

Joseph's new manager has plenty of experience

Dan Larman joined staff in July

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Joseph's new city manager comes with a host of qualifications for the job, having worked with outgoing pro-tem Administrator Brock Eckstein in Elgin for nine years and spent most of his adult life working in the municipal industry.

"I've worked my way up. I started at the bottom. I was the guy shoveling stuff up into a bucket and I've literally worked my way up since then," said Dan Larman, during an interview Wednesday, Aug. 24. "I've handled just about every aspect there is to handle in municipal work, whether it's city or county. I've always been a public servant; I don't see that changing in the near future — or even the far future."

All that on-the-job experience, and numerous certi-

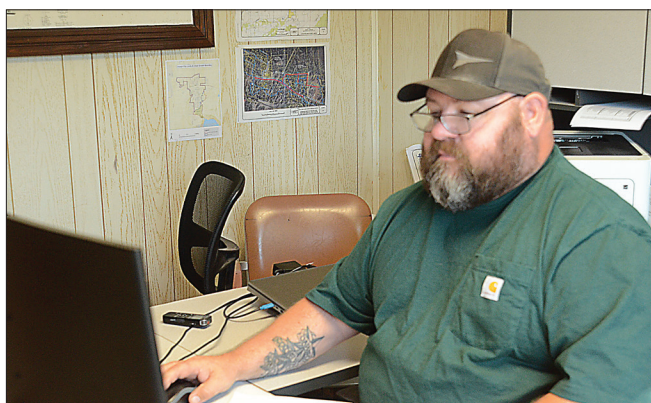
fications to operate municipal systems earned through continuing education "short courses," easily replace the need for a college degree, Larman said.

"I've been in the municipal arena for 19 years, 10 of those in management," he said.

Larman is a native of Wichita, Kansas, where his father was stationed while in the U.S. Air Force. When his father retired, the family moved first to Western Washington, and then, at age 7, Larman moved with his mother to Mount Vernon, in the John Day Valley.

"Eastern Oregon has always been my home," he said. "This area and Wallowa County in particular is a very desirable place to be. It's rural — I don't really like the bigger cities too much — the sense of community is just awesome out here. People really take care of their neighbors; they care about what's going on in their communities."

The single dad of three



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Dan Larman, Joseph's new city manager, looks over his email Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022, in his office at Joseph City Hall. The city council hired Larman in July.

sons sees Joseph as a great place to continue raising his kids.

"I have school-aged children and the smaller, more-rural schools give them the opportunity to achieve the things that they want to achieve, more on a personal basis," he said.

Post-chaos Joseph

Anyone who has been paying attention is aware that city government in Joseph has been anything but sedate

the past few years. When former city Administrator/Recorder Larry Braden resigned amid accusations that he experienced harassment from the mayor and city council in April 2021, that set off a chain of events that included a councilwoman being censured, arguments between employees and an unrelated issue of the then-mayor resigning because she moved.

The council contracted with Eckstein to serve as pro-

tem city administrator until a permanent replacement for Braden was found and Councilor Lisa Collier was elected as mayor. Vacant council seats were filled so that only one vacancy remains at present.

Now, with Larman hired in July and most vacancies filled, the city appears on track to be fully functional.

"I did learn of and was aware that Joseph had been plagued with some turnover in the past and I'm hoping that, being in a management position, that we can turn that around and keep the staff that we have," Larman said.

He said he doesn't feel associated with the chaotic nature of city government in recent years.

"I feel that what was put in place before I started and I'm picking up where it was left off," he said. "I will say that the staff and the team that was put together before I came on is exceptional. These people take great pride in their jobs; they really want to do things correctly; they are great performers."

Challenges ahead

Larman is aware of and ready to take on the challenges the city faces. Coming up are issues dealing with the urban growth boundary and the so-called "land swap," the ongoing wastewater and water treatment projects and the project by the Oregon Department of Transportation to upgrade city sidewalks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The latter project, he said, which will last two seasons, bred a bit of controversy as local merchants and the Joseph Chamber of Commerce expressed concerns to the city council that the ADA work could disrupt the tourist season. However, earlier this year, the city, the chamber and ODOT came to an agreement to start work on the outer edges of town during the busy time of year and not move downtown until tourist season was winding down. Larman said after ODOT has to cease work this fall, they'll return to finish up in the spring.

Hurricane Creek Grange named Distinguished Grange

Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Hurricane Creek Grange has been recognized as a 2021-22 Distinguished Grange, by the National Grange organization.

Grange members will attend the 156th Annual National Grange Convention in Sparks, Nevada, in November to receive the award in person at a special reception for the 24 community granges and three state granges to receive the distinction. The Oregon State Grange was one of the three state granges to also receive the Distinguished Grange recognition.

"It will come as no sur-

prise to people in the communities where these distinguished granges are active that they have qualified for such a select honor," National Grange President Betsy Huber said. "While each of our 1,500 granges across America perform great feats to improve their communities, these granges are an integral piece of the fabric of their hometowns, constantly finding ways to improve the lives of their neighbors and rising to the occasion with innovative outreach."

Hurricane Creek Grange members said they were proud to qualify for the award.

"We are very pleased to be able to serve our community in a number of ways. Receiving the National Distinguished Grange award is a great honor," Grange Treasurer David McBride said. "As Hurricane Creek Grange

completes 100 years of supporting Wallowa County next year, it is very impressive to remember all that has been accomplished by the grange. We certainly look forward to expanding our membership and support for the community."

Hurricane Creek Grange submitted for national review a recap of activities from July 2021 through June 2022, including awarding \$1,500 in scholarships to three graduating high school seniors, distributing dictionaries to third grade students throughout Wallowa County, offering a free ice cream social in the spring and a barbecue to the community. Hurricane Creek Grange offers a low-cost breakfast monthly, and hosts meals through Community Connection of Northeast Oregon. The Grange Hall is offered for public gather-

ings. Hurricane Creek Grange members volunteer to assist with the Eagle Cap Extreme Dog Sled Race, Chief Joseph Days Rodeo and the Wallowa County Museum.

"I grew up just down the road from Hurricane Creek Grange and remember attending a few events when I was a young child," Grange member Mary Kay Pace said. "Fast forward, after finishing a teaching career in Nevada, my husband and I returned home to Joseph. I joined the grange in 2017 because I wanted to make sure that the beautiful old white Hurricane Creek Grange continues to flourish and serve the communities of Wallowa County."

Hurricane Creek Grange meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Grange Hall, 82930 Airport Lane, Joseph.

Building Healthy Families would like to recognize and thank all of the volunteers who helped serve at Summer Lunch in the Park this year. You are greatly appreciated!

BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH SUMMER LUNCH VOLUNTEERS

Building Healthy Families
541-426-9411
oregonbhf.org

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 with-in 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

Introducing Dr. Nick West

Nick grew up on a cattle ranch down the road in Imbler, Oregon. Through this experience of growing up rural he developed a passion to serve the small towns of Oregon, including our beloved Wallowa County. He is excited to be joining our team of physicians at Winding Waters in September!

Visit our website or scan the QR code to learn more!

www.windingwaters.org

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Enterprise Joseph Wallowa

OUT OF THE DARK

Bring Light to Suicide Prevention

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Wallowa County Courthouse

Join Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness during Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Decorate a luminary bag which will be lit as a symbol of hope and support for suicide prevention and in memory of those we have lost to suicide.

BAGS AVAILABLE TO DECORATE AUGUST 17 - SEPTEMBER 7 AT:

- Wallowa Public Library
- Building Healthy Families
- Joseph Center for Arts & Culture
- Enterprise Public Library
- Wallowa County Justice Department
- Winding Waters Clinic in Enterprise
- Wallowa Memorial Hospital in Enterprise
- Hearts for Health Integrated Care Center

For more information, please contact us at 541.426.4524 x1031

HAPPY LABOR DAY!

Chieftain office will be closed Sept. 5th in observance

EARLY SPACE RESERVATION DEADLINES

for advertising is noon Wednesday, Aug. 31st for the Sept 7th edition. Ad copy is due on Thursday, Sept. 1st at 10am. Ads must be cleared to print by Noon Sept. 6th.

Wallowa County **CHIEFTAIN**

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