

Bentz:

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“People say, ‘You Republicans, when you had power the last time, you didn’t do anything.’ Well, that’s not quite true, but this is your chance to say what you want us to do,” Bentz told the people gathered in the dining hall at Community Connection in Enterprise for his seventh town hall meeting with voters.

He said he looks forward to governing with the majority, an experience that has eluded him for his political career.

“I’m hoping to some day be able to govern for once as opposed to just throw rocks,” he said. “But when you see bills come out of the Senate and go across the floor of the House without one amendment because (Speaker) Nancy Pelosi knows she has about four votes to spare. She doesn’t dare bring an amendment because that would mean the bill would have to go back to the Senate. So right now the situation is such so that making changes based upon discussion is almost zero.”

A typical conflict between Democrats and Republicans involves the high rate of spending the current majority party has been conducting.

“Our polling indicates that the biggest issue is inflation,” he said, and also added other issues of energy, immigration, law enforcement and abortion in the wake of the recent Supreme Court ruling throwing out Roe v. Wade.

Partisan politics

Bentz said the current partisan rancor in American politics does no good.

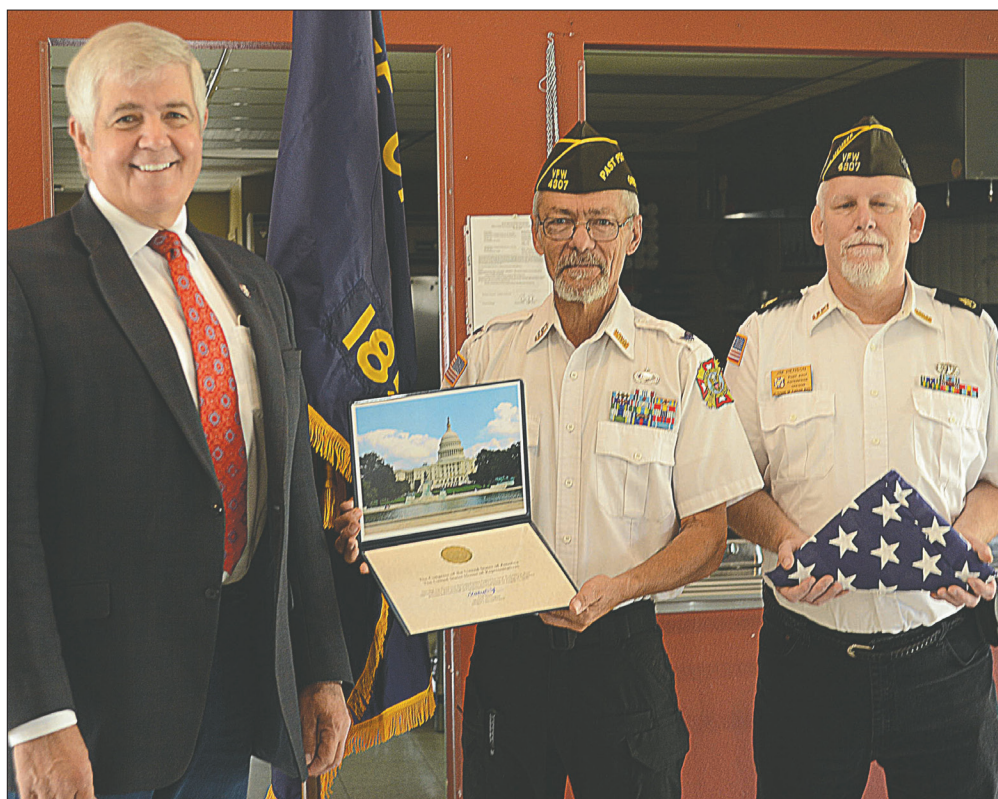
“I’m not suggesting that we don’t get along,” he said. “If we don’t get along, we won’t have a country, and that’s the truth.”

A Lostine man said his greatest concern is just that — the state of our democracy. He said he identifies with the largest bloc of voters, those who are unaffiliated with either major party. The man talked about how unaffiliated voters are frustrated with candidates who won’t work across the aisle.

He and Bentz were familiar with an article in the Atlantic Monthly called “After Babel” that discussed how social media promotes political polarization.

Bentz took it from there and brought it to a personal level.

“It addresses why we in Congress and the legislatures are now very reluctant to reach across the aisle,” he said. “Why? Because you’ll



From left, U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz presents a flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol to Enterprise Veterans of Foreign Wars members Kim Hutchison and Jim Henson just before Bentz held a town hall Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022, in Enterprise.

be toasted and roasted and crucified on social media. And as you’re being crucified on social media, you’ll see that social media is designed so that the louder and the more obnoxious and the more outrageous you are, the more you’ll be put into a space with others just like you. It’s like mob rule on the internet. As a result, the people who normally would be on one end of the spectrum become much more powerful than they otherwise would be.”

He said lawmakers who’ve been on news programs find it challenging to dare say they’ve gotten along with their political opponents

“Because people will say ‘You’re not fighting for me. You need to be fighting for me; you don’t need to be getting along. These people are socialists or communists. Why are you even talking to them? They shouldn’t exist.’ That’s the kind of thing you hear,” Bentz said.

He said he asked Congresswoman Virginia Foxx, R-N.C., who’s been in Congress 18 years, how to meet Democrats.

“She said to join the prayer group,” he said. “So I did and I go to the prayer group every Thursday between 8 and 9, and guess what? I’ve met more Democrats there than any other place.”

Natural resources

In response to a question from a local rancher about restrictions on livestock grazing allotments, Bentz said he supports increased grazing and logging on federal forests.

“It’s not just the forests, it’s also water and the oceans and all that,” he said. “For us, the water issues are very high on my list. Forests are extremely high on my list and fire-related issues.”

His words were what many ranchers in Wallowa County were glad to hear — that grazing allotments should be opened up to eliminate the underbrush that serves as fuel for wildfires.

Bentz said he had an opportunity last summer in Washington, D.C., to demonstrate for some of his colleagues on the House Natural Resources Committee the far-reaching effects of decisions on managing public lands.

Bentz said he pointed to smoky skies over the nation’s capital.

“You see that smoke there? That’s Oregon going over Washington, D.C.,” Bentz said he told fellow committee members. “Yeah, the smoke went all the way, so I was able to point out the window and say, ‘We have to do something.’ And the something is we remove that fuel with the cows grazing or

with mechanical thinning.”

Bentz said too many trees are growing in some areas — 300 to 500 per acre instead of the 80 that he said is more appropriate.

“All those trees are pulling up water, they’re cannibalizing each other,” he said. “One thing many people don’t recognize is the impact that more CO2 in the air has on the growth of a plant. Our trees are growing up to 14% faster than they used to. Where are the environmentalists when it comes to recognizing this growth? It’s all getting overgrown and it’s growing faster.”

Bentz said he doesn’t want to see Oregon — or anywhere — burn, although he acknowledged that fire is part of nature.

“Fire is a natural part of the forest, but not when you allow the buildup we’ve allowed to unnaturally occur,” he said.

Bentz said the GOP has plans to remedy the situation, if they’re in a position to govern.

“There’s hope, but we better win in November, but even if we don’t, we still have the Supreme Court.”

Utah murder suspect found dead near Joseph

Man wanted in Wasatch County, Utah, for July slaying of ex

Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — The body of a Utah fugitive who was wanted for murder is believed to have been found along Hurricane Creek Road west of Joseph, according to a Tuesday, Aug. 16, press release from the Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office.

Michael Grant Asman, 35, of Heber City, Utah, was wanted for the murder of Julie Ann Burns on July 14 in Wasatch County, Utah.

At about 1 p.m. Aug. 15, a sheriff’s deputy and Oregon State Police responded to a report of an abandoned 2005 Chevrolet Silverado pickup parked on the shoulder of Hurricane Creek Road near the trailhead. The license plate on the vehicle was registered to Asman. A Wasatch County warrant charged Asman with homicide, stating that his whereabouts were unknown.

When Asman’s pickup was found, OSP Sgt. Grant Jackson and Wallowa County Deputy Sheriff Paul Pagano determined the vehicle had not been moved for some time. They searched through a wooded area to the creek and found a decomposing corpse with

a gunshot wound to the head and a Glock model 27, 40-caliber Smith and Wesson pistol by the left shoulder of the road.

Wallowa County Medical Examiner Gary Zeigler responded to the scene.

Law enforcement officers from Wasatch County flew into the Joseph Airport and joined the investigation. They believed the corpse to be that of Asman.

Sheriff Joel Fish said it was a “domestic violence relationship.” He said Asman and Burns had been married, even though they did not share a surname.

According to Law and Crime online, when officers responded to a domestic violence call, they found Burns in her home apparently dead of a gunshot wound to the head. She was pronounced dead at the scene.

The couple’s children were in the house at the time, Law and Crime said, and were sent upstairs while Asman and Burns argued. One child said Asman had a gun and they heard what they believed to be a gunshot. Asman led the children out told them not to look at their dead mother.

A search warrant was issued by Circuit Court Judge Wes Williams on Asman’s pickup, which was then searched and towed. Fish said nothing significant was found during the search.



Asman

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WALLOWA COUNTY
GRAIN GROWERS

IMPORTANT NOTICE

To: Wallowa County Grain Grower True Value Customers

I would like to inform all of our customers, that due to a labor shortage within the True Value Store, we have decided to close the store for business on Sundays until further notice.

This is a necessary step to help keep our current employees from burning out. Short staff and more days worked for each of them has been the trend for a long period. **This will go into effect on Sunday August 21st 2022.** We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the labor pool will get better in the future.

Thank you for your understanding.

Stacy Beckman
Stacy J Beckman
General Manager

GET TO KNOW OUR PROVIDERS!

Dr. Annika Maly
 Dr. Maly joined the Winding Waters team in the fall of 2016 after completing her Family Medicine Residency in Boise. She provides comprehensive primary care services including women’s health, obstetrics, newborn/well child care, Accutane treatment, trigger point injections, home visits, and end of life care.

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Last week Wallowa County experienced horrible devastation with the tornado that hit the City of Wallowa. The people of Wallowa suffered huge property losses including damage to homes, businesses, vehicles, livestock and pets. All the suffering is hard to bare but when you have a community like Wallowa County where the pain is felt far and wide you also encounter the strength in our community!

This week we honor all those who rallied together in a time of need for our fellow neighbors including the countless donations, all of the volunteers, Tim Polumsky, Pacific Power, 1917 Lumber, MCrow, WC Ace Hardware, Community Connections, Little Bear Drive-In and everyone who gave so much to help. **WE ARE A COMMUNITY, WE ARE WALLOWA COUNTY and WE ARE THE PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**

People Making a Difference