

Guentert takes over as CCNO executive director

Former Wallowa County manager for the agency replaces longtime leader Davidson

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

LA GRANDE — Connie Guentert knows she has big shoes to fill as the new executive director of Community Connection of Northeast Oregon.

Thankfully, the outgoing director, Margaret Davidson, was right alongside Guentert as she made the transition into the lead role in the company, a move that became official May 1.

“Margaret has just been a fantastic leader and teacher,” Guentert said. “To be able to follow in those large shoes is a challenge, but also the foundation of having her for all this time, she’s imbued in me those same values and goals that we strive for in our agency.”

Guentert has been a part of Community Connection for 15 years, the last eight as the county manager in Wallowa County.

“Matter of fact, it’s like eight years exactly. May 1 eight years ago I took over as county manager — eight years later, the new executive director,” she said.

Guentert said she has been “inspired” by Davidson, and repeatedly praised her effort fronting the agency, calling her an “invaluable teacher” and a person who leads by example.



Margaret Davidson, left, outgoing executive director for Community Connection of Northeast Oregon, stands next to Connie Guentert, right, the new director. Guentert served for eight years as the manager in Wallowa County prior to stepping into her new role on May 1, 2022.

Contributed Photo

Guentert began as a front office assistant in 2007. She also spent time in transportation before moving into her county manager role in 2014. Knowing as many of the ins and outs of CCNO is valuable, she said.

“Learning the pro-

“MARGARET HAS JUST BEEN A FANTASTIC LEADER AND TEACHER.”

— Connie Guentert, executive director of Community Connection of Northeast Oregon

gram from the ground up and growing up within the agency, it has given me such a well rounded perspective of what this agency does for all the

communities that we operate in,” she said. “It is so diverse.”

Guentert said the decision to step into the executive director role is one that required a deep internal look.

“I loved my job as the county manager,” she said.

“Did I want to drive to La Grande everyday?” Yeah, it was a lot of inner reflection. “Did I want to take that step and continue on in the wonderful culture and leadership that Margaret has (not only) led by example, but ... really infused through our entire agency?” It inspired me to step up and have the opportunity to continue the culture, the foundation of our agency, (and) the family of it.”

Guentert will continue to live in Wallowa County, staying in an area she has grown to love, and will make the commute on a daily basis.

“It’s a beautiful drive,” she said. “It’s enjoyable. It’s time to reflect on what you got going on in the day. When you’re home, you’re present for your family. It also keeps my feet in that neck of the woods, also. I’ve loved raising my family there and living there. It’s home.”

Guentert said she doesn’t plan to make any alterations to the way Davidson operated CCNO, instead wanting to continue the legacy the long-time executive director built.

“I am definitely going to operate it the same way she has,” she said. “Being present in the future, what our counties need, that is why we’re here. We’re here to serve people.”

Her replacement at Community Connection Wallowa County is still being determined. Guentert said she hopes that spot is filled by mid-May.



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CLUES ACROSS

- Women, folksily
- Mess up 007's martini order
- Cultural dish variety?
- Woodwind that Julia Roberts played
- Where the heart is, it's said
- Love, in French
- Bureaucratic document
- Barely
- Appears, as the day
- It's heard but never seen (In this answer, see letters 3-6)
- Google Maps offering: Abbr.
- LP speed
- “___ aboard!”
- Canine meme
- On the same ___
- Cell reception unit
- Winter figures (letters 4-7)
- Periodic trig function
- It's often preceded by “safe,” redundantly
- End of UCLA's URL
- Slightly ahead
- Column with a perspective
- Cow or pig (letters 2-7)
- Expected golf score
- Savior
- Attack like Dracula
- Roofing gunk
- Give a good tip?
- ___ tip (expert pointer)
- Beaver's creation
- Novel featuring Mrs. Whatsit (letters 6-10)
- “Foxy Brown” star Pam
- Part of a phrase
- RuPaul, e.g., in the world of drag
- Didn't feel well
- Very excited
- Delivery vehicles
- “If you ___” (“OK, then”)
- Not any
- '70s gymnast Korbut

CLUES DOWN

- Win at life
- Give or take

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
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62							63				64			

- Acted superior to
- Big rig
- Give a good tip?
- Sacred carving
- Apple desktop
- Start over on
- Pickleball racket
- What many a meeting could've been
- Theatrical finale for “Our” or “On the”
- Ladder level
- Tax refund org.
- Church instrument
- Starting point for many an inspiring tale
- Was in the red
- Retired pitcher Martinez
- Former “SNL” cast member, e.g.
- Former of engineer who may design a surgical robot
- Netflix's “Inventing ___”
- Stagger
- Indulge in retail therapy
- Golden State wine region
- Paraphernalia
- Stick on the barbecue?
- Labor group
- Plant with spores
- Shorten, like a dictionary
- Stylist's cut
- Shade sources
- Eva portrayed by Madonna
- ___ friends (in good company)
- Opera solo
- Cunning
- “Crazy Rich Asians” author Kevin
- FedEx's has a hidden arrow
- DVR maker
- Ethane or methane



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