



WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



136th Year, No. 27

WINNER OF THE 2020 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

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Wallowa County Voices



Alicia Fambrini
Enterprise

New to county, she already loves it

ENTERPRISE — Alicia Fambrini is a bit of a newcomer to Wallowa County, but she's already fallen in love with it.

She came here six months ago from Tacoma, Washington, to live with her father, Alan Fambrini. Her dad is her only family in the county. Alan Fambrini has lived in the county about 10 years, his daughter said.

She works two jobs: at the Pioneer Guest Home, a private rehab facility in Enterprise, and the Alpine House Assisted Living home in Joseph.

What's your favorite thing about Wallowa County?

The lake is my favorite thing. I like going there to relax. I just look around at other people having fun and soak in the sun. It's another beautiful day in Wallowa County.

Are you particularly worried about COVID-19?

I am a little bit worried about the COVID. I heard a couple tourists just contracted it in Wallowa County so it's still out there and going. No one's really safe from COVID just yet. But I'm not worried about catching COVID. I wear a mask every day and I make sure I sanitize my hands. I'm not too worried because I'm not in close corners with anybody.

What are your thoughts on the upcoming election?

It's a turning point for people who have been in for 30 to 40 years to see other new faces come in and take over old positions and try to do a good job. It's a really important year to vote in both the local and national elections.

What's your advice for people who are thinking about moving here?

I recommend looking for a job and keep looking. I went through 30 different places I was going to apply, got interviews with five, talked to three different places and got a job with the fourth one. So just hang in there and keep on trying and you'll find something.

— Bill Bradshaw
Wallowa County Chieftain



Katy Nesbitt/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

A class of fourth- and fifth-grade students at Enterprise Elementary School has lunch at their desks in accordance with COVID-19 protocols of safe distancing.

Learning to adapt

Wallowa, Enterprise schools adjust to education during the pandemic

By KATY NESBITT
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa County school staff, students and parents are learning to be flexible in light of the constantly changing face of education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

From Superintendent Erika Pinkerton's office, elementary school kids can be seen at recess on the school playground. Some kids are wearing masks, but they aren't required to do so outside.

Pinkerton said the kids also get "mask breaks" during the day, but to keep them safe desks are spaced 6 feet apart, and each classroom has its assigned playground equipment.

Steve Roundy, the Enterprise Elementary School office manager, said kids are allowed to play with soccer balls at recess, but basketballs are off limits because they are touched by so many hands — adaptations to keep the kids well-



Katy Nesbitt/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

Hallie Duncan plays with friends on the "hand rock" in front of the Enterprise School. Enterprise Elementary School kids can be seen at recess wearing masks, but they aren't required to do so.

"The kids miss their after-school sports like soccer and baseball," Roundy said.

Pinkerton said students can't

be exposed to more than 50 people in the school and the elementary school has 150 kids and 30 staff members. To reduce expo-

sure students go to the cafeteria and bring their lunches back to their classroom and are assigned a "buddy cohort," a fellow student with whom they are allowed closer contact.

Instead of going to the art room, the art teacher has a wheeled cart she takes to each room and each student has their individual kits so art supplies aren't shared.

As for hygiene, Pinkerton said handwashing and sanitizing are priorities.

"Dr. Powers met with all of our K-6 students about handwashing and we've had training on cleaning for all of the staff," Pinkerton said.

The school closed just before spring break when much of the state was shutting down. Within a few weeks, children were attending school from home on Google Classrooms. This fall school reopened for in-class learning, but of the 150 students, 21 opted to learn from home.

Trish Otten was a kindergarten teacher until this year and is now working with the distance learners online.

"The kids have interaction with their grade-level teachers daily for 45 minutes and I am available every day," Otten said.

The transition from Google Classrooms to a program called Pearson that includes curriculum wasn't smooth at the beginning of the year and the school lost some students to a program offered by Baker County. Pinkerton said that after a couple weeks, the school had

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Most eateries, lodging survive pandemic

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Eateries and lodging establishments in Wallowa County that were concerned the COVID-19 pandemic would wipe out business during the tourist season have been somewhat relieved as tourism winds down and they find they've survived.

Todd Morrow, owner of the Log House RV Park & Campground on the north side of Enterprise, said his establishment remained as much as 85% full over the tourist season.

"We were pretty close to last year," he said. "The pandemic didn't really hurt us businesswise."

He attributed this at least partially to the fact that his custom-

ers preferred using campgrounds and RVs to do a better job of social distancing than if they stayed in a motel.

"You have control of your own environment," he said.

He said he even heard from customers who said they were having a harder time getting new RVs or campers or the equipment to upgrade them, with more people interested in avoiding motels.

Though some lodging establishments in the area experienced a drop, they didn't find their occupancy rates down considerably.

Darin Naisbitt, of the family-owned Ponderosa Motel and Wilderness Inn in Enterprise, said



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

A waiter delivers an order to customers at an outdoor table Friday, Oct. 9, 2020, at the Range Rider in Enterprise. Outdoor seating has helped restaurants avoid being devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic, but the Range Rider still has had to cut seating by 50%.

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