

THE SCENE

**Friday, Dec. 30**

• "Final Friday" Open Mic Night, 7 p.m. at Stockman's Lounge

Friday, Jan. 6

• Open mic, 7 p.m. at Terminal Gravity

Thursday, Jan. 12

Big Read Kickoff, 7 p.m. Fishtrap, Enterprise

Friday, Jan. 13

• Bart Budwig and Marshall McLean, 7 p.m. at Terminal Gravity

Saturday, Jan. 14

Wallowa County Gamblers Snowmobile Club Annual Poker Run, Salt Creek Summit Tunesmith Night, 6 p.m. Featuring Marshall McLean, Bart Budwig and Kory Quinn at Stockman's Lounge

Wednesday, Jan. 18

Eagle Cap Extreme sled dog race, 9 a.m. vet check in Joseph and 1 p.m. vet check in Enterprise. Followed by community potluck at the Joseph Civic Center.

Thursday, Jan. 19

Eagle Cap Extreme sled dog race, start at 1 p.m. at Fergi Ski Area

Please submit Entertainment Calendar event information to editor@wallowa.com

SMILES ON WHEELS



Subway of Enterprise employee Chris Gomes poses with his new three-wheeled bicycle, an early Christmas gift from a collaboration between Santa Claus and Wallowa Grain Growers employees. Gomes said he couldn't wait to start using the new bicycle. The Oregon State Police gifted Gomes the star on his shirt, which identifies him as a junior trooper.

Steve Tool/Chieftain

MCNEIL

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The goal is to compile information that can lower the risk of accidents and fatalities, while promoting safe backcountry travel, Pridmore-Brown said.

"Oregon has had relatively few avalanche fatalities, but the fatalities that have been in Oregon have been clustered in northeast Oregon," he said.

One incident happened earlier this year, when Rand — an experienced backcountry skier, guide and observer — was killed after being swept 1,200 feet in an avalanche. It was the fourth backcountry skiing fatality in the Wallowa Mountains since 2009.

Rand was hired as director of the Wallowa Avalanche Center in 2015, and his death was a personal blow for everyone, Pridmore-Brown said. The center had high hopes under Rand's leadership, and the tragedy left behind a void for the group's board of directors to fill.

"We, as the board of directors, had a very clear picture of where we wanted the center to go and what our mission is," Pridmore-Brown said. "That was never in doubt."

Enter McNeil, who has spent past seasons as an observer for the avalanche center while guiding backcountry trips for Wallowa Alpine Huts. McNeil was already prepping weekly avalanche advisories for the coming season before he was hired.

Connelly Brown, owner and operator of Wallowa Alpine Huts, said the avalanche center plays a critical role in preparing backcountry skiers for what to expect on the mountain.

Wallowa Alpine Huts has been in business since 1980, renting camps and offering guides for backcountry skiers in the Eagle Cap Wilderness. Brown said they have forged a symbiotic relationship with the avalanche center, and several of his staff — McNeil included — double as observers.

"What the center provides is a resource for decision-making about where to go skiing, and what to do when we get there," Brown said. "That's part of the experience."

Conditions are already excellent for backcountry skiers in the Wallowas, Brown said. A series of storms battered the mountains, dumping up to 3 feet of snow at the cabins and 5 feet in basins. Such a strong start has made the snow deep and stable, Brown said.

Melissa Webb, hydrologist with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, said the current snow-water equivalent, or amount of water contained within snow, is 111 percent of normal for the area, including the Grande Ronde, Powder, Burnt and Imnaha river basins.

"We're always happy to have such a strong early start to the snow season," Webb said. "Certainly for folks out enjoying the snow, it's a good start to the year."

Eastern Oregon might not be the most famous backcountry terrain, or the easiest to access, Pridmore-Brown said. But it definitely has its rewards.

"The mountains are truly spectacular," he said. "We're just trying to reduce the risk and number of accidents out there."

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

Enterprise fish hatchery expands

OUT OF THE PAST

Compiled by Cheryl Jenkins

Items of interest from the pages of *The Chieftain* from this week in years past.

**100 YEARS AGO
Dec. 28, 1916**

December 27, 1916, may be set down as one of the memorable cold days in Enterprise and Wallowa county. The minimum temperature was not abnormal for mid-winter. This was 20 below zero, a temperature reached nearly every winter. But the maximum was the lowest recorded since this paper began keeping check on the weather. The thermometer rose only to 6 degrees above zero in the whole day.

A striking illustration of the increase in population of this community was afforded at the railroad station last Saturday. The waiting room was overcrowded and many persons stood on the platform when the train came in. Agent Rice found he had sold exactly 100 tickets for the outbound train.

J. F. Bruce has rented the Miller building on River street, opposite the front of the courthouse, and is moving his harness store to it, from his old location at Main and West 1st streets. The building has windows at the front and rear and also a skylight.

Advertisement: Don't Kill Your Wife — let our machines do your dirty work and raise you in your wife's estimation from a mud image to one of the gods. Eagle Cap Laundry.

**70 YEARS AGO
Dec. 26, 1946**

Improvements calculated to increase the capacity of



Wallowa County Chieftain archives

Freighting to Imnaha.

the Enterprise fish hatchery from less than a million fish to over 2 million are getting underway, according to Supt. Ralph Kay.

The Wallowa Cougar basketball team will make a tour during the vacation. They will leave December 27 and return January 1. While away they will play Boardman, Fossil, Heppner and Lone.

An estimated 800 to 1000 persons visited the new display rooms of the Joseph Sales Co. at Joseph Saturday when the company held Open House.

Local merchants are still a bit groggy under the effects of one of the heaviest Christmas buying seasons here in many years. Customers armed with an abundance of cash, and out to buy larger and more expensive gifts than they usually seek, crowded the stores throughout December.

Having in mind the recent coal shortage, and remember-

ing the lovely big wood-burning fireplace in their home, Dee Walker selected his wife's Christmas present this year with great care. He was seen coming out of the Marshall-Wells store with the finest over-sized wood saw that money could buy.

**50 YEARS AGO
Dec. 29, 1966**

Tuesday word was received that the Flora post office will be closed and that the mail will be delivered on a star route.

Long distance charges will be eliminated at 11:01 p.m. Thursday, December 29, on calls between Wallowa and Lostine and between Wallowa and Enterprise, West Coast Telephone district manager Dale Ronney said this week. The new service will increase the number of telephones available to Wallowa customers on a lo-

cal call basis from about 500 to more than 1500.

The Wallowa County Jaycees went on their annual Christmas lighting inspection on Wednesday evening, December 21. The outstanding displays selected in each of the towns were as follows: Jack Coleman, Wallowa; Orval McArtor, Lostine; W.E. Warnock, Joseph; Vaughn Haggerty and C.A. Winings of Enterprise. Each winner will receive a check for \$5.00 from the Jaycees.

As the year draws to a close a general feeling of optimism prevails as farmers and business men look forward to 1967. The general opinion is that the worst economic conditions are behind us.

**25 YEARS AGO
Dec. 26, 1991**

Dennis Brennan of Enterprise has been named 1991 "man of the year" of the Wal-

lowa County's search and rescue posse by Sheriff Roger Decker.

If a merry Christmas can be captured in boxes, then 109 "Merry Christmases" were delivered Monday morning to doorsteps throughout Wallowa County by numerous pickup driving elves as part of the annual Elks' Wallowa County Christmas Basket program.

The red-hot Enterprise Savages scored an 88-41 victory over Stanfield and an 85-48 win over Pilot Rock to take championship honors at last weekend's Pilot Rock Christmas Tournament. Nathan Locke, Lance Homan and Tim Martin were All-tourney team selections.

The Wallowa County Junior Women's Club recently donated \$750 each to the county EMT association and to the county fair board as part of its 2-year Community Improvement Project.

Happy New Year
to all our loyal customers and
friends in Wallowa County!

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