

Wallowa Ducks Unlimited banquet and auction a success

By Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

Despite the threatening weather, this year's Wallowa County Ducks Unlimited banquet served nearly 160 adults and children from Wallowa and Union County. They enjoyed a Chuck Wagon Sisters buffalo, chicken, and pulled pork dinner at Cloverleaf Hall Saturday evening—and supported wetland conservation at the same time. The 2019 banquet was "...way more than we've done in the last couple of years," according to Wallowa County chapter treasurer John Duckworth.

"Lots of people here believe in wildlife conservation," said Ken Knifong, who brought his family to the event. "This dinner is fun for families because our Ducks Unlimited chapter really involves the kids as well as parents." Events for children, known as "Greenwings" in Ducks Unlimited parlance, included duck decoy painting, and the always-popular duck calling contest.

Raffles and a silent auction, with items donated by many local businesses, including Kevin's Tire, Moonshine Glass Art, and Aspen Grove Gallery were another highlight of the evening. The live auction featured a barbecue grill donated by Ed Staub Propane, a Tipi Adventure at the Rim Rock Inn, and a landowner-preference (LOP) cow elk hunt donated by Hancock Forest Management, as well as artwork and several



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Peyton Fough, 8, of Joseph receives her prize for winning the Junior Greenwings Duck Calling contest.

firearms. Funds raised help support Ducks Unlimited conservation projects in Oregon and around the Northwest.

Ducks Unlimited is a non-profit that conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and related waterfowl habitat and also supports waterfowl hunting. Established in 1937, the organization has 700,000 members, 40,000 volunteers and 250 staffers, including more than 150 biologists, hydrologists and engineers. Habitat conservation now tops 14 million acres and focuses on waterfowl flyways and breeding grounds import-

ant to maintaining and restoring populations of ducks, geese and other birds.

In Oregon, just-completed projects include Fern Ridge Reservoir near Eugene, where the ability to change water levels during the year will help control invasive plants, including purple loosestrife that degrade duck habitat, and increase natives that supply waterfowl food. Ladd Marsh just south of La Grande has also benefited from Ducks Unlimited support.

"Several people here want to do conservation projects on their land,"

said Duckworth. "But so far none of them have been chosen. We hope that will change in the future."

That's unlikely in the near future, according to Ducks Unlimited Regional Biologist Chris Colson, who is based in Boise. "A decade ago we worked with a lot of landowners doing small projects," he said. "But that was very expensive, and we also found that improving habitat on major flyways and feeding grounds is more beneficial for migrating waterfowl." Colson noted that this strategy also allows more ducks to make it to higher elevation homes in northeast Oregon.

"Our biggest project now, called SONEC, is in southern Oregon and northeast California" he said. "It provides habitat and food for ducks migrating from their winter grounds in the Sacramento Delta. It's an important stopover so that the birds can replenish their energy, and arrive at their breeding grounds in good condition."

But as the climate warms and dries, migration patterns are likely to change, Colson noted. Ducks Unlimited may turn their attention to higher elevation habitat like Wallowa County where water is more plentiful, and flood-irrigated pastures and hay fields on river floodplains provide better habitat.

"Things are always changing," Colson said. "We want to think ahead, and always be there for the ducks."



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Kelly Gomes (left) and Jeff Journigan get advice from fellow volunteer firemen about the fine points of cooking oysters for the steak and oyster feed.

Wallowa volunteer firefighters raise dough for better equipment

By Ellen Morris Bishop
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Saturday's Wallowa Volunteer Firemen's annual Steak and Oyster Feed raised funds to upgrade the department's "bunker gear." The 16 volunteer firefighters, along with their wives and children, turned out to cook oysters and steaks for more than 200 hungry diners at the all-you-can-eat event. "I can't say enough good things about the support of the volunteer's whole families," said department chief John Campbell.

"Each year we use the

funds from the dinner for scholarships for high school students, or sometimes students in college," Campbell said.

"This year we'll also use some of the proceeds to get better quality 'bunker gear'—that's the helmets, pants, coats, gloves and Nomex shirts—than what our grant from FEMA funded." The dinner proceeds will also help with the purchase of new firefighter breathing equipment. Past dinners have supplemented State Department of Forestry Volunteer Firefighter grants to improve wildland fire equipment.

FOR THE RECORD

FEB. 4
6:55 a.m. — 911 down power line in Wallowa.
10:34 a.m. — Trespass complaint in Enterprise.
3:01 p.m. — Enterprise Police Dept. arrested Michael C. Zanello, 39, of Enterprise for Failure to Register as Sex Offender. Subject was transported to Umatilla County Jail.
11:47 p.m. — Assault reported in Joseph.

FEB. 5
12:03 p.m. — Stolen trailer recovered in Lincoln City.
3:20 p.m. — Down power line reported in rural Enterprise.

FEB. 6
8:37 a.m. — Animal neglect complaint from Wallowa.
11:15 a.m. — Dog as a public nuisance complaint in Lostine.
3:55 p.m. — Dog as a public nuisance complaint in Joseph.
9:57 p.m. — Wallowa County Community Corrections issued a Statewide Warrant for Darren L. Weaver, 48, of Wallowa for Probation Violation. Original charge of Driving While Suspended/Revoked.
11:12 p.m. — Wallowa County Community Corrections issued a Statewide Misdemeanor Warrant for Daniel

Patrick McMichael, 63, of Lostine for Probation Violation.

FEB. 7
8:22 a.m. — Theft reported in Troy.
9:35 a.m. — Trespass complaint rural Enterprise.
7:45 p.m. — Report of a hit and run in Wallowa.

FEB. 8
9:35 a.m. — Dog as a public nuisance complaint in rural Enterprise.
11:20 a.m. — Animal neglect reported in rural Wallowa.

FEB. 9
10:11 a.m. — Road hazard rural Wallowa.
3:40 p.m. — Probation violation warrant issued for Michael Brian Sheffield, 24,

of Joseph with an original charge of ID theft.

3:55 p.m. — Probation violation warrant issued for Dalton Chase Tanzey, 23, of Wallowa. Original charge of Burglary I.

4:57 p.m. — No Contact Release Agreement against Johnny Duane Sabey, 57, of Elgin.

5:25 p.m. — No Contact Release Agreement entered against James Marvin Sabey, 81, of Elgin.

9:43 p.m. — Violation of a No Contact order in Enterprise.

FEB. 10
8:25 a.m. — Identity theft reported from Joseph.
3:56 p.m. — Wallowa County Sheriff's Office arrested Michael B. Sheffield, 24, of Joseph for Probation

Violation. Original charge ID Theft. Mr. Sheffield was cited and released.

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Christian Ambroson

Friday, February 15th
1 pm to 4 pm

Refreshments will be served

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