

Lower warns of danger twine has on osprey

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Charla Lower is warning residents of the danger bailing twine can have on osprey.

Lower, the associate director for the Wallowology Natural History Center in Joseph, said few people are aware that twine “laying all around the county” is lethal to the bird.

“(There’s) so many stories of osprey hanging themselves, and lots of pictures,” she said.

Lower led a group April 23 — one day after Earth Day — that went to various locations, including farms, around the county picking up twine that had built up.

“I was finding so much I made a day of it. A couple other people continued, as well,” she said. “A lot of that twine came from one particular ranch. I still want to go out and collect more. We didn’t get to many of the roads I wanted to get to.”

She said people aren’t aware that twine is becoming



A photo at Wallowology shows an osprey hanging in bailing twine under its nest.

ing accessible to the osprey, and even fewer are aware of the effects it has.

“It blows out of the back of people’s pickups, and they don’t even realize it,” she said.

Osprey are drawn to taking twine for building nests, something Lower said hawks and eagles don’t do.

“What I’m not sure about is if they are attracted

to the bright colors,” she said. “We’re trying to think of solutions to try and prevent this from happening. Things we’re going to look into are if it was natural colors instead of bright col-

ors, would they not see it as easily. Right now (twine is often) bright blue and bright pink.”

She said the birds will get a talon stuck in the twine that is at the bottom of the nest and end up unable to get loose from it.

“We have a picture here at Wallowology of one hanging below its nest. It’s usually caught in the talon, and they get hung upside down and die,” she said.

Lower said while out picking up twine April 23, she came across a woman walking and told her about the danger. That woman said she had not known about the danger, and said she would start picking up twine and disposing of it while on her walks.

“If they are aware of that they might be willing to throw (it) away. It’s another form of plastic,” she said.

Lower knows many farmers and ranchers collect bailing twine and use it on fences and gates because of its durability. She said a simple solution for farm-

ers and ranchers could be for them to cover it up so the osprey don’t see it and endanger themselves.

“If they’re not going to use it, just throw it away,” she said.

Recycling the twine is much more of a challenge, she said, because the nearest place to recycle it is in Portland. She advised against other possible disposal methods.

“It wouldn’t be good to burn it. I know people do burn their plastic here, but it’s not the best thing for the environment or neighbors,” she said. “It is better to throw it in the dumpster.”

While only about one or two osprey a year die in Wallowa County because of getting caught in twine, she said that is a significant amount of the roughly eight to 10 pairs of the bird in the county.

“Maybe we can save the lives of a couple osprey,” she said. “It seems like every year in the county we have one or two die, and we don’t have many.”

Wallowa County youths get ideas for future at career fair

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa County took another step toward helping its young people prepare for the working world Wednesday, April 27, at the annual Career Fair it holds at the Cloverleaf Hall.

“It’s a collaborative effort between the county, the Education Service District and Wallowa Resources and a lot of interested parties,” said Lindsay Miller, youth education manager for Wallowa Resources.

She and Jori Journigan, career connected learning coordinator for the Wallowa County Education Service District, were two of the main organizers of the event.



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain
Maverick Gilbert of Enterprise, left, visits with Zak Bradshaw, hiring and talent manager for Viridian Management, during the Career Fair held Wednesday, April 27, 2022, at the Cloverleaf Hall in Enterprise. Bradshaw was explaining to Gilbert the career opportunities Viridian offers.

“It was definitely a success. More people than I even hoped were able to come and set up,” Journigan

said. “Their displays were really fun. ... I saw a lot of good conversations happening between students and

employers and it met our goal of exposing students to different career options and local employers. That was important.”

She said this was the first such career fair in recent memory.

“It was part of a set of career learning or development initiatives we’re putting in place,” she said. “We have a job shadow program and an internship program to implement more ways to get students to think about their futures and get students prepared for careers after high school.”

More than 30 potential employers and representatives of institutions of higher learning had tables set up in the hall manned by more than 50 adults to dis-

cuss career opportunities with an estimated 100-plus high school students from throughout the county.

Brooke Pace, communications and public relations director for Wallowa Memorial Hospital, was pleased with the response she got from some of the youths she visited with.

“It was great. People don’t always know what’s available at the hospital,” Pace said. “They think you have to be a doctor or a nurse, but that isn’t so.”

The potential employers were divided into 10 categories: agriculture, food and natural resources; architecture and construction, the arts, A/V technology and communications; business management and admin-

istration; finance; health science; hospitality and tourism; human services; information technology; and manufacturing.

Representatives from colleges and universities also were there, including Eastern Oregon University, the University of Idaho, Lewis-Clark State College, Blue Mountain Community College and Treasure Valley Community College.

The students came in groups from the various high schools in the county, and were mostly sophomores and juniors, Journigan said, although there were some seniors and GED candidates.

“I was amazed at the turnout today,” Journigan said. “It was awesome.”

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