

IN BRIEF

Native sport is focus of Josephy Center exhibit

JOSEPH — An exhibit at the Josephy Center of Arts and Culture in Joseph called “Beautiful Games” opens Thursday, April 7, and will hold an opening reception from 3-5 p.m. April 10.

Beautiful Games, which follows Native Americans in sport, will continue through May 11.

The exhibit was originally shown in 2018 at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and looks at Indians in sport from the earliest Mesoamerican contests to the Pendleton Round-Up. It displayed games of chance and skill, team games and contests of individuals. It told us that American Indians developed lacrosse, and that Indians, from Jim Thorpe to Jacoby Ellsbury, have become highly proficient at games developed

by white America.

The Josephy Center will display much of Beautiful Games, with updates from regional reservations and current contests that bring native sport to Eastern Oregon and the Wallawas.

For more information on the exhibit, contact Rich Wandschneider at 541-263-0930.

Parents invited to view new curriculum

The Enterprise School District is hosting an event Thursday, April 7, during parent-teacher conferences to give families and interested community members the opportunity to view sample materials of new K-12 English Language Arts curriculum the district is looking to adopt. The event is from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Each school will have the curriculum that corresponds to its respective grades, and contact cards will be available to fill out to provide feedback.

— Chieftain staff

Beth Gibans memorial fund awards more than \$12,000 to local farmers

By ANN BLOOM
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — Beth Gibans had a vision.

She envisioned a community with sustainable food systems and an abundance of organic produce and healthy food. If she were alive today, she would have seen a part of that vision achieved as four businesses were among the first recipients of the Beth Gibans Memorial Producer Fund Award, named after Gibans who died of cancer in June.

For more than two decades, Gibans provided organic produce to members of the Wallowa County community through her farm, Backyard Gardens, and her catering business. She was generous with her knowledge and passion for healthy food and sustainable farming practices. She believed that local food production is essential to the health and well-being of a community.

Gibans was instrumental in establishing the Wallowa County Farmers Market, served as a board member and was a regular vendor at the market. She was a mentor and friend to many, as well as a founding board member of Slow Food Wallowas, according to Lynne Curry, a member of Slow Food Wallowas.

In honor of Gibans’ work, Slow Food Wallowas solicited applications last fall for projects that demonstrated an ability to increase their capacity to produce and distribute more local food. The four winners were announced on Gibans’ birthday, Jan. 22.

Slow Food Wallowas distributed \$12,731 among



Leon Werdinger Photography/Contributed Photo
Beth Gibans tends vegetables for sale at a stand at the farmers market in Joseph. The Beth Gibans Memorial Producer Fund Award — named in honor of Gibans, who died in June, awarded more than \$12,000 to Wallowa County farmers.

the four winners for their projects.

“We planned to award \$5,000 with this grant, but the quality of these applications compelled us to increase that limit,” Curry said.

The winners and their projects are:

- Nic Hackney, Evergreen Family Farm, who with partner, Sarah, is installing a handline irrigation system for their small, organic farm in La Grande. They also plan to be regular vendors at the Wallowa County Farmers Market.

- Ali Lyons and Christian Niece, Backyard Gardens. As the new owners of Gibans’ organic produce business, the couple is repurposing a horse trailer to use as a mobile walk-in cooler with attached wash station to manage farming on a variety of properties.

- Kristy Athens, Genuine Wallowa County Provisions. Athens used the grant

money to purchase equipment for processing SNAP benefit payments, the federal nutrition assistance program for low-income individuals and families, which will allow more people to access her online grocery store.

- Jessica Bass and Adam McGrath, Lazy Mule Farm. Powered with draft animals, this new certified organic farm is growing garlic, salad mix, herbs, strawberries and flowers for commercial sales. The grant has allowed them to purchase a greenhouse and a custom pack shed building to increase their efficiency and workflow.

Slow Food Wallowas has a history of helping local producers expand and develop their operations through its grant program, which started 10 years ago with a \$3,000 grant to the Magic Garden.

“Since then, Slow Food Wallowas has directed about

\$23,000 directly into local food production thanks to the ongoing donations from private individuals,” Curry said.

The program has expanded to include grant awards to Nella Mae’s Farm for a new rototiller, to Alder Slope Gardens for a low tunnel growing system, and to Moonglow Mushrooms for a propagation tool for commercial mushroom growing, among others.

During the increased challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and donor generosity, the Slow Food Wallowas board voted to award grant moneys to the four farming operations because of their capacity to make more local food available during the next growing season.

“This fund provides direct support for new or existing local food producers and entrepreneurs,” the grant proposal read. “It is designed to fill gaps in existing funding opportunities for small-scale growers and producers, community innovators and educators, especially those in underserved populations.”

Slow Food Wallowas is the local chapter of Slow Food USA, a nonprofit organization devoted to developing regional food systems and increasing access to good, clean and fair food. The mission of Slow Food Wallowas is to educate, engage and build a viable local food system while celebrating the pleasures of local food in the Wallowa region.

For more information about the Beth Gibans Memorial Producer Fund or Slow Food Wallowas, contact slowfoodwc@gmail.com.

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Weed of the month is common bugloss

Chieftain staff

ENTERPRISE — As part of the Wallowa County Vegetation Department and Weed Board’s ongoing education efforts, in conjunction with Wallowa Resources, the Chieftain will feature a noxious weed each month that is on the county’s list of noxious and invasive weeds.

This month’s noxious weed is common bugloss (*Anchusa officinalis*).

The goal is to educate the public, as landowners and county residents are instrumental in identifying and eradicating those weeds.

What: Common bugloss is a perennial plant with bristly hairs that grows 1-2 feet tall. It has numerous, symmetrical five-petaled flowers that are a deep, sapphire blue with white throats found on the end of the stems.

Where: Common bugloss likes to grow in dry, sandy-to-gravelly soils and can be found primarily in the Imnaha River corridor of Wallowa County.



Joe Sims/Contributed Photo

Common bugloss (*Anchusa officinalis*) is a perennial plant with sapphire-blue flowers that that grows 1-2 feet tall. It is on Wallowa County’s list of noxious weeds.

Dangers: This plant invades alfalfa fields, pastures, pine forests, riparian areas and rangeland. The fleshy stalks can even cause hay bales to mold if gathered up during field harvest.

How to help: Anyone

finding one of the weeds on their property or while out and about, take note of the location and contact Wallowa Canyonlands Partnership Program Manager Joe Sims at 541-426-8053, ext.61.

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