

Enterprise council OKs funds for sports fields

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — A new request for funding for athletic equipment was approved by the Enterprise City Council at its meeting Monday, Aug. 8, presented by Jim Nave of the Wallowa County Athletic Network.

Mayor Ashley Sullivan, in a press release after the meeting, said Nave and the Public Works Committee — who met Friday, Aug. 5 — were requesting the council award the network \$73,589.80.

The money would be to improve all sports fields in Enterprise, including backstop improvements at all fields, an extension of the high school backstop, new

dugouts at the high school baseball field and improvements to parking.

Council President Jenni Word asked for information regarding available funds. City Administrator Lacey McQuead told the council that the current Opportunity Fund, which includes anticipated revenues from this fiscal year, totals \$74,000.

Beyond that, there was leftover American Rescue Plan Act funding available, which totaled \$29,924.51. If the ARPA Opportunity Funds are used, there is \$30,000 remaining, originally allocated for Enterprise business assistance and resident assistance, that can be moved into Opportunity Funds.

Nave said that if more

funding is needed, he has some ideas on possible donations.

Word asked if a request for funding support by the schools would still be requested if the council approved the full amount. Nave said he still will be asking for support from the schools.

The council then approved Nave's request, contingent upon receiving the ARPA funds. The funding will include \$29,924.51 from the ARPA Opportunity Fund and \$43,665.29 from the Motel Tax Opportunity Fund.

ARPA spending

In another matter related to the ARPA funds the city is expecting, Finance Officer

Christie Huston submitted a memo to the department managers and the council explaining the process for which the funds would be expended.

Prior to purchasing the items discussed, a resolution must be passed. McQuead said that the original approval was quite generalized, as department managers estimated the cost for their proposed purchases. Therefore, prior to expending the funds, a resolution, which will explain the funds for each expenditure and the exact cost of the purchase, will be required prior to approval.

Other business

In other matters, the council:

- Witnessed the swear-

ing-in of new Police Officer Shannon Emel.

- McQuead told the council that Councilor Corey Otten was not successful in his attempts to contact a member of the Oregon Department of Transportation on the city's traffic control concerns, nor was McQuead able to make contact with them. For now, the discussion is tabled until contact can be made with ODOT.

- Heard the Library Department report where librarian Denine Rautenstrauch said the summer reading program had closed out with 206 participants, the most successful summer program to date.

- Was told by Police Chief

Kevin McQuead that his department will be receiving the new computers over the next month. He recognized Brooke Langerman, police department administrative support specialist, for her efforts and assistance in the transition of the department.

- Was told by Public Works Director Shawn Young that there were some problems with residents moving through barricades after streets were paved. Lacey McQuead said she would place a notice on Facebook, asking the public to respect the barricades and not enter newly paved streets until said barricades are removed.

- Set the next council meeting for Sept. 12.

Group sheds light on suicide prevention

By **SHANNON GOLDEN**
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness will be holding its second-annual Out of the Dark luminary vigil Saturday, Sept. 10, in honor of National Suicide Prevention Month.

The event coincides with World Suicide Prevention Day, a yearly worldwide awareness event geared toward spreading a singular message — suicide can be prevented.

Tosca Rawls, the center's public relations and development director, hopes the event will allow community members to remember those they have lost, bring people together, and perhaps foster hope by showing that support is readily available.

For the team at WVCW, this year's vigil is just one of the many suicide prevention education and outreach efforts it provides for residents in Wallowa County.

"Our community has been deeply affected by a rise in completed suicides in the last two years," Rawls said. "We also just want to shed some light on the issue and reduce the stigma in talking about it."

Those who attend the vigil can expect to see hundreds of bags, filled with battery-powered tea lights, illuminating the lawn and walkways in front of the Wallowa County Courthouse in Enterprise.

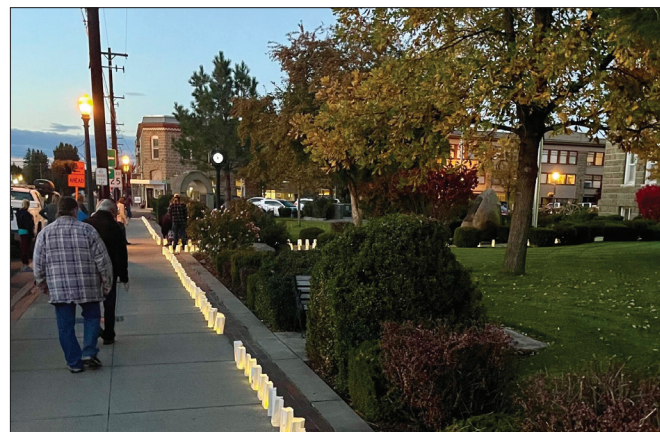
Rawls said last year's vigil was a powerful way to show just how many people have been affected by suicide. She noted that, for the moment, the center plans to make it an ongoing annual event.

"I think that when people saw the amount of lights, it had a real impact," she said. "I think that it gave people an opportunity to remember those who had been lost."

Between Aug. 17 and Sept. 7, community members are encouraged to visit locations around Joseph and Enterprise to pick up bags to decorate for the vigil. The bags can either be decorated on-site, or personalized and returned before Sept. 7.

Last year, Rawls said the bags were covered in messages and notes remembering those who had been lost, pictures of hearts and rainbows and messages of hope.

Displays with bags to decorate for the event will be at the following locations: Wallowa Memorial Hospital lobby, the Joseph Center, Enterprise's Building Healthy Families, the Enterprise Public Library, Winding Waters Clinic, Wallowa Public Library or



Tosca Rawls/Contributed Photo

Community members walk alongside illuminated bags during the inaugural Out of the Dark luminary vigil in Enterprise, hosted by the Wallowa County Center for Wellness on Sep. 30, 2021.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information or questions about the event, contact Tosca Rawls or Amy Busch at 541-426-4524 ext. 1031. Visit the Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness website at wvcenferforwellness.org for a current list of upcoming suicide prevention and education events.

SEEKING SUPPORT?

If you or someone you know is seeking local crisis support, call Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness Crisis Line at 541-398-1175. For anyone in Wallowa County who isn't in crisis but is seeking additional resources, the WVCW has same-day service available 541-426-4524.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, call 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255, text HOME to 741741 or visit SpeakingOfSuicide.com/resources for additional resources.

the Hearts for Health Building at 606 Medical Parkway, Enterprise.

This vigil is one of many that will be held across the country to bring awareness to suicide prevention and offer support for community members who have been impacted by suicide. Rawls said the event will begin at dusk, and that there is no formal schedule.

"People can absolutely come and go as they would like," she said.

WVCW dedicated its work in 2022 and 2023 to suicide prevention education and outreach. They have held several free classes and trainings — open to the public — focused on how to recognize signs of suicide, talk to those at risk and get help for individuals in crisis.

"Our hope for impact is that we can continue to raise awareness around suicide prevention and to focus our efforts on providing treatment," she said.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

DESTINY WECKS

Destiny Wecks participated in the Wallowa County Horse Fair as a senior member, completing nine years of 4-H in Wallowa County. Wecks won 4-H senior presentation and the 4-H senior record book as well as senior and grand champion in showmanship, senior champion in reining, in addition to a host of other awards.

Wecks qualified for the Oregon State 4-H Fair in all her events. She left Tuesday, Aug. 16, for the Canby Rodeo as she serves as Miss Teen Rodeo Oregon 2022 and then will go directly to the Oregon State Fair. Wecks was at Benton County Fair, Corvallis, prior to the start of the Wallowa County Fair where she carried the American flag to begin the rodeo as Miss Teen Rodeo Oregon.

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Main Street Garden receives grant

Wallowa County Chieftain

PORTLAND — St. Patrick's Episcopal Church's Main Street Garden has received a grant of \$2,230 to add fruit trees and fruit bushes, along with a deer fence, to expand its offerings to the local food bank, Wallowa County Alternative Education High School and Head Start, according to a press release.

The American Association of Retired Persons announced the award Monday, July 25, as part of an effort to help communities across Oregon that are working to become more livable for residents of all ages. AARP is working in partnership with local leaders, organizations and dedicated residents to help

make that vision a reality.

"St. Patrick Church's Main Street Garden will be able to continue transforming the church's lawn into an edible garden," Vicar Katy Nesbitt said. "AARP funding will pay for fencing, fruit trees and bushes that will be tended by our elderly congregation to serve customers of our local food bank as well as two local schools."

Four Age-Friendly Communities grantees were chosen from across the state. Grants were also awarded to Ashland Senior Services, the city of Philomath and Grow Portland.

The grants fund innovative projects that inspire change in transportation, public spaces, diversity and inclusion and civic engagement. The grant-

ees were chosen from applicants for the national AARP Community Challenge Grant and are funded by AARP Oregon. In June, six national grantees were announced.

"AARP Oregon Age-Friendly Communities Grants seek to help communities like Enterprise become great places for people of all backgrounds, abilities and ages, especially people 50-plus," said Bandana Shrestha, AARP Oregon state director. "We know that quick-action projects like these can spark innovation and catalyze long-lasting change."

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age.

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Jude Graham, Curator, Wallowa County Museum

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By Rita Ehler & Ellen Morris Bishop

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- Early rodeos at the Lake (1930s!) where Harley Tucker got his start.
- The electric railroad vs the steam railroad
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