



# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



## Wallowa County Voices



**Elvaree Fine**  
Enterprise

### Enterprise woman loves the county fair

ENTERPRISE — Elvaree Fine is a Wallowa County native who moved away for several years during her youth and then returned, having been here for the past 41 years.

"I was born here, at the old hospital," she said.

Never married, she has two older brothers and two younger, who have produced many nieces and nephews.

She and her brothers were raised on a cattle and horse ranch 22 miles out of Enterprise along Crow Creek that was started by her grandfather.

She worked at the old hospital in the kitchen, then down at Pete's Pond, a one-time restaurant and health food store in Enterprise. She also took care of her parents in their final years and worked for the Enterprise Christian Church before it moved to its current location from downtown.

Elvaree recently shared her thoughts about living in Wallowa County.

#### What's your favorite thing about Wallowa County?

The mountains, the scenery, the people being friendly.

#### Are you concerned about the recent coronavirus spike?

Not really, I've been OK. I've been vaccinated.

#### What do you think of this year's fair?

I think it's really nice because we didn't have one last year. I think it's really good this year for the public.

#### What's your favorite exhibit?

The stuff that I entered. I also like watching the horses. I was raised on a farm.

#### Have you participated in the fair? Doing what?

Yes, I entered some sewing and some crocheting. I just looked at it and I got some firsts and seconds.

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

It's a nice, quiet, friendly place for everybody who moves here. It's not like the big city where it's real crowded and people aren't so friendly. People like to help everybody.

# One for the record books

## Wallowa County Fair livestock sales top \$360,000

By **BILL BRADSHAW**  
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Bids totaling a record-breaking \$360,345 were received at the Wallowa County Fair Fat Stock Sale that closed the nine-day event Saturday, Aug. 14, the culmination of a year's worth of efforts by 4-H and FFA kids.

Wallowa County Commissioner Todd Nash, the commissioner who serves as the liaison with the Fair Board, said the commissioners usually budget for about \$275,000 and this year's take far exceeded expectations.

"It was incredible the amount of money and amount of support that went through there," Nash said Monday looking back at the fair.

Nash said he was aware of one year that topped \$300,000, but never as high as this year.

Debi Warnock, the Oregon State University Extension agent in charge of 4-H, said the past two years garnered \$230,000 and \$263,000 respectively. Of course, last year's was a low mark largely because of the coronavirus pandemic that limited the fair to just the one-day livestock sale.

"Animals are worth a lot more all over the state," she said. "Sales are well supported by their communities."

Fair Board Secretary had one word for the success of the fair: "Amazing."

Fair Board Chairwoman Brinda Stanley went into a little more depth.

"I think the fair was a great success," she said. "I think families had a great time. ... and the kids were a success at their projects. ... I think we achieved all that."

#### Auction — beef

Joseph Birkmaier, the son of Tom and Kelly Birkmaier of Enterprise, had the highest-selling animal of any species with the Angus cross steer he raised as his first 4-H project. The animal was purchased for \$4,600 by Caleb Howard of Cool Springs Ranch.

But being his first project, it took an emotional toll on Joseph as he bid a tearful farewell to his steer, which he had named Moe and formed quite an attachment to.

But Joseph recognized slaughter was the ultimate destiny of all market animals and choked back the tears as he accepted it. As he thought about the price he got, his demeanor changed.



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

**Joseph Birkmaier attempts to control his unruly, just-sold steer Moe, during the stock sale of the Wallowa County Fair on Saturday, Aug. 14, 2021. Behind Moe is buyer Caleb Howard of Cool Springs Ranch. Joseph's was the highest-selling animal of the sale at \$4,600.**



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

**Kane Johnson, right, stands with his just-sold grand champion FFA market lamb Saturday, Aug. 14, 2021, during the fat stock sale of this year's Wallowa County Fair. From left, are future FFA members Mia DeMelo and Adele Johnson and county Commissioner Todd Nash.**

"I'm really happy. I'm really surprised. I didn't think I'd get that much," he said. "I'm going to save it for my future, for college."

He said he has a little less than

\$2,000 to pay in costs he incurred raising Moe, but he's not worried. In fact, his mom further brightened his spirits recalling Joseph's daily work with Moe.

#### MORE NEXT WEEK

The full list of award winners from the various categories at the Wallowa County Fair will be published next Wednesday, Aug. 25.

#### MORE INSIDE

More photos from the Wallowa County Fair on **Pages A9 and A16**

"Every day, when (Joseph) would call him in from the pasture for feeding, he'd holler, 'Mo—ee, Shmo—ee. Would you happen to want some grain—ee. Cuz if you did, I happen to know where you could get some.' Every morning and every afternoon I'd hear that," Kelly Birkmaier said.

Joseph even had advice for other kids and encouraged them to raise a market animal for the fair.

"It's a great way to get to know animals and it will really benefit their future," he said. "They can

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# Mask order returns as COVID-19 surges

By **GARY A. WARNER**  
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown on Aug. 11, ordered face masks worn indoors in public places by everyone age 5 and over beginning Aug. 13. The state will not immediately enforce the rules as people and businesses make the change.

During a press call last week, Brown said the highly contagious delta variant was pushing the virus spread to the point that each infected person was infecting eight others.

"Moving forward, for the immediate future, masks will be required for all indoor public settings," Brown said.

The mandate applies to adults and children older than 5. On public transit, also includes children older than 2.

Brown also urged, but

did not mandate, wearing masks in crowded outdoor situations. She also urged private companies and other organizations to enact their own indoor mask policies.

#### 'Fifth wave' across the state

Brown's order came the day after the Oregon Health & Science University's infectious disease experts forecast the state could see more than

1,000 COVID-19 patients per day in hospitals by early next month. Oregon would be about 500 staffed beds short of needs for all patients if the rate hit its projected peak of Sept. 7.

Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state epidemiologist, said this "fifth wave" of COVID-19 to hit the state in the past 18 months was different than earlier spikes.

More than half the pop-

ulation is vaccinated, but the "relentless" delta variant was spreading rapidly through the estimated 1.2 million Oregon residents who are not inoculated. That group includes children under 12 for whom there is no federally approved vaccine as yet.

The Oregon Health Authority has reported patients arriving at hospitals are younger, sicker, require more care and stay longer.

"The COVID-19 situation is dire," Sidelinger said, with the delta variant "far outpacing even the grim scenarios in our latest reported projections."

The action was a policy U-turn for Brown and the OHA, who had relinquished decisions on COVID-19 restrictions to county supervisors as of June 30.

"I expected local elected officials to step up

and do the right thing," Brown said. "What is clear they are not taking action. That is why we are moving forward."

Wallowa County Commissioner Todd Nash said he and other commissioners spoke with Brown prior to the mandate going in place about their local communities.

"She was absolutely in agreement with and appreciative of the efforts made here, but wasn't willing to carve us out as being any different," he said.

Nash said the mandates were "disappointing," and said on the call, the governor wanted local officials to step up.

"She wanted some actions from the commissioner or she was going to take action herself. I told her our actions may look different than your

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