

WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

137th Year, No. 13

Wednesday, July 7, 2021



Fireworks covered the sky at all elevations over Wallowa Lake Sunday night, July 4, 2021, during the annual Shake the Lake fireworks show. Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

WINNER OF THE 2020 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50

INSIDE DISCOVER WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH **GO!**

Wallowa County Voices



Andy Osborn
Joseph

He says slow down, be neighborly

ENTERPRISE — It's been almost 30 years since Andy Osborn moved to Joseph, where he worked for Joseph Hardware for 20 years. Now, he works part time putting together motorcycles and side-by-sides a couple days a week.

He has kids in Weston and Milton-Freewater who have produced six grandchildren.

He recently shared his thoughts about living in Wallowa County.

What's your favorite thing about Wallowa County?

Just that it's a small community and the way everybody is pretty friendly. It's not overcrowded, no stoplights, not very much crime that I know of. It's a nice, calm place to live. When I was younger, I lived in a smaller town and it kind of reminds me of that.

What are your thoughts on the beginning of fire season?

Hopefully it won't start. But if it does, I hope it'll be a small one.

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected you?

Not by much. I pretty much stay by myself. When I work, I work in an area where the closest person to me is about 40, 50, 60 feet away. I've been isolated, not because of the pandemic, because that's the way it is. When I go home, it's just me and my dog. I do a little yardwork, go to the store, what else do I need to do? I didn't get vaccinated because I think it's b*****t.

What have you learned from living in Wallowa County?

Slow down and be neighborly.

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

Slow down and be neighborly. Don't bring the big city with you. That's not why we're here.

— Bill Bradshaw,
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH

Council censures Bingham

Removed as mayor pro-tem, from committees, banned from employee interaction

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Joseph City Councilor Kathy Bingham was removed from her office as mayor pro-tem, removed from her committee assignments and banned from interaction with city employees after being censured by the council after it addressed complaints against her Wednesday, June 30.

Five letters of complaint were submitted to City Hall in recent months, largely alleging Bingham acted inappropriately in her role as a councilor.

The council went over the letters individually during a marathon, three-hour executive session and gave Bingham the opportunity to respond to each. The details of executive sessions are not privy to public scrutiny as long as they are handled according to Oregon law.

Bingham declined to comment on the council's action both in open session and when contacted by the Chieftain on Thursday.

Bethscheider complaint

One of the complaints the council considered was the Feb. 21 claim by local businessman Gary Bethscheider that Bingham

ROCKETS' RED GLARE

Independence Day celebrated at Shake the Lake and Wallowa Fourth of July parade



Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

A bystander helps a flock of children get their sparklers lit at the Wallowa County park on Wallowa Lake Sunday, July 4, 2021.



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Mr. Liberty Jaxyn Wyatt, left, son of Janae and Dale Wyatt, and Miss Fourth of July Mila Alexis, daughter of Chesa Alexis, prepare for Sunday's 2021 Wallowa Fourth of July Parade. The kids and their parents all live in Wallowa.



Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

Joshua, who was "almost 5 years old" and was with his family visiting from Pendleton, experiments with his sparkler at the Wallowa County park Sunday, July 4, 2021.



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa's neighbors in Lostine got in on the action Sunday, July 4, 2021, with an entry in the Wallowa Independence Day Parade.

More photos from the weekend's events on A16

Repairs, expansion planned at Josephy Center

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Now that its building has been purchased, plans are underway to improve and expand the Josephy Center for Arts and Culture in Joseph.

On Wednesday, June 23, Executive Director Cheryl Coughlan and Board of Directors President Jeff Costello signed the paperwork to purchase the building at 403 N. Main St. in Joseph, realizing the center's long-awaited goal for the sustainability of the organization.

"The dream of becoming a permanent home for arts and culture in Wallowa County is now a reality," Coughlan said in a press release. "But like every homeowner knows, the work is really just beginning.

There's a long list of repairs and renovations needed to make the building safe and accessible for every person who walks through the doors."

To get those repairs and renovations started, the Roseburg-based Ford Family Foundation, a private foundation that funds programs for children, families and communities in rural Oregon, granted the Josephy Center \$230,000. The grant will cover the cost of an elevator that allows access to the second floor, wheelchair ramps, Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant bathrooms, emergency exit doors, an indoor sprinkler system, floor repair and more.

"We are so lucky to have the support of the Ford Family Foundation," Development Director Kellee Sheehy said in the release. "They have supported us from the beginning

and have helped us grow many of our youth programs. Now they are also one of the biggest funders of our capital campaign. We are so grateful."

Renovation phases

The capital campaign is phased: Phase One focuses on the building purchase, critical safety repairs and accessibility for all. Phase Two focuses on the renovation and expansion of the building, which will increase functionality, accessibility and programming.

In an interview Wednesday, June 30, Coughlan provided more details.

In addition to the purchase of the building, she said there are repairs to the log building's façade that are needed, including rusted fascia and

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