



Wallowa County Voices



Thomas Townsend
Minam

He loves pristine quality of county

ENTERPRISE — Thomas Townsend has a unique job he finds fascinating, working seasonally at the Minam River Lodge in Wallowa County's northwest end.

It's only his second tourist season working there, but he's looking forward to it just the same.

"We work six days a week with one day off and we reside out there at the Minam River Lodge," he said.

He'll be doing what he describes as "guest services" at the lodge this year.

"If you were to fly in, I'd be the one to pick you up at the grass airstrip out there," he said. "I'll be making sure some of the amenities we make available to our guests are fully operational — wood-fired hot tub, a wood-fired sauna, making sure that the wood is stocked and the grounds are kept looking nice for the guests."

Originally from the Willamette Valley, he also lived in Alaska for a while.

"I've been in Oregon pretty much ever since," he said.

Townsend's favorite thing about the county is its geography.

"It's gorgeous," he said. "The Wallowas themselves are incredible. I was driving over from La Grande this morning and this time of year with the mountains turning green and all the wildflowers start popping up and you're getting pristine sections of water throughout the entire drive, it just gets better the closer you get to the Eagle Cap."

But it's more than just the land.

"These small communities are fantastic," he said. "The people are fantastic. You can't say enough about the people."

Townsend is glad we're finally getting out of the long winter and spring we've had.

"I saw a lot of snow and rain; it was pretty miserable weather out here," he said.

He spent part of the winter as caretaker at the lodge and then worked the pre-season.

"It was pretty cold and wet," he said. "You suffer through those cold and wet winters and springs, but then you get blue sky like today."

Now that better weather has arrived, he's looking forward to being able to see more of the county.

"I can just throw on my backpack and go north river or south river and around every bend, there's always something really fantastic to see," he said.

For anyone who is thinking of moving here, Townsend has some simple advice:

"Be kind, be generous," he said. "Otherwise, you won't fit in around here."

— Bill Bradshaw,
Wallowa County Chieftain

MEMORIAL DAY 2022



Photos by Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

From left, Kim Hutchison, of the Enterprise Veterans of Foreign Wars Post, salutes while Holly Hutchison, of the VFW Auxiliary, and Johlona Nelson, also of the VFW, take turns performing the Reading of the Fallen during Memorial Day ceremonies Monday, May 30, 2022, at the Wallowa County Courthouse. Several dozen people braved drizzly weather to remember those who have given all for their country.

ALWAYS REMEMBER



A youth choir from Christ Covenant Church led by Pastor Terry Tollefson, right, sings "My Country 'Tis of Thee" during Memorial Day ceremonies Monday, May 30, 2022, at the Wallowa County Courthouse.



Members of the Enterprise Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars fire a salute to the fallen Monday, May 30, 2022, during Memorial Day ceremonies at the Wallowa County Courthouse in Enterprise. Trace Evans and Randy Morgan wait to play taps on trumpets.



Wooden tombstones bearing the names of 47 Wallowa County veterans from each of America's wars back as far as the Black Hawk War of 1832 — when Abraham Lincoln received his limited military service — stand outside the Wallowa County Courthouse over Memorial Day Weekend. There was even one to remember those designated POW/MIA.

Stockgrowers host Lane County in ranch tour

Event brought diverse ranching communities together

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — Cattle ranchers from opposite ends of Oregon got together here recently to learn more about the challenges each faces and foster a sense of unity among the Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

Members of the Wallowa County Stockgrowers Association hosted an



Todd Nash/Contributed Photo

Ranchers from Wallowa and Lane counties take in the view from the historic Buckhorn Lookout during a ranch tour Saturday, May 21, 2022.

exchange with members of the Lane County Livestock Association mostly on Saturday, May 22, consisting of a bus tour of Wallowa County sites, including

ranches, the Zumwalt Prairie, the historic Buckhorn Lookout and other sites pertinent to the local livestock industry.

"I thought it was a great

tour," said Todd Nash, a Wallowa County commissioner, rancher and president of the OCA, on May 23. "We got to see some really diverse ranching."

More than 25 ranchers from Lane County were among the approximately 60 people who took part in the tour. Three commissioners of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife; ODFW staff; state Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, and an aide; and an aide to Republican U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz also took part. In addition to the bus tour, there were meals and social time at the Cloverleaf Hall in Enterprise.

Lane County abuts the Pacific Coast and is the fourth-most populated county in the state with the highly urban Eugene at its heart. This is in contrast to Wallowa County tucked away in Oregon's northeast corner and the state's fifth-least populated county.

But both are known for their fertile soil and agriculture, giving them something in common.

"Beyond having a wonderful time with ranchers, we had relevant discussions on issues of the day," Nash said.

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