

Pinkerton to join La Grande School District

Enterprise superintendent will be director of student services in La Grande

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Erika Pinkerton is transitioning to a bigger school district after spending five years in Enterprise.

She isn't, however, heading too far away.

Pinkerton, who has been the superintendent of the Enterprise School District and the elementary school principal, will take over as the director of student services in the La Grande School District, she announced last week on the school district's Facebook page. Her final day in the district will be Aug. 30.

Part of the decision for Pinkerton was in the opportunity to gain experience working in a larger school district.

A primary role she will

have as the Student Services Director is being responsible for providing leadership in the development, implementation and coordination of the District's special education, sections 504, and mental health programs for the district.

"Basically, I'll be the district resource for special education teachers to consult with," she said. "Advocating for students with special needs, in addition to building relationships with families is a big part of this job, as well."

She'll replace Landon Braden in the role. Braden, interestingly, recently became the high school counselor at EHS.

"It's a win-win for both districts," Pinkerton said.

She came to Enterprise five years ago after serving as an elementary school principal in the Winston-Dillard School District, a role she held for eight years.

The change, she said,



Pinkerton

will allow her to affect a group she said she has had a big heart for in special-needs children.

"This is an opportunity for me to work closer with children and be able to give back and serve in a positive capacity," she said.

She called the move, though, bittersweet, as she said she has been in Enterprise as the district made several improvements. Most recently, the district received \$4 million from a school bond passed by voters in November, a bond that came with a \$4 million matching grant.

She also touted the district's position fiscally, work done within the special-education program, moving the district from a targeted assisted Title I program to a school wide Title I program, safety and security, and technology, among others.

"Bringing the district into the 21st century was huge. We moved from basically no technology to 1-on-1 technology," she said.

Also important, she said, was, "Making sure that equity was within our school system, whether realizing that we have ramps that are not ADA compliant, to making sure all students had access to curriculum and were able to access their curriculum."

She said she struggled with the decision to take the job, though, because of the relationships built with students, staff and parents.

"When you gain that trust, that's when you can be more progressive," she said. "Change is hard, but the changes we made were pretty impressive in five years."

The school board has looked at hiring an interim superintendent from a pool of retired superintendents before beginning the search for a permanent hire, Pinkerton said.

"I'm extremely grateful to have served our community over the past five years," Pinkerton said. "I do really look forward to hearing about the continued successes of our district."

Hospital gets donation for orthopedics

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa Memorial Hospital has received a major financial boost to help fund its orthopedic surgery department.

The hospital received a \$100,000 donation from the Wallowa Valley Health Care Foundation to invest in the new department, which is headed by orthopedic surgeon Bradley Smith, who joined the staff at the hospital in June.

"We are incredibly fortunate to live in a place that values quality health care with a community that goes above and beyond to support the mission of the foundation," hospital CEO Larry Davy said. "This generosity makes services like orthopedics available locally. We can't thank the foundation and the people that support it enough."

The donation was made during the foundation's June board meeting.

"For years, our goal was to build our portfolio so we could make a substantial gift when a need arose," Foundation Board President David Smyth said in a press release. "Bringing orthopedic surgery to the county is something we are excited to support."

Smith became the first in-county orthopedic surgeon in a decade when he came to Wallowa County.

The money makes up about one-third of the more than \$300,000 needed to fund the new orthopedic surgery department, according to WMH Chief Nursing Officer Jenni Word.

"This generous gift will allow us to expand the services we can offer," she said.

The hospital will pay for the remainder from its capital budget.

Equipment — including a range of tools and instruments, an orthopedic table and protective equipment for support staff — is among what is being supplemented for the new department.

The foundation, which was founded in 1991, has built a portfolio of more than \$1.7 million, largely through major donations or estate gifts.

"Most of the estate gifts come with specific directions about how the funding is to be used. The portfolio covers all major administrative costs, so that money raised from fundraisers such as the annual Healthy Futures Dinner Auction, Circle 100 and Men's Guild can go toward improving and expanding health care services," the press release from the foundation states.

New post office



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

The new modular building that will house Lostine's new post office at Neal Park behind City Hall was almost ready to open Saturday, July 17, 2021. The lease on the current post office expires Aug. 1, and the owners notified the city last year that it would not be renewed.

'Instance in Time' photo exhibit will open July 30

Joseph Center to feature local photographers

Chieftain staff

JOSEPH — "Instance in Time," an exhibit featuring local photographers Rick McEwan and Adele Buttolph will open Friday, July 30, at the Joseph Center for Arts and Culture.

The exhibit opens with a reception starting at 7 p.m. that includes an artists' Q & A and an exhibit walk-through. Food and drink will be served and the art will be for sale. The exhibit ends Friday, Sept. 10.

According to a press release, McEwan approached the Joseph Center two years ago with an idea for this exhibit that focused on his style of photography, where he captures the beauty of an instance in time.

McEwan, a nature photographer, said, "I seek to communicate a sense of place through hours, days, sometimes years of personal experience in a location."

As an artist, he endeavors "to see the familiar in new and intriguing ways, seeing patterns and con-

nections across time, space and experience. ... We live in a world where we document through photography, our instances in time. To hold those photographs, is to hold the memories in our lives."

Buttolph is from Enterprise.

"Nature, travel and intentional camera movement techniques are truly inspiring for me as a photographer," she said. "My intent is to capture the essence of a place or an emotion, as I experience it."

Like McEwan, Buttolph shares the idea that "each photograph preserves a unique portrayal of place and time."

A catalog of the exhibit will be for sale, \$15, and can be purchased online or in-person at the exhibit. A slide show of the exhibit will be on the center's website at josephy.org.

This exhibit was supported by the Ford Family Visual Arts, Oregon Community Foundation, Ann Werner and donor patronage.

For more information, contact the center at 541-432-0505, or contact Exhibits Director Dawn Norman at exhibits@josephy.org.

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