

inside today:  
**SPRING SPORTS CALENDAR**

# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

Enterprise, Oregon

Issue No. 50

Wallowa.com

March 29, 2017 \$1



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Non-competitors admire the insanity of the competitors as they eye the lineup of lawn chair ski-dos.

## Fergi Fest this weekend

By Kathleen Ellyn  
Wallowa County Chieftain

A most appropriate date has been set for Fergi Fest at the Ferguson Ridge Ski Area outside of Joseph this year – April Fools Day.

You can expect to see all of your favorite events at Eagle Cap Ski Club-operated/Lions Club-owned family ski area from the Tucker Downhill races to ski

golf to the world-famous lawn chair races.

It's been a great year for the Ferguson Ridge Ski Area this year, with loads of snow and lots of skiers, but the snow is gone down at the bottom of the hill already. It's been trying to snow, however. Snow or no snow it's always a go at Fergi Fest as most folks know. So, plan on fun even if there is no new snow.

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### AT a GLANCE

Support your local Lions Club. The Lions Club owns Ferguson Ridge Ski Area and provides liability insurance for the Ski Area, Wallowa Valley Community Ice Rink, and local youth football team. To become a member, call Jerry Hustafa, president at (541) 432-0366.



Courtesy ODFW

A collared Oregon wolf is shown in this file photo from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Wolves from the Shamrock pack are suspected of raiding a hen house last week in Wallowa County near Flora.

## Shamrock pack hits hen house

By Steve Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

In a new twist in Wallowa County wolf management, the Shamrock wolf pack struck in the Flora area in northern Wallowa County, raiding a hen house and killing at least eight chickens and a goose early Friday morning. The property owners told Mike Hansen, the assistant district biologist for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Enterprise office, that wolf howls awakened them at 4 a.m. They later found the remains of a number of fowl near the entrance to the coop.

The coop is located only about 50 yards from the property owner's home. According to Hansen, the ODFW has received a number of calls from area people regarding the presence of wolves in their yards, although no depredations had been reported.

"They've been living near humans for several years now. They haven't had negative events happen to them, and for the most part they haven't caused any problems. This is the first time they've caused problems so close to somebody's house," Hansen said.

The biologist said that he found hundreds of wolf tracks at the site as well as remains from a number of chickens and one goose. The coop previously contained 16 chickens and eight geese.

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# ONE INJURED IN ROLLOVER ACCIDENT



Steve Tool/Chieftain

What's left of a Chevy S-10 pickup driven by Aaron Thompson of La Grande after it skidded head-on into an embankment and flipped over on its top on the morning of March 28. Thompson was taken by ambulance to Wallowa Memorial Hospital with a head injury and possible chest injury.

## ICY PATCH SURPRISES DRIVER

### 'IT'S A MIRACLE THAT DIDN'T CATCH FIRE'

By Steve Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

One man was injured and hospitalized in a single-vehicle crash and rollover accident at about 8:30 Tuesday morning near Wallowa Lake.

Aaron Thompson, 44, La Grande, was driving a Chevy S-10 pickup southbound on Wallowa Lake Highway when he hit an icy patch near mile marker 5, throwing his vehicle across the opposite lane and head-on into the embankment before it flipped over and skidded on its top, coming to rest just inches from the guardrail and the frigid waters of Wallowa Lake.

Thompson managed to extract himself from the smashed vehicle despite a bleeding wound on his head as well as a possible chest injury. Joseph Fire Department was first on the scene and arrived within minutes of the accident said firefighter Justin Doherty. The firefighters immediately sealed off the area as gallons of gasoline from the overturned truck covered a considerable portion of the highway in the crash area. Units from the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police and an ambulance from Wallowa Memorial Hospital also responded to the crash.

Doherty noted some blood on the highway centerline and said the pickup also had a large amount of blood on the inside.

All emergency services on the scene gingerly made their way over the very slick road while avoiding large amounts of broken glass and being extra careful not to create a spark. JFD firefighter Tom Clevenger said the crew would stay on the scene until the vehicle was removed because of the extreme fire danger.

"It's a miracle that didn't catch fire, skidding on its top with all that gasoline on the highway," he said.



Steve Tool/Chieftain

Wallowa County emergency services personnel treat Aaron Thompson of La Grande after a single vehicle rollover crash near Wallowa Lake on the morning of March 28.

Wallowa County Sheriff's Deputy Mark Christman surveyed broken pieces of the truck in the ditch where the truck hit the embankment before climbing up and retrieving numerous other items thrown from the truck on impact, including a gas can thrown about 40 feet up the

hill. On the other side of the highway, a bedliner from the truck was thrown over the guardrail and halfway down to the lake.

"It's amazing that truck didn't go through the guardrail and into lake," Christman said. "He's lucky to be alive."



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