

WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



Enterprise, Oregon

135th Year, No. 16

Wallowa.com

Wednesday, July 31, 2019 \$1

CHIEF JOSEPH DAYS



Ellen Morris Bishop

The bull Omaha takes revenge on his tormentor at the very end of the Saturday evening rodeo. The rider was unharmed, thanks to the courage of the bullfighters. In 2017, Derek Kolbaba rode Omaha for a full eight-second ride, but this rider couldn't make the buzzer.

Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

From the opening day Bucking Horse Stamped through Joseph to the final bullride five days later, action and fun summed up the 74th annual Chief Joseph Days rodeo that took place July 23-28. Six days of activities and four days of rodeo. Saturday's parade featured Grand Marshal Bill Wells, along with the members of many previous courts, including 1949, 1964, and 1999.

Bridwell Pro Rodeos supplied all the stock for the rodeo, which kept all the cowboys on their toes. For example, only two bulls were ridden over the four days. Plenty of cowboys in roping events found that cattle don't always run slow or in a straight line, which meant plenty of empty loops. But that meant that winners won big. Steers participating in the steer wrestling events often either stepped on the accelerator or slammed on the brakes, leaving the "lineback-

ers of pro rodeo" holding air and eating dirt. Thanks to active rough stock, plenty of cowboys didn't make 8-second rides either, but the ones who did took home a fat purse.

This rodeo seemed to be a safe one all around. While riders suffered the usual bumps, scrapes, slings and arrows of life riding rough stock, there were no

See Chief Joseph Days, Page A9

Joseph Branch Rails with Trails project withdraws application

Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Joseph Branch Rails with Trails project withdrew its application for a six-mile trail along the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority tracks between Joseph and Enterprise. Ranchers had protested the idea, claiming that traffic on the trail would interfere with their ranching activities, which is protected under Wallowa County's "Right to Farm" ordinance.

Wallowa County native Natalie Millar is spokesperson and treasurer for the JBRWT. She said the July 2 decision to withdraw the application was not an easy one. She noted that the group had heard the concerns of ranchers, many of which Millar described as valid.

"It was a long discussion," Millar said. "We talked for almost an hour and talked to our lawyer, too." She said the withdrawal vote was nearly unanimous.

The trail group's attorney, Garrett Stephenson, also advised the group that its appeal did not face the best of odds. The attorney advised the group that spending a significant amount of time and money for a possible 'no' on the appeal was not in the group's best interest. Transitions within the board membership of the group also made the going difficult.

"We decided it would make more sense if we made this less of a political battle, and try to get some more evidence of people using the right-of-way respectfully," Millar said. "We're kind of taking it as kind of a chance to regroup as a group and make sure we're not over-extending ourselves. We're a volunteer board and we're

See Trail, Page A7

Enterprise and Wallowa school districts begin facilities assessments

Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

Schools are among the most important components of rural communities. In Wallowa County we rightly take pride in our athletic teams and our academic achievements. The Enterprise and the Wallowa school districts are taking steps to ensure that their aging buildings, along with their educational, and athletic capacities can prepare their students to succeed in the future.

Both districts successfully applied for grants to participate in the Oregon Department of Education's Technical Assistance Programs (TAP). TAP funds both long-range facilities planning and facilities assessments. The funds provide inventory and inspection of a school's physical plant by a team of mechanical and structural engineers, architects, and other professionals to determine what repairs are needed, and what classroom upgrades might be appropriate to the school's long-range educational plan. In both districts, a committee chosen to represent the community will review the consultant's reports, and will make recommendations to the school boards after listening to the counsel of teachers, custodial staff, and students. Then, for the needed repairs and improvements, it is likely that bond initiatives will be on the ballots in 2020, with matching funds from the Oregon Schools Capital Improvement Monies (OSCIM).

The Enterprise school board will hold a special meeting on August 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the high school library to present the results and recommendations of their month-long assessment by the consulting firm The Wenaha Group.

Enterprise school district presents assessment Aug. 5

Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wenaha Group consultants and the Enterprise school board will present findings of the month-long assessment of Enterprise's facilities at the high school library, Monday, August 5, at 7:30 p.m. with a new roof as high priority.

The Enterprise School District received a \$45,000 grant for assessment of the school's facilities and environmental hazards. The results of that assessment, completed by Wenaha Group of Pendleton, Oregon, will be presented at a public meeting Monday, August 5.

"The fact that the high school's roof was leaking was kind of a wake-up call that the school buildings and facilities needed attention," said Enterprise superintendent Erika Pinkerton. "It was, and is, in dire need of replacement. We patched it last year. But then it sprang new leaks."

They applied for a TAP grant and after receiving the funds in May, contracted with The Wen-

See Enterprise, Page A7

Wallowa School District begins its assessment

Ellen Morris Bishop
Wallowa County Chieftain

The Wallowa School District began its TAP application about the same time as Enterprise, and received \$95,000 in funding for assessments of facilities, seismic, long-range planning and environmental conditions in the school. "It's a good opportunity to repair our school and ensure that we are equipped to meet students needs in the future," said Superintendent Jay Hummel. Hummel is concerned that the ancient heating system might give out on some cold winter day. "Jake MacDonald, who does our facilities maintenance, has done an outstanding job of keeping everything running, but a system can't last forever. I've been looking into where we could hold classes around the community should we lose the heating system," Hummel said. So far he's found spots to hold classes in the public library, in churches, and other places. "I'd rather not have to do that, but we are going to have school even if

See Wallowa, Page A7

The Wallowa school district is presently just starting their assessment. Superintendent Jay Hummel anticipates a meeting to present the results and recommendations to the community in late September.

ties a meeting to present the results and recommendations to the community in late September.



7 29467 50001 3