

# State park ready for Memorial Day opener



Jason Barber, park maintenance ranger at Wallowa Lake Park, provides a quick lesson to ranger assistant Megan Larson in how to operate one of the facility's large lawn mowers May 17.

By Paul Wahl  
Wallowa County Chieftain

This weekend marks the unofficial opening of the high tourist season in Wallowa County. Wallowa Lake State Park has been buzzing with activity the past few weeks, preparing for an onslaught of campers.

Visitors will find a variety of campsite improvements, according to park manager JR Collier, who is in his second year at the helm.

"We've been focused on fixing campsites which have become troublesome

as RVs get bigger and longer," Collier said. "We've lengthened a lot of sites this spring."

Crews have also erected privacy barriers between campsites in several areas of the park.

The park is also adding universal charging stations for those with mobility devices such as scooters. The units also have USB ports for charging cell phones and other devices.

Collier said one would be near the entrance booth and another at the marina.

"We have an aging population so this is an opportunity to provide some-

thing people can use to keep everything charged up," Collier said.

Contrary to popular thinking, Collier said his organization has determined campers relax and enjoy their stay more when they have an opportunity to check in by cell phone or laptop, rather than leaving them at home.

The marina will also have an "old" new commander this year. Casey Barsstad, whose family has operated the business for decades, received the contract this year.

See PARK, Page A12



Ellyse Tingelstad of Joseph won the 1500 M with a time of 4:57.75. She also won the 3000 M the previous day, following in the footsteps of her older sister Isabelle. Both Joseph and Enterprise competed in the State Track Meet last week in Eugene. More photos and complete results on Page B1. Additional photos at wallowa.com.

## OREGON PRIMARY ELECTION IN WALLOWA COUNTY

### Dunn outraces Daggett

County turnout 61 percent

By Paul Wahl  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Veteran timber industry representative Bruce Dunn defeated Diane Daggett for a seat on the Wallowa County Commission in the May 15 Oregon Primary.

Dunn received 1,869 votes to Daggett's 1,218, roughly a 60-40 percent split in the non-



Dunn partisan race.

"I wish to thank Wallowa County for the opportunity to serve as one of your county

commissioners," Dunn said in a statement to the Chieftain. "I will do my best."

Daggett also issued a statement.

"I am grateful for all the support received in my bid for county commissioner," she said. "I wish Bruce Dunn the best of luck in his term of service to Wallowa County. Dunn has spent decades serving on the county's Natural Resource Advisory Committee

See DUNN, Page A12

### Library district fails

No 'windfall' money will be forthcoming

By Paul Wahl  
Wallowa County Chieftain

Voters in Wallowa County gave the idea of creating a library district a resounding "no" vote in the Oregon Primary election May 15.

Measure 32-41 received 1,979 no votes and 1,102

yes, roughly 65 percent to 35 percent.

Last June, Wallowa County Commissioners announced they would no longer fund the county library due to revenue constraints arising from the loss of federal funds.

A group was formed to study the idea and place it on the ballot.

Those supporting the proposal said a district was one way to assure that money for libraries was not left to the whim of county or city gov-

ernments. Opponents said the 65 cents per \$1,000 valuation was too expensive, particularly for farmers who own large parcels of taxable land.

The Yes for Wallowa County Libraries committee issued a statement to the Chieftain saying they were disheartened but would continue to push forward.

"We are disappointed that the value of the district was not realized by more voters

See LIBRARY, Page A12

## Contract signed for senior living center management

Vitalita begins contract July 1

By Steve Tool  
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa Valley Senior Living center now has new management ready to take the helm July 1.

Vitalita Senior Living Management and Consulting, a healthcare management and consultant company in Lake Oswego, signed a five-year contract with the Wallowa County Health Care District April 23.

Artegan, the present management company, announced in December of last year it

would not renew its contract. The firm did agree to stay on until a suitable replacement was found.

Nick Lunde, chair of the Wallowa County Health Care District board that oversees the hospital and living center was pleased with the new company.

Vitalita is owned by Lisa Hilty, who formed the company about a year ago and is also the company's chief executive officer. Hilty has an extensive background in caring for seniors.

She graduated from Oregon



Hilty

State University in 1995 with a bachelor's degree in Human Development Family Sciences and a certificate in gerontology, a specialty program at the university.

The day after she received her degree, she went to work as a social worker and administrator in training at a rural nursing home. She said she is just as passionately interested in seniors today as she was 25 years ago.

Hilty said that she heard about the opportunity to step into the management role in Enterprise through an industry contact. She contacted Wallowa Memorial Hospital CEO Larry Davy and told him her company was interested. She

said that community involvement with the center sealed the deal.

"When I came out, the thing that was most important to me was that I saw ownership and a community that was truly invested in the very best care and services for their community residents," Hilty said. "It is not common to walk into a senior living community and find the external community involved and invested. It's a unique blessing for the Wallowa Valley."

Hilty isn't walking into the job blind. She's served at successive levels of administration including regional director of operations and vice-president of sales and market-

ing at high-profile senior care providers.

However, she missed direct contact with resident care and service and decided she'd rather have influence on a smaller scale where she could directly impact care and service.

"It's been many, many years in the making," she said. "The vendors and partnerships that I bring to the table are long-term, just like my history in the industry."

Hilty said one of her goals is to make the management transition as smooth as possible, particularly for the sake of the residents.

See HILTY, Page A12