



Enterprise, Oregon

SPRING SPORTS KICK OFF
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LANDSLIDE BRIEFLY CLOSES HIGHWAY 3
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WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

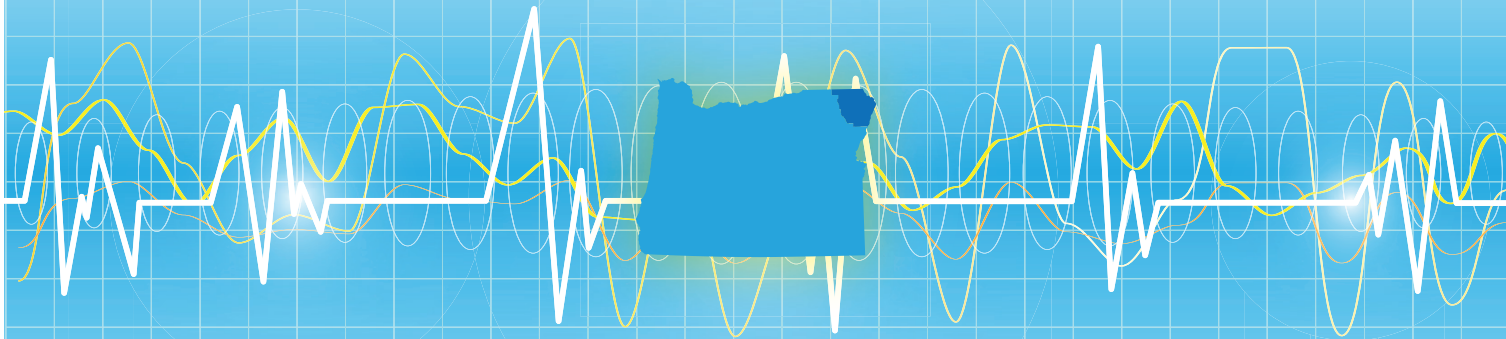
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EXAMINING MEDICAL CARE IN **WALLOWA COUNTY**



LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES WOULD DECLINE IF ACA REPEALED

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

There are options in Wallowa County for those in need of mental health services, but those options would dwindle if the Affordable Care Act is repealed by Congress.

Should ACA be repealed, more than 400 individuals in Wallowa County who are enrolled in mental health services could lose access to treatment and care, said Chantay Jett, executive director for the Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness.



Bob Joondeph

Although there are several residential treatment programs in the county, the majority of Wallowa County individuals dealing with mental illness are not in outpatient treatment. Many deal with anxiety, depression and substance abuse and remain in the community.

While the Affordable Care Act improved access to care for many suffering from mental health issues and addictions,

health care options for outpatient treatment was especially improved.

Prior to the ACA, individuals with mental health issues could be denied insurance coverage for a variety of reasons, including pre-existing conditions. Children, diagnosed at a young age, could be dropped from their plan at any time if their insurer ruled they had a pre-existing condition.

And for adults dealing with mental health issues, finding employment can be difficult or impossible, so many were unable to obtain reliable private insurance through their employer.

Wraparound care

After the ACA came into effect, these men, women and children not only had guaranteed coverage for medication and therapy but also for rehabilitative services.

BY THE NUMBERS

400

= Individuals using mental health or addiction treatment in Wallowa County

Most are not in residential facilities but Wallowa County has three facilities available.

WALLOWA RIVER HOUSE

- an 11-bed residential treatment facility owned and operated by Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness

JOSEPH HOUSE

- a five-bed residential treatment home owned and operated by Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness

PIONEER GUEST HOME

- a 16-bed residential treatment facility owned and operated by a private entity.

These wraparound services, along with the “braiding” of funding to provide comprehensive care, is possibly the most important benefit to mental health in the ACA, said Kevin Campbell, CEO of Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. (GOBHI).

This continuum of care includes school-based counseling, mobile crisis services, supported employment, community treatment, mental health prevention and promotion as well as outpatient treatment for children, families and adults, including case management and peer delivered services, substance use disorder treatments, gambling treatments, and on-site primary care.

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Folk school opens in Joseph

By Tim Trainor
Wallowa County Chieftain

School is about to be in session in Joseph, and not just for children.

Prairie Mountain Folk School, the brainchild of Jennings Hotel owner Greg Hennes, plans to start its first set of classes during the week of March 24.

Those courses include how to build a staked bench, exploring natural dyes, blacksmithing, carving a wooden spoon, weaving and how to make your own herbal vinegars.

It’s a slate that Hennes hopes will introduce the folk school concept to the community, and will allow the nonprofit to evolve into more offerings and a bigger workspace in the future.

Some classes — like carving a wooden spoon — will be taught by locals. Hennes and his friend Tom Bonamici, who is a University of Oregon design instructor, will lead that five-hour, one-day class.

Joseph resident Lyle Witherrite will lead the blacksmithing class, where students will learn to forge a hook. June Colony of Wallowa will teach the lesson on natural dyes.

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Events apply for motel tax

By Kathleen Ellen
Wallowa County Chieftain

The March meeting of Enterprise City Council saw eight events apply for motel tax money.

The city donates up to \$2,000 to applicants who meet the requirements and make a personal presentation to city council on the appointed day. Good bookkeeping and a good “pitch” are required.

Ryan Oberhelman represented the Wallowa Valley Community Ice Rink in a request for a \$2,000 contribution toward a \$460,500 pavilion in Enterprise City Park. The steel structure would cover a 100x200 foot ice rink in the winter and serve as a covered sporting and community event structure during the other months of the year.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department offers awards for such projects, but requires 20 percent of funding come from other sources.

The ice rink committee wants to submit for a state grant and show the city’s donation of \$2,000 as part of their match.

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USDA Wildlife Services removes poison traps

Agency says it’s working to avoid future wolf harm

By Eric Mortenson and
Tim Trainor
Wallowa County Chieftain

The director for USDA Wildlife Services in Oregon said the agency has removed all M-44 cyanide poison traps from Wallowa County, following the unintended poisoning of a wolf in February.

Director Dave Williams said Wildlife Services has reviewed what contributed to the fatal ac-

cident and shared that information with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, which manages wolves in the state. The two agencies are in ongoing discussions about how to prevent another wolf death, Williams said. “We don’t feel good about that,” he said.

Williams said Wildlife Services has removed M-44s from areas identified by ODFW as places wolves are present, including all of Wallowa County.

ODFW officials confirmed that took place.

“We appreciate that Wildlife Services has voluntarily removed M-44s,” ODFW Wildlife Division Administrator Doug Cottam said in a prepared statement.

“We also recognize we want to increase our communication between our agencies,” Cottam continued.

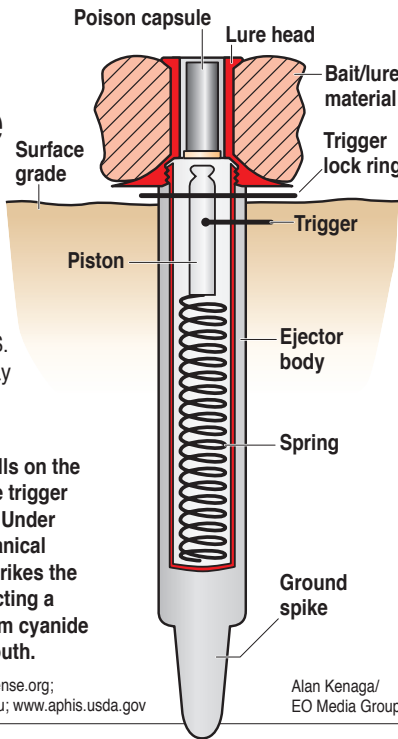
M-44 Cyanide Traps

M-44-style traps, also known as Canid pest ejectors, or CPEs, were first developed in the U.S. in the 1930s as a way to autonomously control pest species.

When the animal pulls on the baited lure head, the trigger pressure of a mechanical spring, the piston strikes the poison capsule, ejecting a lethal dose of sodium cyanide into the animal’s mouth.

Sources: www.predatordefense.org; www.smithandgeorg.com.au; www.aphis.usda.gov

Alan Kenaga/
EO Media Group



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