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# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



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## election results

### Agnew seeks to bridge the gulf between old and new cultures

**M**icah Agnew has lived in Enterprise for less than three years. The 34-year-old, married father of four said he is at least seven years away from being known as an “old timer.”

That word has real meaning here, and that is something that Agnew appreciates. But it comes with a downside.

“There are two cultures in Enterprise, and really the whole county,” said the pastor of Abundant Life Ministries, who squeaked out a five vote win to earn a seat on city council.

In Agnew’s view, one culture includes the families that have deep roots here, who are well-connected socially and have a strong relationship with the land.

The other culture includes the newcomers, drawn here by work or play, who have shallower roots and can feel isolated or unwelcome. They can



Tim Trainor/Chieftain  
**Micah Agnew, 34, said he hopes to bring a new perspective to Enterprise city council.**

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# NEW POLITICAL FACES

## New councilors in Enterprise and Joseph

## New mayor in Enterprise

By **Tim Trainor**  
 Wallowa County Chieftain

### Clevenger wants to build ‘a real community, not just a tourist one’

**T**om Clevenger has been in a public office for most of his working life, but he never saw his name on the ballot until November.

He made his first campaign a winning one, defeating three challengers to secure a seat on Joseph City Council.

Clevenger, 56, is a volunteer firefighter for the city. He retired from a career in firefighting in Southern California and moved to Wallowa County in 2002.

He has been involved in local politics since he arrived, most often representing the fire department. But he has also served on plenty of committees, and even sat in on a goal-setting session earlier this year.

That session spurred him to want to sit on the council, not just in the crowd.

“It was so dysfunctional,” he said. “I’m a common sense guy. I don’t want to just talk and talk. I want to get information, make a decision (and move on).”

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Tim Trainor/Chieftain  
**Tom Clevenger is a new city councilor in Joseph. He said he wants the city to always keep full-time residents in mind when they make decisions.**

### Karvoski wants to ‘stay on path,’ but make some changes

**T**here’s a new mayor in Enterprise, but Stacey Karvoski said she doesn’t see a major change in direction for the city.

Karvoski, 50, has been a longtime city councilor, so she has had a hand in recent decisions. And she has been supportive of outgoing mayor Steve Lear. Lear decided not to run for re-election and Karvoski in November defeated three challengers to secure the position.

“I believe in a lot of the things we’ve been doing, and I just want to stay on that path,” Karvoski said.

Still, she wants to make some changes. That includes being more active in statewide and region-wide groups, including the League of Oregon Cities and the Oregon Mayors Association. Karvoski said she wants to improve her relationship with other Eastern Oregon representa-

tives, and look for common ground and share best practices with mayors across the state.

“My goal is to represent Enterprise on that type of scale,” she said. “I think we’ll have a louder voice.”

But Karvoski is plenty busy already, working fulltime at Wallowa Memorial Hospital as a registered nurse.

She has been involved in local politics for decades, and served on Joseph city council from 1992-1994.

“I’ve always been the kind of person to want to be involved,” she said.

She thinks the city is well-positioned to grow and succeed. The recent sewer project is an important piece of infrastructure that can support future development.

And updating the personnel policy and

catching up on employee evaluations will help the city improve its customer service skills toward residents.

But Karvoski knows a lot of the city’s future rests on the success of the private sector, and the entrepreneurs who operate in Enterprise now and those she hopes will in the future.

“A lot of (our success) is jobs,” she said. “That’s what makes everything else possible.”

Karvoski plans to get councilors more involved in city committees, tapping into each specific council member’s passions and directing them to engage with those volunteers on the committee.

She said that will make councilors better plugged in, and more knowledgeable about issues that eventually make their way in front of the council, she said.



Staff photo by Tim Trainor  
**Stacey Karvoski, a longtime city councilor, will be the new mayor of Enterprise in 2017.**

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## A bird’s eye view

Local birders brave negative temperatures to participate in Christmas Bird Count

By **Michael Beaudoin**  
 For the Wallowa County Chieftain

On Dec. 18 at 5:30 a.m., the sun not yet up and temperatures down in the negative numbers, a variety of souls were en route to Enterprise eatery Red Rooster.

Some arrived in comfortable SUVs, some in rumbling pickups. They came from as far away as Troy to partake in the Christmas Bird Census, an event with roots that stretch back into the 20th century.

Birdwatching, or birding, attracts an eclectic mix of committed and adventurous people who are curious about the detailed workings of nature.

Andie Lueders, despite early morning car troubles, ran the meeting. In collaboration with Mike Hansen of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, she organized and directed the count.

“Some of the regulars aren’t here this year, and some of the irregulars are,” joked Diane Highberger, as the group met for early breakfast. The bitter cold may have held some back from committing to such an early morning.

As Jeff and Nancy Greene arrived, the table was filled: friends chatted and ordered food and discussion turned to the day at hand.



Photo by Michael Beaudoin

This photo was taken with an iPhone through binoculars. The red-tailed hawk is common throughout Wallowa County, and more noticeable in winter when trees are bare.

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