

Six certified to intervene in mental crises

CIT Team training held last week in Enterprise

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Six first-responders were certified Friday, May 14, after a weeklong training session to help law enforcement officers and others dealing with the mentally ill, drug or alcohol afflicted and aging communities, according to a press release.

“The information, tools, and resources presented are designed to enhance first responder response and reduce the overall risk of injury or death,” the release stated.

Certified in the Crisis Intervention Team training were Officer Jacob Curtis, of the Enterprise Police Department; Deputy Anthony Violette, of the Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office; Deputy Jennifer Harmon, of the Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office; Deputy Anthony Scott, of the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office; Josiah Bates, a Wallowa Mountain Medical Clinic nursing student; and Sandra Gore, a Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness therapist.

The certification was held at Enterprise Christian Church.

Brandon Miller, a mental health clinician for the Center for Wellness who hosted some of the training, held a review of the 40 hours of instruction on specific topics, with a CIT version of the game show “Jeopardy.” Categories in the game included Suicide, Mental Health First Aid, Tactical Communication, Crisis, Acronyms and Psychosis. Topics covered through the week’s training included medication time, crisis cycle, “Sad, Bad, Mad,” mental illness in the elderly, seniors presentation, post-traumatic stress disorder/battlemind, family presentation, psychosis and mood disorders, personal-



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Brandon Miller, left, a mental health clinician for the Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness, handed out certificates of completion to six first-responders who completed Crisis Intervention Team training Friday, May 14, 2021. From left, are Miller; Deputy Anthony Scott, of the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office; Josiah Bates, a Wallowa Mountain Medical Clinic nursing student; Sandra Gore, a Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness therapist; Officer Jacob Curtis, of the Enterprise Police Department; Deputy Jennifer Harmon, of the Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office; and Deputy Austin Violette, of the Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office.



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He wasn’t Alex Trebek, but Brandon Miller, a mental health clinician for the Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness, did a credible job conducting a “Jeopardy” review of Crisis Intervention Team training Friday, May 14, 2021, at Enterprise Christian Church. Six area first-responders received their CIT training certifications.

ity disorders, treatment of psychiatric illnesses, synthetic substances, excited delirium, addictive diseases, voices presentation, legal panel, liability and use of force, developmen-

tal disabilities, de-escalation techniques, National Alliance On Mental Illness/own voice, child and adolescent crisis, suicide prevention, suicide by cop and self-care and scenario-based training.

Enterprise Police Chief Kevin McQuead, who has taken the training several times, said the CIT Training isn’t a one-time event, since the parameters of the training change, as do an officer’s understanding of it based on his experience and occasions the officer has had to apply the training.

He said a major goal is to get a person suffering from mental health issues the help they need and to do it in a manner that is as peaceful as possible. Miller said it’s always preferable when mental health care is needed that a patient seeks that care voluntarily rather than having it forced upon them.

Each class varies in length and is taught by instructors locally and from around the state.

Ridg Medford, one of the instructors from the Oregon Center on Behavioral Health and Justice Integration, also emphasized to the trainees that they could become victims to some of the issues they’re intended to address.

He urged them to regularly step away from their work.

“When you get home, you need to take off your vest, take off your badge and step away from it,” he said.

He emphasized that too often, particularly law officers, lose touch with people outside the law enforcement community — even family — and find themselves alone at the end of their careers.

Nationwide connection through CIT

CIT programs create connections in over 2,700 communities nationwide between law enforcement, mental health providers, hospital emergency services and individuals with

mental illness and their families. Through collaborative community partnerships and intensive training, according to the release, CIT improves communication, identifies mental health resources for those in crisis and ensures officer and community safety.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the lack of mental health crisis services across the U.S. has resulted in law enforcement officers serving as first responders to most crises. A CIT program is an innovative, community-based approach to improve the outcomes of these encounters, the release stated.

CIT Training objectives include:

- Providing information and resources to law enforcement personnel who find themselves handling calls involving emotionally disturbed individuals.
- Increasing the ability of law enforcement to successfully manage an emotionally disturbed individual.
- Reducing the number of inappropriate incarcerations involving people with mental illness.
- Providing relief to an overburdened criminal justice system.
- Developing/implementing a treatment response system for persons experiencing emotional or mental crisis.
- Developing and sustaining officer interest and involvement on calls involving emotionally disturbed individuals.
- Continuing to develop relationships between mental health providers, law enforcement and mentally ill individuals and their families.

IN BRIEF

Flora School offers virtual pioneer classes

FLORA — The Flora School will take advantage of current technology to present classes online this year instead of in-person, once again, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Online classes include: 9-Patch Lap Quilt, Blacksmithing from the Ground Up, Basic Bladesmithing, Weaving: The 3 Rs — Recycling, Reusing, Repurposing! and French Burrito Pillowcase.

Sewing, blacksmithing and weaving, all three were important skills used by the pioneers. The blacksmithing and weaving classes will be building the forge and the loom.

Class fees are by donation after taking the class, “therefore, a donation is not required, but is appreciated,” said Laura Wisdom, a Portland-area resident who is in charge of FSEC classes.

Each class has a materials and equipment list. Since the classes are online,

it is important to register ahead of time to make sure all materials and equipment are gathered. Register and learn class times by emailing fsec.education@gmail.com. Students will receive information on using the format used for the online classes, i.e. Zoom, Messenger Room, etc. and how to donate.

Joseph Center to return to summer hours

JOSEPH — Like many businesses in Wallowa County, the Joseph Center for Arts and Culture is resuming its summer hours beginning May 31, according to a press release.

Hours will be 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays.

For more information on the center, visit <https://josephy.org>, call 541-432-0505 or stop by at 403 N. Main St. in Joseph.

County may take part in opioid litigation

ENTERPRISE — A resolution on Wallowa Coun-

ty’s participation in opioid litigation will be on the agenda Wednesday, May 19, when the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners meet.

The commissioners meet at 9 a.m. at the courthouse. County Counsel Paige Sully will discuss the resolution with the commissioners prior to its adoption.

Also on Wednesday’s agenda are a letter from a Wallowa business to consider a donation, the resignation of Hannah Miller from the county Assessor’s Office, an order on the scope of review of a land appeal and two intrafund transfers of funds totaling \$43,550.

Hurricane Creek half-marathon is May 29

JOSEPH — Wallowa County is urged to get out and run or walk as half-marathon event will take place Saturday, May 29, starting at Joseph City Park, according to a press release.

The Hurricane Creek Half Marathon/5 Mile/5K starts at 8 a.m. and heads toward the Hurricane Creek Trailhead. This is for anyone from walkers to

advanced runners.

The whole mission of the event is to encourage more active lifestyles and the goal is to get Wallowa County out and running.

Energy Brown Bag coming on Thursday

ENTERPRISE — An Energy Brown Bag on energy planning is set to take place at noon Thursday, May 20. The meeting will take a look at comprehensive energy planning efforts that are coming together in Wallowa County.

“Long-range planning can ensure a reliable mix of energy sources for local residents, prioritize energy efficiency and renewable energy development, access to funding, keeping energy dollars local and creating community resilience,” a press release on the event states.

To view the meeting, visit wallowaresources.org.

— Chieftain staff

This week’s featured book

The Anthropocene Reviewed

Essays on a Human-Centered Planet

by John Green

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