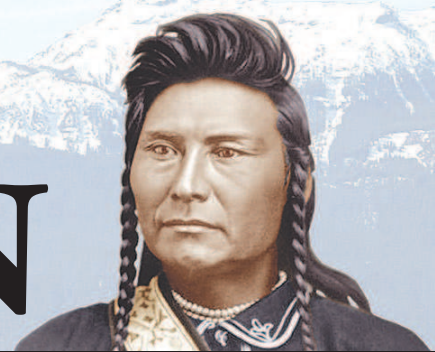




WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



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Cayden DeLury

It's playoff season for local athletes

Two wrestlers gain No. 1 seed in state; Joseph boys, girls basketball advance

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

All the county's high school sports teams had a busy, if not necessarily successful week with District playoffs offering varying levels of success.

Joseph Charter School had the most successful week, sending two of its wrestlers to state after the District Meet in Hermiston. Both the boys and girls basketball teams emerged from District play in Baker City to compete in 1A state tournaments.

Enterprise High School's successful wrestling program will send four of its wrestlers on to state after the District Meet. One boy each from Joseph and Enterprise are the no. 1 seed in the state for their respective weight class.

The Enterprise lady cagers made it to District, but in their very first game the Outlaws were upended by Imbler. The ladies later won against Union for third place in the Wapiti league. The boys team saw their hearts broken on Valentine's Day, being eliminated from District play by Grant Union, whom they had defeated less than a week before.

Wallowa High School saw its girls basketball team unable to qualify for the District playoffs, while the Cougars' male cagers were knocked out in their first District game by Echo.

FULL DETAILS IN SPORTS, PAGE 12

ACA and the WORKING POOR

Hard work alone won't get you health care in rural counties

Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

When Cindy sits down to figure out her budget, she puts "health insurance" in the list of what she calls "set bills." Then she begins the monthly exercise in frustration. Both she and her husband work. They have children. They don't drink gourmet coffees or afford other small luxuries. They drive older vehicles. They love Wallowa County.

So she can speak candidly about a personal matter in a small community, Cindy's identity is being obscured for purposes of this story.

Like a lot of Wallowa County residents, living rural comes at a steep price for Cindy and her husband. They are educated. They are good at their jobs. But they aren't paid at the same rate a counterpart in the city would be paid.

Buying health insurance was a big decision. It meant there was no budget line for some other necessary expenditures.

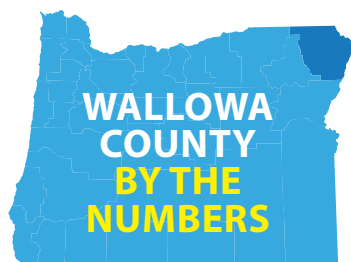
"Where in this budget do I have

retirement?" Cindy asks. "What drives my husband and I crazy is we're working full time and yet we're barely making it. Where in this budget do I put these other things?"

Cindy and her husband have decided that insurance is a "must have," and it's other things, such as gas, groceries, car repair, birthday presents, Christmas and other "extras" that get cut. But for many Wallowa County residents, even when these extras are cut, they see no way to afford health insurance.

The Affordable Care Act changed that. According to the Oregon Health Authority, 28.4 percent of Wallowa County residents are insured through the Oregon Health Plan (OHP), which is Medicaid expanded under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

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560 = Eight percent of the Wallowa County population.

Estimated individuals currently living without insurance in Wallowa County according to NEON.

1,330 = Nineteen percent of the county population in 2010.

Estimated individuals living without insurance in Wallowa County in 2010.



28.4 Percent of Wallowa County residents are insured through the Oregon Health Plan, which is Medicaid expanded.

Public hunting of 'problem' wolves proposed

Environmental groups oppose 'controlled take'

By ZACH URNESS
Statesman Journal

SALEM, Ore. (AP) — Oregon wildlife officials have long maintained that no hunting season is planned for the state's wolf population, even as the number of wolves in state continues to grow.

Wolf hunting is legal in nearby Idaho and Montana — and around 400 animals are harvested annually between the two states — but officials have said no similar plan is envisioned for Oregon.

Environmental groups disagree,



Courtesy of ODFW

OR-25, a yearling male in the Imnaha Pack, is shown after being radio-collared on May 20, 2014. It has split from that pack and is now in Klamath County, where it recently attacked three calves, killing one.

and say the state is planning to offer wolf hunting in Oregon, and possibly soon, just by a different name.

A proposal that could allow the public to hunt "problem wolves" — animals that attack livestock or cause

a major decline in game populations — has become a flashpoint in negotiations over revisions to Oregon's wolf plan.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife said in reports that it's only considering a more cost-effective management tool for wolves.

"This isn't sport hunting because we're not going to have a season — we're not looking to create an opportunity," ODFW spokeswoman Michelle Dennehy said. "This would be a 'controlled take' intended to address damage in very specific circumstances."

Hunting and ranching groups support special permits allowing the hunts, pointing out that the animals in question would otherwise be killed by state officials.

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