

Enterprise woman aids causes by running marathons

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Running marathons has become an annual tradition for Emily Sheahan.

It also has become a way to help those in need half way around the world.

Sheahan, an Enterprise resident who is also a family physician with Wallowa Memorial Medical Clinic, recently took part in her seventh Boston Marathon — and 11th overall — when she ran the 26.2-mile event on Oct. 11.

The race is traditionally held in April, but last year was run virtually — Sheahan ran the mileage locally — due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this year was pushed back to October due to the lingering coronavirus.

Sheahan ran the marathon in a time of 3 hours, 38 minutes, 6 seconds, though the cause — why she ran in the first place a decade ago — matters more.

“I did my first marathon in 2011, and what is interesting is that year my sister, she lives in Colorado, and was on a run group that raised funds for clean water with World Vision,” Sheahan said. “She invited me to run a marathon in Colorado. I ran for World Vision to raise funds. Since then, I (have run) a marathon every year for World Vision.”

Following one of those marathons, run in Zimbabwe in 2012, she and 10 others who ran to support World Vision got to see their work first hand.

It solidified for Sheahan the need to support the group.

“They took us to villages in Zambia where we were able to witness what World Vision is doing in those villages,” she said. “They partner, they help teach them hygiene ... (and how to) garden and grow crops.”

World Vision also helps give access to water, she said.

“It’s better sanitation to keep them healthier. They also have small loans



MarathonFoto/Contributed Photo
Enterprise’s Emily Sheahan poses for a photo after completing the Boston Marathon on Oct. 11, 2021. Sheahan has raised about \$30,000 for charity running marathons in the last decade.

so they can start small businesses,” she said. “They try to choose villages where, if they put a well in, it would support multiple villages. Once they get a well in, they have a clean water source.”

“Having that clean water source is just life changing for the villages. It was cool to go over and see how World Vision is working (in) those villages. ... After that trip, I decided I was going to run a marathon a year to raise funds for clean water. It was amazing what it did for those villages.”

Through the years, various churches in the county have helped support the

charity through Sheahan running in the marathon, especially her home congregation at Enterprise Christian Church. To date, she said, about \$30,000 has gone to the organization, including \$7,900 this year.

Support for the organization has come in various ways, including sponsoring a single child or contributing funding to give clean water to a person half a world away.

This year, it was a donation of \$50 to support water for one person that was the requested donation.

“For \$50, it allows one person to get clean water,” she said. “Each of those amounts leads to clean water for at least one person. This year, it was 100 people. I just asked people to give money to World Vision, and then I sent the money into World Vision, they get it to Africa where they are putting in wells.”

Sheahan has ample experience running marathons, and knows how to maintain herself during the grueling 26 miles.

But with the Boston Marathon this fall run in October — at the end of summer and warmer than in early April — she put in one additional request of those supporting her in the race.

Prayer.
“I asked the congregation at Enterprise Christian Church to have people sign up to pray for me for each mile of the marathon,” she said. “They prayed for me while I ran, which was amazing because I actually felt stronger than any other Boston Marathon. The heat didn’t affect me, and it had to be the power of prayer.”

Sheahan intends to continue running — and supporting the charity — as long as she can.

“I am hoping to. I figure as long as I can run and continue to marathons I want to keep going and keep raising funds for World Vision,” she said. “It helps when there is something more than just yourself you are running for.”

Senior living centers meet vaccine deadline

No one laid off due to state order; Wallowa Memorial loses five

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — No employees at two of Wallowa County’s primary senior living facilities had to leave their jobs in late October when the state’s mandate requiring health care workers be vaccinated against COVID-19 or have an approved exemption to the vaccine took effect.

The Oregon Health Authority required that public employees, including health care workers, be fully vaccinated against the virus by Oct. 18 or have medical or religious exemptions to the requirement. Fully vaccinated status is reached two weeks after the final recommended dose of either vaccine.

Employers who did not require this of their employees could be subject to fines.

“Everybody is either following the guidance or following the religious or medical exemptions as laid out by OHA and the state,” said Lisa Hilty, corporate manager at Wallowa Valley Senior Living Center in Enterprise on Monday, Oct. 25.

The center, which has 32 employees, had no violations of the vaccine mandate. Hilty did not know how many — if any — obtained exemptions to the mandate rather than getting vaccinations. But the center has no worries about layoffs, “happily,” she said.

Steve Zollman, administrator at Alpine House

in Joseph, said his facility also had to lay no one off. Three of the 23 employees obtained medical exemptions, he said.

“They were for things like if you’d had a kidney transplant, (they were told) don’t take it,” Zollman said Monday.

He said he thought the vaccine mandate was “fairly stupid,” given the environment his workers were in.

“How can you think that someone who’s been working in a COVID situation for the past 14, 15, 16 months would be in more risk?” he said.

But, Zollman said, he believes his employees should be vaccinated.

“People should be more afraid of COVID than the vaccination,” he said.

Wallowa Memorial Hospital and Clinics, meanwhile, did lose five staff members due to the mandates. The rest of the more than 200 staff members either were vaccinated or granted an exemption.

“Wallowa Memorial Hospital and Medical Clinics currently employs 204 individuals. Ninety-eight percent of our workforce is in compliance with the governors mandate for health care workers,” Wallowa Memorial Hospital Communications Director Brooke Pace said. “We are actively filling and recruiting for these five positions and our patients will not be impacted.”

Chieftain editor
Ronald Bond contributed to this report.

IN BRIEF

Wallowa County surpasses 700 COVID-19 cases

ENTERPRISE — The positive trend in COVID-19 cases continues.

The Oregon Health Authority tallied four new cases in Wallowa County over the weekend in its latest report on Monday, Nov. 1. There were no new deaths reported in the county, with the number remaining at 12.

While the number of cases in Wallowa County during the pandemic has moved past 700 — that milestone was hit Friday when two cases were reported to move the total to 701 — and inches closer to seeing 10% of residents having at some point contracted COVID-19, the number of weekly and monthly cases is again on the decline. The four cases reported Monday moved the overall total to 705 cases. For the month of October, the total count was 123 cases, down from 180 in August and 163 in September.

For the week of Oct. 26 to Nov. 1, there were just 12 cases, with the number of cases steadily dropping in recent weeks. The prior three weeks were 49, 21 and

19 cases.

OHA showed no cases in the county its Oct. 26 report, two on both Oct. 27 and 29, and four on Oct. 28.

In Wallowa County, 66.8% of residents 18 and older have at least one vaccine dose, and 62.8% are fully vaccinated. Of all residents, the numbers are 56.4% and 52.7%.

OHA, in its Oct. 28 breakthrough cases report, noted there have been a total of 95 breakthrough cases in the county.

Wallowa Memorial beefs up security

Wallowa Memorial Hospital is making an effort to improve safety at the hospital, and announced Thursday, Oct. 28, that it will be adding a security department, which is set to launch in the next several weeks.

“The safety of our staff and patients is the most important thing to us. Having a security department will ensure that we are doing everything possible to provide that safety,” said Stacey Karvoski, who was named Security Department director.

The hospital cited heightened emotions and frustrations in the last 12 months, during the pandemic, as the reason for the added security team. The hospital has

seen an increase in patients with violent behavior, suicidal tendencies and “a general feeling of unrest.”

An executive manager and two security officers will provide daily coverage for the hospital and clinics.

Chamber voting deadline is Nov. 15

ENTERPRISE — Voting will be open until 5 p.m. Nov. 15 for the election of the 2022 Board of Directors for the Wallowa County Chamber of Commerce, according to a press release.

The vote is to confirm the entire ballot. The ballot for the 2022 board is:

- Cheryl Coughlan, arts director.
- Diane Daggett, Enterprise director.
- Susan Gilstrap, small-business director.
- Jerry Hustafa, outdoor recreation director.
- Madeline Lau, Wallowa

Lake director.

- Lem McBurney, public relations director.
- Shannon McNeerney, education director.
- Brooke Pace, Joseph director.
- Becky Riverman, Wallowa and Lostine director.
- Nancy Ruderger, culture and heritage director.
- Adele Schott, farming and ranching director.
- Stephanie Anderson Stroup, tourism director.
- Cynthia Warnock, natural resources director.
- Jenni Word, health care director.

Voters will be asked on the ballot to enter the name of their business to validate the vote.

A ballot may be sent to you via email or provided in person at the chamber office. Call 541-426-4622 with any questions. To vote online, visit <https://www.wallowacountychamber.com/form/view/24598>.

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