

County law enforcement carrying 'miracle drug'

Narcan can reverse opioid overdoses

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County law enforcement is armed with a life-saving drug.

Winding Waters Clinic presented Wallowa County Sheriff's Office and Enterprise Police Department with boxes of Narcan Aug. 20.

Narcan is the brand name for the drug most commonly used to treat heroin opioid overdoses. Treatment of overdose with Narcan falls under the "Good Samaritan Laws" in the state of Oregon. Law enforcement officers, who are often first responders, do not have to have special legal protections to administer the drug.

Opioid overdose deaths are on the rise in Oregon, and Wallowa County has the dubious distinction of being one of only three places in Oregon where an especially dangerous synthetic opioid, Carfentanil, has been found.

According to The Centers for Disease Control, fentanyl is 80-100 times more potent than morphine and hundreds of times more potent than heroin. Carfentanil, a synthetic fentanyl, is 5,000 times more potent than heroin.

"If it's here, there's a possibility of someone overdosing," said Enterprise Police Chief Joel Fish.

As a former Police Chief in North Carolina, the state with the second highest increase in opioid deaths in 2018, Fish is familiar with Narcan.

The grassroots organization, North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition, estimated that 1,214 law enforcement agencies across the U.S. have implemented Narcan programs and reported 403 rescues in North Carolina alone as of February 2017.

"The thing to remember is you're not going to hurt anyone," said Winding Waters Quality Director Meg Bowen. "If they're having a heart attack or stroke, it's not going to make anything worse."

In most cases, one dose of the nasal spray version of Narcan local law enforcement will be carrying is enough to bring a person out of overdose within minutes.

The only serious warning that comes with the drug is for law enforcement officers. Overdose victims sometimes "come back" from near death really angry. Their high is gone and they are in immediate withdrawal.



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Enterprise Police Chief Joel Fish demonstrates the ease of using nasal Narcan on volunteer Quinn Berry, crisis team/clinical supervisor for Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness.

"You may want them in handcuffs before you shove this up their nose," said Sheriff Steve Rogers, whose department has used Narcan in Wallowa County in the past.

Overdoses can happen to individuals who are not a criminal risk, too. According to OHSU rural scholar Will Hockett, individuals older than 65 are most at risk for accidental overdose of prescribed pain medications, which they may be taking for serious conditions including cancer.

Hockett, who is currently working at Winding Waters Clinic as part of his clinical rotation toward a medical degree, was part of the group that supplied and trained officers in the use of Narcan.

He was following up on a program begun by the former OHSU rural scholar

Nick West whose research revealed that Wallowa County was one of the top five opioid prescribing counties in the state in 2015.

Plans to address that issue were introduced, and Winding Waters Clinic endorsed equipping law enforcement agencies with Narcan.

Every law enforcement vehicle in Wallowa County will carry two nasal spray applicators per vehicle; two because if the amount of heroin is high, the individual treated may pass out a second time.

Wallowa County ambulances are prepared to deal with repeated dosages and in some hospital settings, a drip of Narcan is established.

Enterprise Police officers took part in a training on recently. Wallowa County deputies had already received training.

TLT PLAN

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Hurley had previously issued a challenge of the legality of the ballot measure on Aug. 17.

The suit filed Aug. 24 alleges that the Wallowa County Commissioners violated Oregon's Public Meetings Law in 17 ways.

According to court documents, commissioners held public meetings on the proposed increase in transient lodging tax without providing the public with any substantive information such as a draft of the tax measure, a plan or budget for the use of the tax or information about how the tax complied with Oregon law concerning narrowly defined uses of Transit Lodging Taxes.

Hurley had confronted commissioners at the June 4 board of commissioners meeting with

his concern that no one had seen a plan, budget or draft ordinance for raising the tax and asked that further meetings be postponed until a formal proposal on the matter could be produced.

That was not done.

It is further alleged that the commissioners did not provide notice to property owners affected by the proposal when the idea was first introduced, did not publish other scheduled meeting times in the local newspaper or notify the press of these meetings as requested, did not publish agendas for three public meetings, and that on the morning of the June 26 meeting, despite the lack of agenda for the meeting, Commissioner Todd Nash advised the president of the county fair board Brinda Stanley that a vote would be taken at that meeting.

The suit states: "Commis-

sioner Nash's announcement at the start of the June 26 special meeting was the first indication given to the public that the commissioners had planned to make a final, public decision concerning the proposed tax increase during the June 26 meeting."

Furthermore, the suit alleges that instructing county council, Attorney Paige Sully, to draft the ballot title before making the public decision to refer the measure to voters indicates the decision to refer the measure to voters was made in secret before the June 26 special meeting.

Oregon statute requires that the public be informed and aware of deliberations and decisions of the governing bodies and the information upon which such decisions were made.

The suit asks that the notices given and decisions made in

violation of Oregon's Public Meetings Law be voided; commissioners be ordered to refrain from further violations of Oregon's Public Meetings Law; and Hurley be awarded his reasonable costs and attorney fees.

A further challenge to actions of the commissioners was presented via a letter of complaint from Hurley through Attorney Benjamin Boyd dated Aug. 24. The letter was in response to the commissioners' "request for Ballot Title" to the Wallowa County Clerk's Office.

The complaint maintains the county had failed to draft the proposed local legislation. Oregon statute requires that the measure and ballot title be filed at the same time with the county clerk.

Hurley had filed a request on July 24 asking for copies of the "proposed ballot title and ballot measure" and did not receive a copy of the measure. The letter suggests that the reason he did not receive the ballot measure is because it does not exist.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to respond to the filings through Sully.

DUNN

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When Castilleja announced his decision earlier this year not to seek another term, Dunn again felt duty calling and threw his hat in the ring.

He won the May primary election over Diane Daggett.

Commissioner Susan Roberts remembers Dunn's attention to detail.

"He was able to pull pertinent pieces out of written material that we needed to focus on," she said. "It was interesting to be in the presence of someone who had the ability and knowledge to look at a large document and be able to do that."

One of Dunn's campaign promises had already submitted to the present commissioners, a proposal to establish a Human and Social Resource Advisory Committee for the county with members being appointed by the commissioners in fields ranging from law enforcement to education to tourism and other.

The 14- to 18-member committee would not handle county funds, but would offer policy advice to the commissioners on both economic development and social issues facing Wallowa County citizens.

"We're still going to do that," Roberts said. "Not just because Bruce wanted it, but because it's just a good idea."

Commissioner Todd Nash remembers Dunn as a force to be reckoned with but someone who still respected the opinions of others when they differed.

"There was a presence about Bruce," he said. "He was a formidable figure with a forceful voice and opinion, but he was also very quick to listen. I always appreciated that about him."

Nash also noted Dunn's preparation for any subject he encountered.

"In his capacity as NRAC chair, there would be a variety of topics on the board up for agenda discussion, and he was well-versed in every one of them," he said.

The commissioner fondly remembered a time he asked Dunn how he managed to read forest documents sometime running into thousands of pages and make concise notes through the document.

"It's easy," Dunn replied. "I don't go out on Friday and Saturday night. I sit at home and read through them."

Commissioner Castilleja said he had known Dunn for at least seven years.

"He was far smarter than I am when it comes to dealing with the forest service," Castilleja said.

One of Dunn's closest friends, Jim Zacharias, remembers him not only a man of his word, but like vir-

tually everyone who knew Dunn, a man of golden generosity.

More than 30 years ago, Zacharias went into the Sequoia mill in Joseph to introduce himself to the new forester. He described Dunn as a big man dressed in black, an imposing figure with longish jet black hair and a handlebar mustache. Even Dunn's cigars were black.

After several more visits and a few trips to the woods, with Zacharias' head hanging out the window for air, Dunn offered him a job as a contract logger and convinced the mill to front the young man substantial cash to use as a down payment for the purchase of the first mechanical logging equipment in the area.

Dunn married his wife Jane in 1978, and the couple had no children, but they had a close relationship with his mother-in-law, Anella Robinson. But according to Zacharias, Dunn never lacked for family.

"Bruce's wife, Jane, and her mother are undeniably his surviving 'blood' family, but his extended family is all of us," he said.

It's a huge loss, not just for my friendship, but for the county.

— John Williams
Close friend and retired extension agent

Retired Wallowa County extension agent John Williams, also a close friend, had known Dunn since 1993 when the two worked together to formulate NRAC and Williams also lassoed him for participation on a local radio call-in show called "Natural Resource Round Table."

"We were pretty good friends ever since," Williams said.

Like many others, Williams said that Dunn had a capacity to get along with anyone and understand their views, even if they were on the other side of the table when it came to natural resources, something that Williams thought helped him earn the commissioner post.

"Everyone was Bruce's friend," he said. "Even if he disagreed with you, he'd find a way to have a relationship; he'd find a connection somewhere."

Williams said that a number of Dunn's best qualities summed up a man of high character.

"His combination of knowledge and his passion for natural resources and Wallowa County can never be replaced," he said. "He was one of my best friends. It's a huge loss, not just for my friendship, but for the county."

POT

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The Secretary of State's Office has subsequently affirmed that the deadline for submission of signatures to the city was Aug. 8, as published in the Chieftain in June.

The Wallowa County Clerk's Office was able to confirm 135 of the submitted Enterprise signatures as valid. Reasons for rejection of signatures included petition signer outside city lim-

its, out of the county and out of the district; and illegal signers who were inactive or not registered voter.

Sean Flanagan of Joseph, a co-owner of The Peace Pipe, a Joseph smoking accessories and art shop on Main Street, was the chief petitioner for repeal of Joseph City ban on marijuana sales.

Flanagan turned in 184 signatures by the deadline of which 104 were verified. Flanagan only needed 87 signatures, far less than the 174 signatures originally thought to be the requirement. That measure will appear on the November ballot.

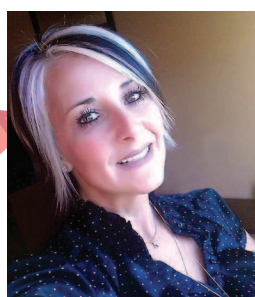
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Ad copy is **due on Friday Aug. 31st at 10am.**
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The Nature Conservancy is seeking producers interested in grazing leases on the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve. Lease opportunities may be under either full-care or self-care terms. Our standard lease is a two year term, with potential for renewals based on performance and program needs. The goal of the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve grazing lease program is to graze the Preserve in a manner compatible with the native grassland plant communities, to facilitate grazing research, and to develop relationships that further conservation on lessee property and the surrounding privately-owned prairie.

If you are interested in leasing pasture on the Zumwalt Prairie, application materials are available at:

The Nature Conservancy
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