable skills.

## New educational goals

That's the goal of the new CTE financing program being rolled out by the Legislature in the coming years.

"Eight years ago the legislature and Oregon Department of Education recognized there was a large workforce hole that the traditional college path wasn't filling," said ODE Regional Coordinator Stefen Maupin.

"For three bienniums we had a financing program that revolved around CTE and Science/Technology/Engineering Mastery (STEM) courses. Now we have a new money stream: Secondary Career Pathways," Maupin said. "Ag teachers need to know how to access this money."

All three Wallowa County schools currently are listed for funding of \$10,000 each, but other opportunities are being created to improve CTE program offerings.

For instance, Secondary

Careers Pathways is actively seeking completed ideas and requests for Industry Recognized Credentials programs for high school students.

"We began to ask, 'What set of courses can you offer a kid that sets him or her up for a high wage/high demand job?'" Maupin said.

From that questioning, credentialled courses are now being created.

## Hands-on learning

The courses reach and prepare students who previously had been all but ignored by the all-students-to-college ideology of the past.

Some students simply don't thrive in the college environment. Many learn better and faster with a different teaching style.

"I literally had kids that would spend four to five classes with me just to survive the high school experience," recalled 29-year ag teacher Dave Yost of Joseph. "They needed that hands-on."

Yost says he's always been a hands-on learner, and he understands that his students are no less intelligent or driven than their college-bound classmates. They simply know what they want, and that often includes immediate work outdoors, on the farm and in agri-

culture or manufacturing.

"I know there are brilliant students with great math minds, but if you take a kid that needs to build a barn and put all those math formulas into his individual project — he's got it," Yost said. "That was me, too."

## Toughest job in school

Yost is now a volunteer mentor for new ag teachers in Dayville, Prairie City, Cove and Ontario through another innovative offering being rolled out through the Secondary Career Pathway program.

Another mentor, Les Linegar, who taught agricultural technology for 35 years at Ontario High, will be helping teachers in Ontario, Vale, Harper, Burns, Jordan Valley and Nyssa.

"I had so much enjoyment teaching and I want them to have that excitement and fun," Linegar said. "The first year as an ag teacher is traditionally very scary and so hard. Ag is a unique teaching situation; you are a teacher, FFA advisor and community organizer. It's one of the hardest jobs at the school."

First-year teacher Kristy Riggan of Harper added another big job to the list Linegar mentioned.

"What I didn't realize is a

lot of an ag teacher's job is just applying for grants," Riggan said.

Her ag students in the tiny town of Harper cannot even dream of the equipment that Wallowa has unless she writes some compelling grant applications.

"There's no way I could have any of that without a big grant. We were very fortunate that Nyssa donated the frames of green houses to us and I'm going to use Perkins money and other grants to finish our greenhouse project."

Nicole Merchant, a third-year ag teacher from Prairie City, has been through her first tough years without a mentor and is relieved to both have the help now and know her cohorts will have it.

"It's going to help keep younger teachers in the ag teaching business because it is a pretty exhausting career — you're not just dealing with students but with community members, industry, competitions and more," Merchant said.

Keeping teachers is key because schools may not get an automatic second chance if they overwhelm and then lose their first teacher — there aren't enough ag teachers to go around in the first place.

"Last year there were 16

positions and only eight ag teachers graduating from OSU," said student teacher Kimi Starner of Wallowa.

As a result, many small schools take applicants like Cassidy Corrigan of Jordan Valley, who has a masters degree but no teaching degree, and require them to get their teaching degree within three years.

## Smooth operators

Two more aids to ag teachers were presented by Enterprise High teacher Stephanie Schofield and Joseph Charter School teacher Toby Koehn.

Schofield helped new teachers learn to use a student assignment tracking software program called Ag Experience Tracking.

"An example of organizational complications I deal with is that I literally have enough students in ag leadership for a whole extra class, but they're scattered through numerous classes — a few in each," Schofield said. "With this program I can track and they can pull together all the assignments they need for their leadership projects."

And students who don't like to write are required to keep journals in this program. That writing provides them with an expanded outline for other as-

signments.

Getting students to simply do the journaling is a step toward a larger "buy in" on doing the work to prove proficiency, Schofield said.

"I am 95 percent confident that there are kids in everyone's programs that could be state proficiency winner when they build that 'want to,'" she said. "They don't know yet what this work can get them — they just have to do it. The more they do it the more they have buy in. If you can explain that if they do this and do a good job it translates on the farm, in the shop, helping get a loan for farm improvements or cattle ... it translates," she said.

Koehn introduced the new teachers to another bit of technology that made their work not only easier but provided ag students with valuable comparison tools.

He discussed a program called Judging Pro, which provides short videos presented by industry experts on judging market animals. The videos give good and bad examples of conformation, but also a visual of the actual finished market product (chops, steaks, etc.).

"I think the greatest value of this program is that it helps you keep up on industry standards, which is important if you want to win at state fair," Koehn said.

# FORUM

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Sen. Hansell and Rep. Barretto each spoke briefly, giving an overview of their histories and the challenges the next term would bring.

Areas of concern for the legislators included how PERS payments would be made, transportation packages under discussion, the difficulties anticipated if Measure 97 (tax on business gross earnings) passes, and concerns that clean fuel standards require too much too soon.

The 13 individuals running for various council positions in Joseph, Enterprise, Lostine and Wallowa were introduced, but those attending did not have the opportunity to speak.

The city of Enterprise has

the Mayor's position and three council positions open. Applicants for the council positions are: Bruce Blevins, Pastor Micah Agner, Fred Tippett and Christopher Pritchard.

Applicants for three council positions in Joseph are: incumbents Tyler Evans and George Ballard and newcomers Tom Clevenger and Garik Asplund.

Candidates for council in Wallowa are incumbent Garrett Lowe, and Teri Barnhart, Tom Hafer and Shawn Sealey.

The lone candidate for city council in Lostine is Rene Garoutte. There are still no official candidates to replace Lostine Mayor Krag Norton.

The four Enterprise Mayor candidates gave brief resumes that included their time in the county and on the city council, school and work experience and current job outside of

council. Those candidates are George Hill, Stacey Karvoski, Bill Coffin and Danny Paul Sticka.

Hill, Karvoski and Coffin all have served on Enterprise City Council; Sticka has no city council experience.

Questions from the audience were few, but one in particular tried the patience of experienced candidates: "What will you do to keep all citizens informed of government deliberations and actions?"

It was a question that touches a raw spot for city councils the nation over.

Karvoski answered the question first.

"I think the city council as a whole has the obligation to try and get that information out there, be that via the website, publications in the newspaper, things mailed out to citizens

throughout the city, but all in all its you all's job to be informed; to take that step, to go to a council meeting, to ask those questions. Were not going to hold your hand and drag you through it."

"Freedom isn't free," said Sticka.

"The city has a great website," said Coffin. "And I'd like to say, come to the meetings."

Hill told the sad story of when the city had to make the decision to close the swimming pool. At the public meeting, he said, there was huge crowd, but only two of them were from Enterprise.

Only two candidates made a statement of intent beyond the smooth running of the council and commitment to their city.

In answer to the question of what the candidate's priority would be Bill Coffin said that

balancing the budget was key and he thought the city should take "another hard look at" the decision to opt out of allowing a marijuana dispensary within city limits, given the amount of money coming into the state since taxation and legal requirements have been more defined by the state. Coffin said that an investigation of how much money other cities were bringing in ought to be studied.

Karvoski spoke about the work recently done in creating good policies and procedures for the city, allowing for accurate accounting of service. Building a new fire hall was also high on her list of prob-

lems to resolve. "The fire hall is a 100 percent failure structure in case of earthquake," she told the attendees.

Sticka said he would come in to listen rather than speak and watch for "a way to submit something that could help a business or help people personally ... that's something I'd definitely submit to the council."

Hill said that the mayor just tried to keep the council moving. "The only thing the mayor does is run the meetings and cast votes, it's up to the council to do the rest."

The meeting concluded with pros and cons on ballot measures.

# LENDER

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Additionally, the conservation plan had the support of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The fact that the lodge was the only collateral the LLC could offer to secure the loan was another issue to be examined, but again Hunter found several facts that supported the risk: lodge management was being retained to preserve business continuity, group chairman James Monteith's background as co-founder of the nonprofit Wallowa Land Trust, and an examination of the makeup of the oversight committee of the group.

"We love the idea of community ownership," Hunter said. "(but) we had to get used to the idea of a community investment group with about 120 members and understand who was on the management committee and determine if they had the diverse skill set to over-

see this."

In the end, Hunter was convinced by the quality of individuals involved.

Craft3 has had other experiences in the Wallowa County area. It also served as a lender on the Integrated Biomass Plant project in Wallowa, lending over \$430,000 to that project back in 2013.

Since its inception, Craft 3 has invested more than \$399 million in over 4,800 individuals and businesses in Oregon and Washington, Hunter said.

"It's about place and caring about community," said Carl

Seip, Vice President for External Affairs. "We want the deals we do to be of things that are supported by the community and build family, community and environmental resilience."

## National recognition

Craft3 was recognized by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) for its exceptional work this year. The company earned an honorable mention and \$25,000 for innovative approaches to increasing investment in underserved rural

areas.

Specifically, the award recognized Craft3's Clean Water Loan product, previously implemented on the county level and expanded to a regional strategy. The new configuration allowed on-site sewage system professionals to discuss the same financing option with potential borrowers regardless of physical location.

M. C R O W & C O .



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