

# Fuel price increase leaves station owners stumped

Motorists can expect hikes as travel season approaches

By BILL BRADSHAW  
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — Rising fuel prices have brought filling stations in Enterprise to within a fraction of a cent below \$5 a gallon for regular unleaded, surpassing the highest-recorded average price in Oregon of \$4.739.

That statewide high was posted on the American Automobile Association's website March 11.

Locally, station owners aren't quite sure why the price is so high.

The first station to jump to \$4.99 was the Enterprise Chevron, with diesel No. 2 selling for \$5.89 Tuesday, May 3.

Station owner David Burns declined to comment on the reason for the high price, other than to say,

"Don't you read the news?"

The Enterprise Texaco followed suit a couple days later, raising its regular prices a dime to \$4.99 and diesel to \$5.99. Both stations give a 10-cent discount for cash and another discount for fuel points gained at the local Safeway.

Texaco owner Tim Testerman also declined to comment on the reason for the high prices.

In Joseph, Paul's Chevron was charging \$4.69 for regular and \$5.65 for diesel, according to co-owner William Castilleja. He said May 5 it was likely to go up again the next day.

"It's been going up daily for a week," he said.

Castilleja also didn't know why the price is so high and speculated that the oil companies would blame supply and demand, which will increase the price come Memorial Day Weekend, the traditional start of the travel season.

Paul's also sells ethanol-free premium, Castilleja said. It goes for

\$5.49 a gallon.

With no corn products in the premium, he said it's preferred by some motorists.

"It burns more efficiently and it's cleaner," he said. "That's why those with older equipment and smaller motors like motorcycles prefer to use it."

The only other fuel outlet in the county, Goebel's in Wallowa, was selling the same price for regular as in Joseph, \$4.69 a gallon. Diesel there was \$5.29.

Station owner Garrett Mahon said he, too, is unsure what's driving the price increase.

"It all depends on what I get charged," he said. "I had one time that jumped 60 cents (a gallon). I'd never seen that before."

All Mahon said he can do is go with the flow and live at the mercy of the economy.

"That's the way it goes," he said. "Speculators, the world market and the way things are in the economy."

According to a press release from AAA, the cost of crude oil continues to hover around \$100 a barrel, keeping prices at the pump up.

The release blamed Russia's invasion of Ukraine for sparking fears of a global energy supply disruption, outweighing concerns of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on China's economy.

AAA said it now costs drivers in the U.S. about \$23 more to fill up than it did a year ago.



American Ramp Co./Contributed Graphic

This is a recent version of the planned bicycle playground to be built at Wallowa School. The mound at the top of the graphic is to be graded to provide more concrete area for other elements.

## Bike playground closes in on funds

By BILL BRADSHAW  
Wallowa County Chieftain

### BICYCLE PLAYGROUND

Donations can be made to Building Healthy Families, 207 NE Park, Enterprise, OR 97828. For more information, call Ron Pickens at 541-426-9411.

WALLOWA — The finish line is in sight in efforts to raise money to build a bicycle playground in Wallowa, with those behind the project having raised about 93% of the estimated \$329,500 needed, Ron Pickens said Friday, May 6.

"The biggest thing right now is we have two foundations that have recommended we use their funds as a matching opportunity within the community," Pickens said.

He said the Reser Family Foundation has pledged a match of \$12,000 and the Roundhouse Foundation has pledged \$10,000, in addition to the \$15,000 Roundhouse already has given. Added to the approximately \$306,000 already acquired, the two pledges will take the project's funding over the top of what is needed, he said. The final payment to the American Ramp Co., which is building the park, is due in early July, Pickens said.

A teacher at the Wallowa County Alternative School, Pickens works at Building Healthy Families in Enterprise. He was instrumental in last year's refurbishment of the skate park in

Enterprise. But he's long had a desire to have a similar facility in Wallowa since transportation to Enterprise is difficult for youths.

The promised matching funds also would help build a fund that could go toward maintenance costs and the rising cost of materials.

"Within the past three weeks, the price (of materials) has already jumped," Pickens said. "We want to make sure we have a little extra in our coffers."

For example, he said, a bicycle-repair station, such as was installed at the Enterprise skate park, had been priced at about \$2,000. It's now up to \$2,300-2,400.

Such a station would allow an individual put their bike on a rack and use tools available for minor repairs. It also includes an air pump to inflate tires.

Pickens said a recent fundraising venture was successful, when the organizers of the playground project held a raffle for a flight in and breakfast for two at the Minam River

Lodge. Courtney Lyman of Enterprise won the raffle.

Coming up Pickens said he plans to make a presentation at the May 18 meeting of the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners. On May 4, the commissioners expressed interest in supporting the playground — possibly even financially — but said they would like more information on the project.

Some of the commissioners and spectators were unclear on the difference between the Wallowa project, a proposed trail-with-rails project between Elgin and Joseph, the Enterprise skate park and a pump track proposed for Enterprise. Of the latter two, the first exists and the latter is still in the planning stages.

Pickens said he has scheduled a grand opening of the Wallowa playground for Saturday, Aug. 20. Although the itinerary is still to be finalized, he hopes to have BMX stunt riders and motivational speakers there.

**JADA GRAY**  
Jada Gray had a strong tune-up for the district track meet with two victories and two second-place finishes at the Grant Union Invitational Friday, May 6. The senior took the top spot in the girls 100-meter hurdles and was part of the winning 4x100-meter relay team. She added runner-up efforts individually in both the 300 hurdles and in the high jump.

**Eds**  
Ed Staub & Sons  
Energy. Community. Service.  
201 E. Hwy 82, Enterprise • 541-426-0320  
www.edstaub.com

**eomedia group**  
The most valuable and respected source of local news, advertising and information for our communities.  
eomediagroup.com

Honoring All Who Served

# Veterans Appreciation Dinners

Brought to you by  
Wallowa County Veterans Services & Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness

We are hosting Veterans Appreciation Dinners in each town throughout May and June.

**May 5, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**  
Imnaha Christain Fellowship

**May 19, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**  
Troy School

**June 2, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**  
Cloverleaf Hall in Enterprise

**June 16, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**  
Senior Center in Wallowa

**June 30, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**  
Joseph Community Center

Please RSVP to help us plan.

scan me to RSVP or call 541-426-0539.

## GET TO KNOW OUR PROVIDERS!

**Dr. Wes Baker**

Dr. Baker has been with Winding Waters since the fall of 2018 after completing medical school and residency at OHSU. He now provides a multitude of services including primary care from birth to death, hospital and ER care, prenatal care and deliveries. Visit our website or scan the QR code to learn more!

**Winding Waters**  
Your Health Care Home

Medical, Dental & Mental Health Care for Our Community  
541-426-4502

Enterprise Joseph Wallowa

**True Value**

## BARGAINS OF THE MONTH

While supplies last.

**24.99** SALE PRICE  
**-4.00** MAIL-IN REBATE\*  
**FINAL PRICE**  
**20.99**

**Roundup®**  
36.8 oz. Weed/Grass Killer Concentrate Plus

Roundup® 36.8 oz. Weed/Grass Killer Concentrate Plus  
L 47 895 B12  
\*Limit 2 per offer. Consumer responsible for taxes.

**M-F 8AM-5:30PM • SAT 8AM-5PM • SUN 9AM-3PM**

Hurricane Creek Road  
Enterprise, Oregon  
541-426-3116

**WALLOWA COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS**

BEHIND EVERY PROJECT IS A True Value®  
Sale Good Thru May 31st