WALLOWA COUNTY

# BERTAIN



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# **Wallowa** County Voices



Lexie Canelli

### She had a fun experience seeing wolves

ENTERPRISE — Lexie Canelli has only lived in Joseph for the past five years, but she grew up here and moved away several

"I'd move away and come back. I'd move away and come back," she

She said the community and the presence of family — her parents — keeps bringing her back.

Not presently employed, she spends much of her time at her hobby of macramé — the art of tying knots into patterns. She and her boyfriend also like to drive around in the mountains, something a bit hindered by the high cost of gasoline.

"Right now, yeah, definitely," she said.

Her favorite thing about Wal-Iowa County is twofold.

"It's a tossup between the people — the friendliness of the peo-— and the mountains," she said.

Not only does she enjoy seeing the majestic mountains from town, Canelli enjoys seeing

"We just saw two wolves" on a drive near Wallowa, she said. "It vas just running. Two weeks later, we went up to the same area and we saw an adult wolf and it was running away. We drove up about 200 yards and there was a mama elk with her little calf. I think we scared it off from going after the

Canelli is aware of the concern ranchers have expressed about wolves attacking their livestock.

"I'm not particularly fond of the wolves. They're fun to see just because I've never seen one, but with the ranchers and their cattle, it's their livelihood. I would be (upset), too."

With the Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission in town, she doesn't have a lot she wants to see them accomplish.

"A bike path all the way to the lake would be nice," she said. "It gets kind of scary."

When someone is considering moving here, Canelli has mixed feelings.

"Stay away so it stays small and beautiful," she said. "But also, everybody's businesses need the service. Come visit, but don't stay."

Bill Bradshaw, Wallowa County Chieftain

## Frazier to be grand marshal of July 4 parade

By JACK PARRY Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA - When it comes to the annual Fourth of July Parade in Wallowa, Ruby Frazier has been an ever-present onlooker of the festivities throughout her 86

"I've never missed any," Frazier said.

years living in the town.

But for the first time, she will not be viewing the event as a spectator. She has been selected as the grand marshal of the parade by City Hall.

Always looking on from a parking spot at what used to be JNS Automotive Ser-

vices, she has many fond memories of the event over the years, especially when it involved her children.

"This motorcycle bunch (of riders) went through, and my oldest boy had a bicycle," she said. "He turned his hat around backwards, and rode down Main Street with all those motorcycles on his bicycle."

She's always admired the amount of passion workers put into the occasion, saying, "Some of them they put a little heart and soul into it, (which) makes it good."

As someone describes herself as a quiet person, it wasn't that shocking how she reacted to receiving the news.

"Total surprise; my first answer was no," she said.

She didn't think she deserved it, something that her daughter, Wendy McDaniel, vehemently disagrees with.

"She's one of these people that always sits in the background and does amazing things," McDaniel said.

Despite Ruby's nervousness when it comes to the parade, her soft-spoken personality doesn't take away from the important role she has played in her family and the community. Having raised six children in Wallowa, she devoted a lot of time and energy to their upbringing.

"Somebody asked me if I raised a garden, and I said no I can't keep up with my kids let alone a garden." she said.

When it came to her kids, Frazier always emphasized finishing high school even though she didn't graduate herself. Using her degree in "good common sense," she would reiterate this message to each of her sons and daughters.

"If you'll just stay in school until you're 18, whatever you do with your life after that is yours," she said. "But do it well."

Working 20 years at the Wallowa County Memorial Hospital before retiring, the 90-year-old Frazier now enjoys the quiet of town and makes sure to keep up with the lives of her 10 grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Looking ahead to Independence Day, a very patriotic Frazier hopes that she will be ready to participate in the parade.

"If I can get over this nervousness, I'll be fine," she



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Mac Freeborn, left, manager of Wallowa Lake State Park, shows members of the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission a parcel of land Tuesday, June 14, 2022, that the commission is considering for purchase during its meeting in Wallowa County.

# Parks commission tours Wallowa Lak

### Talks events center, access; hears comments

**By BILL BRADSHAW** Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY Getting back to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission held its first meeting in person last week, and it came to Wallowa County to do so.

"This is the first time they've seen each other face-to-face in two years," said Chris Havel, deputy director and commission spokesman in an interview Wednesday, June 15.

Havel said they chose Wallowa County for a couple of reasons. He said they wanted to bid farewell to outgoing Commissioner Lisa Dawson of Enterprise, whose term ended with the meeting. Also, they plan to hold the next meeting on the coast and wanted to take a trip to Northeast Oregon. The commission meets five times a year, Havel

"For the people who have never been here before, we tend to hear the same thing, which is 'Wow' and 'This is a part of Oregon I've always wanted to see,'" he said.

Agency Director Lisa Sumption

expressed her pleasure with Wallowa County after the meeting.

"You have some of the most incredible scenery and humans here," she said.

#### Seeing the sights

The commission started its gathering earlier in the week with a trip up the Wallowa Lake Tramway hosted by co-owner Mike Lockhart. That gave him a chance to discuss issues he believes are important for

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Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Mac Freeborn, manager of Wallowa Lake State Park, talks about a planned events center at the marina before the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, during the commission's meeting in Wallowa County.



Wallowa County Chieftain, File Mike Lockhart, co-owner of the century-plus-year-old Edelweiss Inn, stands before the dilapidated building in 2019. It once was the venue for a variety of events at Wallowa Lake that may now find a new home in an events center planned for the state park.

#### ENTERPRISE ELEMENTARY



Vikki Olsen/Contributed Photo Lorri Fischer holds a bouquet presented on her last day of teaching at Enterprise Elementary School. She has retired after 38 years in the classroom.

### After 38 years, Fischer says farewell to teaching

Passion for job key to teaching students

> By JACK PARRY Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Lorri Birkmaier Fischer first walked into Enterprise Elementary School as a young girl with a knack for reading and writing. She liked school so much she would teach her younger brother, Tommy, lessons of her choice when she had the chance.

After graduating from Eastern Oregon University with a degree in elementary education and a reading endorsement in 1981, Fischer would return to Enterprise Elementary as an educator in 1984. The principal at the time, Bob Eddy, gave her quite simple instructions to start.

"He threw me into a room and said, 'Teach!'"

Now, 38 years later, Fischer is putting down the chalk and eraser following a career teaching students from fourth through eighth grade. It was a decision based on the need to be there more for her family, of which she has two daughters and four grandchildren.

"I always say that you are replaceable at work, but irreplaceable within your family," she said.

Throughout her career, Fischer prided herself on lesson plans that made it fun for students to learn.

Her classes have shot themed movies about the 100-year anniversary of the school and Lewis and Clark to name a few. Most recently, she brought her fifth-grade class to the Wallowa County Museum in Joseph to donate an antique dress and a stack of old Wallowa County Chieftains along with her daughter,

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