



**BUSINESSMAN TRADES PAINTBRUSH  
IN FOR A LAWNMOWER**  
BUSINESS, A6

**WALLOWA VALLEY GIRLS CLAIM  
MIDDLE SCHOOL STATE TITLE**  
SPORTS, A9

\$1.50

# WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN

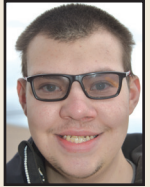


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## Wallowa County Voices



**Adrian Widener**  
Enterprise

### Job gives time to go bow hunting

ENTERPRISE — Adrian Widener has lived in Enterprise all of his 24 years.

"I graduated from Enterprise High in 2017," he said proudly.

Nowadays, he works in masonry for his grandfather, Dave Melville.

"I do all the mixing; I'm a hod carrier," he said. "In my position, I have to do all the cleaning and mixing. It's tough work, but it's good for archery season."

He said the times he's kept working allow him free time to go hunting.

His dad, Scott Widener, is a nurse practitioner in La Grande and a volunteer firefighter here. His mom, Brenda Widener, works for the school.

Widener is still single, but would one day like to marry. He said he doesn't yet have a girlfriend.

He recently shared his thoughts about living in Wallowa County.

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

The hot weather. Because I don't have to bring in firewood during the summertime. Our propane heater broke down. And there's all these stores where everybody knows me well. With my parents, everybody knows me and I don't get in trouble.

#### With winter looming, are you looking forward to anything about it?

When it's winter, I go sledding with the family. That's fun.

#### What will you be thankful for on Thanksgiving?

That I have a really nice family who keeps me out of trouble and an amazing dad who actually helped me out with a crisis I had a few years ago.

#### Are you concerned about the coronavirus pandemic?

No, my family and I are OK. Dad, at the hospital in La Grande, he deals with it so we don't have to. I got vaccinated in May because we had a family reunion in the summertime.

#### What do you think of government mandates on face masks and vaccinations?

I don't listen to the government so much. When my mom and dad tell me I need a mask, I just put my mask on. I listen more to my parents than the government.

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

It's a nice place and everybody can get to know you well, and the schools are nice.

— Bill Bradshaw,  
Wallowa County Chieftain



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Connie Guentert, manager of Community Connection of Wallowa County, shows some of the items that will go in "turkey boxes" Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021, that will be distributed ahead of Thanksgiving.

## Community offers help to stave off hunger

### Churches, Community Connection prepare donations ahead of Thanksgiving

By BILL BRADSHAW  
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Generosity is showing itself again ahead of Thanksgiving as community outreach organizations and churches in Wallowa County are trying to make sure county residents have enough to eat.

Community Connection of Northeast Oregon in Wallowa County is offering turkey boxes at its Enterprise and Wallowa locations this week, according to Tammy Odegaard, an office specialist at the Enterprise outlet. She said the boxes will be distributed from 1-4 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 17, and all day Thursday, Nov. 18, except for the lunch hour.

Odegaard said Wednesday, Nov. 10, the turkey boxes being handed out have, in the past, included a turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, gravy, fruit, a vegetable and canned pumpkin. She said Wednesday it was a little early to be sure exactly what will be in this year's boxes.

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### Got firewood? Volunteers donate to those in need

Chieftain staff

ENTERPRISE — Food donations aren't the only thing to help keep people warm as the weather gets cold; volunteers are working to provide firewood to those in need in Wallowa County, according to Community Connection of Northeastern Oregon.

"This program is to help seniors and people with disabilities who are low income and can't get out into woods anymore," said Connie Guentert, manager of Community Connection's Enterprise office.

With such a large percentage of county residents relying on wood heat, a need is out there and volunteers are trying to meet that need, Guentert said.

"It's wonderful, but it's not much wood," she said. "We can get a cord of wood to a person, but when you're talking 10 to 30 people a winter, that's a lot of wood."

Jim Zacharias of Jay Zee Lumber in Joseph donates most of the wood and space in his mill yard. But he's not

alone, he said.

"Others have donated, including my father, Bob Zacharias of Zacharias Logging," he said.

Mike Hayward, one of the volunteers, said the program has been going on for about 10 years. Once recipients are vetted for their need, volunteers deliver it, he said.

"The theory behind it is some people don't have the money to buy wood or don't have any way of getting it," he said. "I'm just one cog in the wheel."

The operation is a partnership between Community Connection, Zacharias and other volunteers and Wallowa Resources. Guentert said Nils Christoffersen, executive director of Wallowa Resources, facilitates the program.

"There are a lot of awesome people in our community," Guentert said. "We couldn't do it without volunteers. Those guys are amazing."

For more information, call Community Connection at 541-426-3840, Wallowa Resources at 541-426-8053 or email Guentert at connie@ccno.org.

## Trail-with-rails project gets \$272K in grants

By BILL BRADSHAW  
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The Joseph Branch Trail Consortium, the nonprofit working to establish a 63-mile trail-with-rails between Elgin and Joseph in northeast Oregon, announced Tuesday, Nov. 9, it has received two grants totaling more than \$272,000 that will fund construction of the first trailhead and inaugural trail segment, as well as final planning and design for another 13-mile segment.

The trail has been in the planning stages for about 10 years and will eventually offer a nonmotorized alternative transportation route to Highway 82 in the form of a trail that will run beside existing railroad tracks in the railroad right-of-way owned by the Wallowa Union Railroad Authority. With one end in Elgin, the other



Joseph Branch Trail Consortium/Contributed Photo

Members of the Joseph Branch Trail Consortium help with trail cleanup along the tracks. A recent grant will help fund the first 13 miles of a trail that will ultimately run from Elgin to Joseph.

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