



Joseph Charter School seniors switch sides of their tassels, officially marking their graduation.

Joseph grads: Joseph Charter School graduates 15 seniors

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Kilgore attributes much of their success in school, and in planning futures that fit each student, to the guidance they received and the senior projects that they completed. Students undertake a project closely related to the career they are interested in. For example, Tyler Homan, who aspires to becoming a mechanical engineer, taught STEM classes to JCS 4th-graders. Valedictorian Victoria Suto, who is looking toward a future in the arts, helped create a community mural.

At the graduation ceremony, Kana Oliver performed the National Anthem. Megan Smith and retiring teacher Marla Dotson offered sage advice as honorary speakers, and the triumvirate of valedictorians spoke briefly to the gathered friends, family, and faculty.



Steve Tool

Joseph Charter School Class of 2019 Valedictorians Natalie Gorham, Victoria Suto, and Kana Oliver, along with Salutatorian Kade Kilgore, pause for a photo after graduation.

Then it was time to toss caps in the air and move on with life. The recession

anthem, "Don't Stop Believin'" by Queen, said it all.



Ellen Morris Bishop

The Wallowa High School class of 2019 awaits their diplomas.

Wallowa grads: Wallowa High School graduates 19 seniors

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the class of 2019's academic career. Their remembrances echoed the class slide show, which included each senior's favorite quote. Among them: "Learn from the mistakes of others. You can never live long enough to make them all yourself." (Groucho Marx); "Any society that would give up a little liberty to gain a little security will have neither." (Benjamin Franklin) and "We're adults. When did that happen? And how do we make it stop?" (Dr. Meredith Gray).

Judith Shike, Class of 2009, delivered a moving commencement address that recounted how she overcame the challenges she has faced during the decade since graduation. "Life inevitably throws us curve balls," she noted. "But remember that it is usually our light, not our darkness that most frightens us." She told the story of a



Ellen Morris Bishop

Wallowa High School 2019 co-valedictorians Rylee Goller (left) and Riley Ferre' address their classmates at graduation, Saturday, June 1.

young Syrian refugee who rescued her family from drowning when their flimsy raft began to sink. That girl went on to become a world-class Olympic swimmer despite all her early travails. "Set goals, fall in love with

everything, and never give up," Shike said.

With a class motto of "Our lives are before us, Our pasts are behind us. But our memories are forever with us." Wallowa High School's class of 2019 is on its way.

Other market: Lower Valley Farmer's Market offers local produce, meats

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that there was a food co-op in Enterprise back in the 1970's," Reth said. "That seemed to be a good thing for the community. Then I read a book called 'The Town that Food Saved'. It really brought home what keeping money and food in the local economy can do."

In 2012, Reth started an open-air Farmer's Market in Wallowa. The setting up and taking down was a lot of work in addition to the tasks of harvesting and packaging food. So when the Telephone Building came up for sale, Reth bought it, with an eye to it becoming a more permanent venue for a marketplace for local products. The new indoor market opened in 2014.

"Right now, the market keeps egg money in people's



Ellen Morris Bishop

The Lower Valley Farmer's Market is housed in the old Telephone Building on First Street in Wallowa. It is open from noon to 6 p.m. on Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

pockets here," Reth said. There's a lot of economic

power and good in keeping dollars local. If the local gro-

cery store goes away because I saved ten cents when I

bought a half-gallon of milk, there are local jobs lost. We all shop for the best bargains. But when you think about it, the best bargain is a healthy, prosperous community."

The Telephone Building store offers a wide variety of locally produced foods, clothing, gifts, and useful things. There's local eggs from Neal Isley's chickens, local grass-fed Angus beef from the Harshfield Ranch on Dougherty Loop, and if your timing is good, chicken from the Hawkins Ranch. As summer progresses there will be more local vegetables. Right now, you'll find thick succulent asparagus grown in Milton Freewater, and a number of items grown locally in Wallowa County greenhouses.

"We could help support even more local farms," Reth said. "I wish we could

showcase even more local producers."

Beyond the fresh foods, there are locally made jams and jellies, pickles, dried local fruit, and other goodies. You'll find floral bouquets of local fresh-picked flowers. Looking for a special gift? There are Gene Hayes paintings, Debbie Lind cards, and very original postcards by Brian Wizard. Ralph Anderson's Old Geezer woodcarvings, Peggy Goebel's crocheted art, Lynn Price's Sacred Salve Company Herbal Remedies—the list of fun and artful local wares goes on. There's something for everyone and every need.

"This is such an inspiring place to work," said volunteer Cathy Mullins. "There are so many amazing artists and gardeners in this community!"

The search for the long lost Blue Bucket Mine

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

An overconfident mountain guide and an errant wagon train in Oregon's early pioneer days could be credited with sparking one of the greatest gold rushes in American history.

It was prospectors in search of the Blue Bucket Mine who discovered gold in Canyon, Dixie and Griffin creeks in 1862, drawing thousands of people to Canyon City, Prairie City and Auburn in search of riches.

"The Blue Bucket Mine is the most celebrated and publicized mine in the Pacific Northwest in importance," Canyon City amateur historian Lawrence Roba wrote. "It will even outrank such famous mines as the Lost Dutchmen and Peg-Leg Smith mines of the Southwest."

Stephen Meek was the younger brother of Joseph Meek, one of Oregon's founding fathers and the man behind one of the state's earliest maps. In 1845, perhaps wanting to live up to his brother's name, Stephen Meek offered to guide 800 people in 200 wagons on a shortcut across the Eastern Oregon wilderness.



Contributed photo/Blue Mountain Eagle

Joseph Meek, left, was an active Oregon politician, U.S. marshal and sheriff. His brother Stephen Meek, right, was a mountain guide and later miner. Both were fur trappers in Oregon's early history.

Shortly after the party sighted Fremont Peak on the North Fork of the Malheur River, now known as Castle Rock, Meek was surely lost. Members of the wagon train mistook Steens Moun-

tain for the Cascade Range near Bend and Silvies River for Crooked River.

Several people succumbed to bad water or diseases during the trip, and as water became hard to find,

lynch mobs formed twice. A few loyal members hid Meek and his wife, who finally left for their own safety.

Meek was gone when members of the wagon train found the now infamous gold nuggets. Gold wouldn't be discovered at Sutter's Mill in California for four more years, so not only was nobody in the wagon train expecting to find gold — they wouldn't know what it was if they saw it.

In one version of the story, three young men went searching for their oxen and brought back 15-20 colored pebbles they had found in a stream. Several "seasoned" men said they were copper. A woman named Fisher kept one pebble but didn't find out it was gold until after the '49ers hit it rich in California.

There are many versions of this discovery story. In one, children looking for berries found the gold nuggets. In another, a blacksmith put a nugget on an iron-rimmed wagon wheel and easily hammered it flat. In other stories, a tool box filled with nuggets was lost when it fell off a wagon during a river crossing.



Ellen Morris Bishop

Pacific Power crews install new insulators on hot power lines after a direct lightning strike on this power pole next to Safeway Friday afternoon exploded the insulators and damaged power lines, causing a power-outage that lasted until about 1:30 a.m. for about 25 nearby homes.

Lighting strike causes power outage

By Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

Friday afternoon's power-outage to about 25 homes in Enterprise from around 4:30 p.m. Friday to 1:30 a.m. Saturday was caused by a direct hit of a lightning bolt on a power pole at Holmes and West North Street, outside Safeway, according to Pacific Power Line supervisor Mike McCor-

mack who was directing the work to replace insulators and transformers on the hot power lines along North Street.

The charge traveled south on Holmes Street, also severely damaging two transformers. Pacific Power crews arrived from Pendleton to repair the damage, including a hazmat crew charged with cleaning up oil leaking from the transformers.