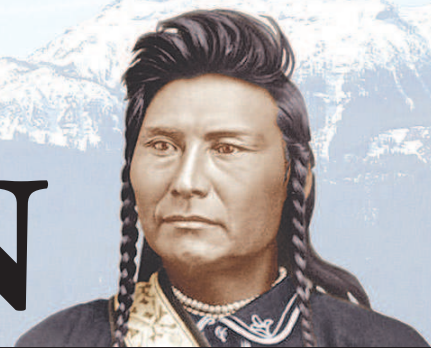




WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



‘Extreme’ event field filled with veterans

Near-perfect weather forecast for 2017 races

Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County weather has been a blessing for the Eagle Cap Extreme sled dog race with both cold temperatures and abundant snowfall making for a near-perfect race course.

“Even the slight warming we had earlier this week is good for trail conditions,” said Troy Nave, public relations director for the Eagle Cap Extreme. “Trail crews and the Snowmobile Club groomer will

have an easier time compacting the snow now that it’s warmer, making for a good running surface. Now we’re keeping fingers crossed for cool temperatures during the race.”

This year’s ECX, which begins at noon Thursday, is well populated in every race category: the 200-mile, 12-dog main event, an Iditarod and Yukon Quest qualifier; the 100-mile, eight-dog race; the 31-mile, six-dog pot race (two stages: one on Thursday, one on Friday), and the 22-mile Juniors race which will start on

Thursday – a last minute schedule change just announced by race officials.

Race officials decided over the weekend to change the Juniors Race start time from Friday to Thursday on Thursday early afternoon, immediately after the Pot Racers leave. Having more assistance along the trail for the beginning mushers was cited as the reason for the change.

See RACE, Page A6



Kathleen Elynn/Chieftain

Scott White gave it a few hours after this checking in at Ollokott last year, but was too sick to continue. This year, he’s healthy and ready to give two-time winner Brett Bruggeman a run for his money in the 200-mile race.

Big cold doesn’t stop BIG READ

EVENT KICKS OFF WITH DOCUMENTARY OF VIETNAM-ERA TALK SHOW

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The latest cold snap didn’t keep the reading public, including students from Joseph and Enterprise schools, from packing the Hurricane Creek Grange Hall for Fishtrap’s Big Read Kickoff on Jan. 5.

The Big Read is a nationwide community reading program initiated by the National Endowment of the Arts. This year, the county chose the Vietnam War classic “The Things they Carried,” a semi-autobiographical account of the war by former soldier Tim O’Brien.

The kickoff event featured a showing of the documentary film “Dick Cavett’s Vietnam.” Cavett hosted a nighttime talk show on ABC from 1969-1975, some of the most controversial years of the war. His shows often featured outspoken guests, including politicians, government officials, celebrities, veterans and others on both sides of the war. The documentary featured the most pertinent discussions on the war.

See READ, Page A6



Steve Tool/Chieftain

Fishtrap executive director Shannon McNerney addresses the nearly packed house at Fishtrap’s Big Read Kickoff on Jan. 12. The event was held at Hurricane Creek Grange Hall.

Fishtrap’s second Big Read event happens Thursday, Jan. 19t, at the Tomas Conference Center, located at 309 S. River St., starting at 7 p.m. The event, titled: “What Vietnam Teaches Us: Wallowa County Veterans Discuss The Things They Carried” will feature a panel of Wallowa County veterans discussing their reaction to Tim O’Brien’s novel, “The Things They Carried” from their unique perspective as combatants.

Miles McFall, recently retired from 30 years service in the Department of Veterans Affairs where he served as chief of psychology service and director of outpatient mental health services, will moderate the panel.

See EVENT, Page A6

Researchers look at cow’s impact on riparian areas

Study finds cows spend little time in streams or buffer areas

By Eric Mortenson
EO Media Group

A five-year study of cattle grazing on federal rangeland showed they spend only 1 percent to 2.5 percent of their time in streams or in riparian buffer areas, a finding that may prove important as debate continues over the impact of cattle on public land.

Researchers at Oregon State University outfitted



Courtesy of Oregon State University

A cow and calf drink from Catherine Creek in Union County.

cows from three ranches with homemade GPS tracking collars and mapped their positions during spring to fall grazing seasons over five years. The collars reported

WHAT MIGHT WE LOOK AT IN MANAGEMENT OPTIONS THAT LETS US BE MORE EFFICIENT?

John Williams, OSU Extension

the cows’ positions about every five minutes and compiled more than 3.7 million data points over the course of the study. The technology was able to pinpoint when the collared cows were within 30 meters of streams.

The study took place on federal grazing allotments in the Wallowa-Whitman and Umatilla national forests. The findings are potentially significant because critics of public land grazing practices have long contended cattle trample and erode stream-

banks and pollute water.

But John Williams, an OSU Extension rangeland expert in Wallowa County, said cows enter riparian areas for two reasons: “One is to drink, the other is to cross,” he said.

The cows typically did not rest or graze near streams. Instead, they spent most of their time grazing on higher ground or resting in dry areas away from streams, according to Williams.

See STUDY, Page A6

