



MEETING THE NEED

Mobile medical begins service in rural areas

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

The new rural medical van creeps around and down the hairpin turns through the incised basalt canyons of the Grande Ronde and Wenaha area.

The van is on the way to the remote hamlet of Troy, nestled at the confluence of the Grande Ronde and Wenaha Rivers.

There are three roads into Troy from the valley, but the Wildcat Road route is washed out and the Grande Ronde River Road to Troy passes through the Washington/Oregon border twice.

Redmond Grade, twisting from Hwy. 3 through Flora to Troy is the shortest route today.

For these folks the drive into Enterprise for medical or mental health care would be a full-day excursion.

It's April 29 and the "shakeout" trip for the medical van and the team inside. The trip is designed to see how long it takes to get to Troy from Enterprise and see who has shown up for the new rural medical and mental health service.

Organizers Erica Stockdale and Danielle Nash of the local mental health nonprofit Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness have posted informational fliers across the county and spoken to school boards and city councils. Now it's up to the healthy rural grapevine to get the word out.

In addition to Troy, the van will serve rural families out of Wallowa and equally remote Imnaha. There are 14 clients so far, Stockdale said.

Troy's permanent population swells with regular summer folk and visiting fishermen, but this spring it is "about eight" souls, according to ranch wife Chelsea Matthews of Anchor Bar Ranch.

The one room school in Troy had two students, Buck and Chelsea Matthews' oldest children, up until last week, but the child population has more than doubled overnight with the addition of the Jensen family children. Brandon and Angela Jensen, parents of four, just came to work for the Matthews.

Oversized mailboxes lined up in the town of Troy testify to the hidden population of farmers and ranches up in the hills, canyons and high altitude benches of this starkly beautiful country.

For these folks the drive into Enterprise for medical or mental health care would be a full-day excursion. Often, the self-reliant folk in remote locations simply go without medical, mental health, addiction counseling or dental care



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Cooper Matthews, 4, of Anchor Bar Ranch in Troy pedals toward the medical van outside Troy School.

until their condition is an emergency.

The van is made possible through the Assertive Community Treatment program, which serves the entire county. It multidisciplinary and engages in "wrap around care" that includes medical, substance abuse, mental health and employment support professionals. It's designed to aid persons with

persistent and serious mental health issues.

That would be enough of a goal, given that the Oregon Health Association reports that one in 20 Oregonians have serious mental health issues, and one in 10 Oregon children have serious emotional disorders.

But the center also engages in "reverse integration," scheduling

the time of doctors, acupuncturists, behavioral health coaches and others to visit their community annex offices in Enterprise weekly.

When the rural care van came along, there was a push toward sharing that asset with dental and medical clinics in the county. And local clinics responded.

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Joseph council eyes truck parking, again

Removing pole in alleyway behind coffee shop considered

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

Delivery trucks parking in front of or near the home of Mark Lacey and Kathy Drake in Joseph took center stage again before Joseph City Council May 4. The issue has appeared semi-regularly on the council agenda since at least October 2016 when it was originally brought to the council's attention.

Mark Lacey and Kathy Drake live behind Red Horse Coffee Traders in the 300 block of North Main Street. They claim delivery trucks park in front of their home and disrupt their lives.

Red Horse owners Kathy and Mike Leo say they have done all they can to keep trucks away from the couple's doorstep and are puzzled that the issue keeps coming back for discussion.

Kathy Leo told the council she had received complaints from the residents behind the coffee shop and asked her delivery drivers more than a year ago to turn off their beepers and refrigeration units and to use the alley if they have a smaller truck.

"We're following all the rules, so I'm not sure why this keeps popping up in a negative light for us," Leo added, noting that previous coverage of the issue did not adequately address their side of the discussion.

Leo said that she and her husband had never received the two calls from Mayor Dennis Sands mentioned at a previous meeting on the topic. Sands said it had been an error on his part as the phone number he had was one digit off.

Leo also said she had never received a letter from the city recommending that businesses have delivery trucks use their respective alleys, also previously mentioned. Council member Teresa Sajonia said she had received one.

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OK Theatre earns restoration grant

\$100,000 will mean major improvements

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The historic OK Theatre in downtown Enterprise received a much-needed boost last week: A \$100,000 grant that allows theater owner Darrell Brann to make much-needed improvements to both the interior and exterior of the building.

The grant was awarded May 9 by the Oregon Main

Street Revitalization Program, part of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The funding went to Greater Enterprise Main Street organization, which will oversee the contracting.

Brann said that he had only heard about the grant in December 2016 while he was working on a separate application for the theater's facade. Chris Marko, rural development specialist for the Rural Communities Assistance Corporation, brought it to Brann's attention.

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Steve Tool/Chieftain

OK Theatre owner Darrell Brann explains all the improvements he plans to make to the theater because of a \$100,000 grant from the Rural Communities Assistance Corporation under the umbrella of the Greater Enterprise Main Streets Group. Improvements include ADA accessible restrooms and a heating/air conditioning system.

