



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan  
Stanfield Police Officer Joyce Wright chats with some Stanfield Secondary School students. Wright is the new Community Resource Officer for Stanfield and Echo schools.

# Echo, Stanfield schools add Community Resource Officer

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

Some parents may be alarmed to see a police officer regularly wandering the halls of their child’s school. But the goal of the new Community Resource Officer at Echo and Stanfield schools is to elicit just the opposite reaction.

“I’m not here because there are any problems,” said Officer Joyce Wright, a Stanfield police officer. Starting this year, she will split some of her time between Echo and Stanfield school districts, spending time in the classrooms and hallways and getting to know students.

“The Stanfield Police Department wanted to get more involved with the community. The goal is to get someone in the school so they see a familiar face (from the police),” she said.

Wright spends about 20 hours per week going between Echo and Stanfield schools. She spends the rest of her time working as a code enforcement officer and on general patrol.

“I bounce back and forth between both schools during

the day,” she said. “I try to make contact with each high school at least once a day.”

Wright said the school resource officer job is a jack-of-all-trades position, with some administrative responsibilities like school safety plans and emergency drills. But the main goal of her position is to get involved in classrooms and interact with students and teachers on subjects related to law enforcement or drug and alcohol abuse.

“The goal is to interact with the kids and create a bond so I can be there if they have questions,” Wright said.

“We hope it will be a good bridge between law enforcement and students,” said Echo School District superintendent Raymon Smith. “Not just an authority figure, but another extension by which students can achieve their goals.”

Smith said the students seem to enjoy having Wright around, and some even interviewed her this week for the school newsletter.

While Wright hasn’t taught any specific lessons yet, she said her first weeks getting to know students and staff at both schools have been positive.

“The students have been receptive,” she said. “The other day, I talked to a student about forensics and careers in law enforcement.”

Though she had only been on the job for a couple of weeks, Wright has already developed a rapport with some students.

“Can I say you got me in trouble?” one student teased her as she stopped by a classroom.

“The kids have been very polite and friendly,” she said.

Wright previously worked in the Hermiston Police Department for 15 years, where she spent part of her time as a school resource officer at the middle schools and two elementary schools.

Superintendent Shelley Liscom said the schools wanted to use Wright’s position to increase safety in the school environment for both students and staff.

“Over time, we hope that students develop positive relationships with our local police force so that they view them as a resource when help is needed and feel comfortable asking for their help,” Liscom said in an email statement.

# Pendleton Mounted Band considers joining Round-Up

First performed at the 1911 rodeo

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

Although it has always been associated with the Pendleton Round-Up, the Pendleton Cowboy Mounted Band now has a chance to officially become a part of it.

When the mounted band convenes in Pendleton next week, its members will be polled on whether to accept an offer to become an arm of the Round-Up Association or continue as an independent group.

Randy Thomas, the Round-Up’s publicity director, described it as an opportunity for the Round-Up to preserve a unique Pendleton tradition.

Originally formed in 1911, the only band in the United States that plays its instruments entirely on horseback performed at the second ever Pendleton Round-Up.

The mounted band went on an extended hiatus for unknown reasons in 1938 before it was revived by former Umatilla County Circuit Court Judge Richard Courson for the Round-Up’s 75th anniversary in 1985.

The group has performed ever since, a fixture at the Westward Ho! Parade and a frequent presence at other events around the area. According to Emmett Moore, an at-large member of the group’s board of directors, the mounted band has about 45 active members, 39 of which are committed to performing in this year’s Round-Up.

Thomas said the Round-Up Association took a similar tact with the Round-Up Wagon Train, a multi-day journey by horse and wagon from the Blue Mountains to Pendleton in June.



EO file photo  
A man plays the drum in the Pendleton Mounted Band during the 2014 Dress-Up Parade in Pendleton. The band is considering an offer to become part of the Round-Up Association.

“It takes a lot of work to do this.”

— Emmett Moore, at-large member of the Pendleton Mounted Band board of directors

After the previous wagon train leader expressed interest in retiring, Round-Up Parade Director Randy Leonard took over this year’s event. Thomas added that with the Round-Up in charge, this year’s event saw a boost in attendance.

Moore, the mounted band board member, also understands the appeal the mounted band has to the Round-Up.

“If you don’t keep it going, you’re shooting yourself in the foot,” he said.

Moore has been involved in conversations with the Round-Up about the potential acquisition and plans to present the pros and cons of the arrangement to the band.

On one hand, the Round-Up would be able to provide its financial and promotional heft to the group.

Although the group has taken steps recently to create an organizational

structure and a board of directors, it isn’t a formally recognized nonprofit with its own staff. In addition to recruiting people who can sit on a horse and play an instrument simultaneously, the group spends a lot of time and energy looking for horses who don’t easily spook at the sound of loud music.

“It takes a lot of work to do this,” Moore said.

But he also understands some members who would be resistant to the move. Moore said some members object to adding the words “Round-Up” to the group’s title, in addition to other concerns.

Moore doesn’t know which way the mounted band is leaning, but they have a fan in Thomas, who recently heard the band when it performed at Frontier Days in Walla Walla.

“Dang, they sounded good,” Thomas said.

There’s a small constellation of independent organizations that are associated with Round-Up week, but Thomas said the Round-Up isn’t interested in consolidating all of them into its fold.

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