



## Fire case starts with a hitch

Roy Peterson faces 10 counts in unsigned indictment

By **Scotta Callister**  
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY – Roy Richard Peterson, once the central figure in a drive to bring rural fire protection to the Monument area, has been indicted on 10 felony charges stemming from the acquisition of equipment for a fire district.

His made his first appearance last Thursday in Grant County Circuit Court before Judge William D. Cramer Jr.

However, the arraignment was nearly derailed by a missing signature.

At the start, the state's attorney, Senior Assistant Attorney General Daniel P. Wendel, informed the court he had neglected to sign the secret indictment issued by the grand jury. He asked to sign it then, in the courtroom.

Cramer turned to the defense attorney, D. Zachary Hostetter of Enterprise, to see if he and his client would agree to that.

"We do not," Hostetter responded. He noted he had filed a demurrer – a filing that challenges the case – that same day.

The filing makes nine objections to claims in the indictment, citing insufficient facts for the allegations, the lack of the signature, and a conflict on the year of filing date.

The parties differed on the legality of correcting apparent clerical errors without returning to the grand jury.

Hostetter said while case law supports revision for form, it has only allowed striking material from filings, not adding it.

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# Cooperation or Coordination?

## Counties grapple with demands, forest issues

Residents eye better 'seat at the table'

By **Scotta Callister**  
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY – Local access activists last week urged the Grant County Court to reject "cooperator status" on the Forest Service's Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision.

Jim Sproul recommended

that if the Court does sign a memorandum of understanding with the Forest Service regarding the plan, it use the word "coordinate" rather than "cooperate."

Sproul and other members of the county's Public Access Advisory Board appeared at the Feb. 4 Court meeting.

Sproul said the process known as coordination would give the county "a much better seat at the table."

The Forest Service has been meeting with county officials in the region to discuss



**Judge Scott Myers**

ways to move forward with a revised plan for three national forests: the Malheur, Wallowa-Whitman, and Umatilla, as well as part of the Ochoco that is managed by the Malheur.

The proposed plan, a decade in the making, would provide a framework for management activities on the forests. The initial proposal

rolled out last fall to a chorus of discontent, with concerns voiced by access, timber industry and environmental groups.

Forest Service officials met with county representatives in Pendleton last month to talk about ways to proceed.

Grant County Judge Scott Myers said the Forest Service, initially aiming for a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with all the affected Oregon counties, now is ready to forge separate agreements with each.

Myers said he has not signed any agreement yet, and he pledged not to do so without public notice and discussion.

"I had an opportunity to sign an MOU 18 months ago in Baker City, and I did not," he said. He noted that both he and Harney County Judge Steve Grasty insisted that any document approved for their counties would require three signatures – meaning the full agreement of their courts.

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# WORLDS APART

## CHINESE, U.S. SCHOOL LEADERS SHARE IDEAS



Contributed photo

Dong Cai'an, a principal visiting from China, observes students working on computers in Kris Metcalf's classroom at Seneca School. At left is Mark Witty, District 3 superintendent and Dong's host in the exchange.

## Superintendent Witty welcomes Dong Cai'an

By **Angel Carpenter**  
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – Chinese principal Dong Cai'an had a warm Grant County welcome in recent visits to local schools.

Grant School District No. 3 Superintendent Mark Witty and his wife, Julie, hosted Dong Jan. 24-29 for an administrator shadowing project, made possible through a China Exchange Initiative grant.

"My wife and I thoroughly enjoyed hosting Principal Dong in John Day," Witty said. "We had the opportunity to learn of his culture and schools as well as share ours."

Witty will complete the exchange

by traveling to China to see Dong's school in March.

Seven other Chinese administrators also visited Oregon schools, staying for a total of 14 days.

Dong traveled across the globe from Shiquan in Shaanxi Province, where he is principal of Shiquan High School.

His school has 3,200 students in grades 10-12, with 230 teachers and staff.

Although Dong's English-speaking skills were good, he was assisted by local resident Micah Sprouffske who helped with translation.

"This is a major task to come here to learn the basic American education system," Dong said.

He said all the students at his school have a goal to continue their education at colleges or universities.

Witty noted that schools in China track students at the end of their ninth-grade year, with some going to college prep high schools and others taking a vocational route.

Dong said his students spend long hours studying difficult subjects in order to pass college entrance exams.

They start their day at school at 7:10 a.m., have lunch from 12-2 p.m. and end school at 5:30 p.m. Activities and club meetings are held after school, such as basketball, lecture, writing, soccer, computer.

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**"Our students might be interested to know that students throughout China are not able to date until age 18."**

**Mark Witty**  
Grant School District No. 3 superintendent

### STUDENT ART



**Kennedy Bengé**  
Grade 4

Teacher: Andrea Ferreira  
Humbolt Elementary

## Porter gets 5 more years in prison

### Board cites lack of remorse, poor parole planning

By **Scotta Callister**  
Blue Mountain Eagle

SALEM – Sidney Dean Porter will spend at least five more years in prison for the killing of John Day Police Officer Frank Ward in 1992.

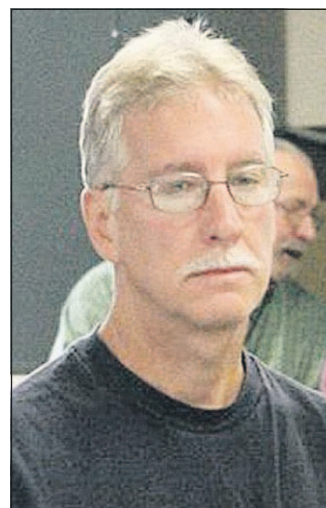
The Oregon Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision issued that ruling last week, following a Jan. 27 hearing to consider a possible release date for this summer.

The board instead extended Porter's term, finding it unlikely that he would qualify for release in the next five years.

In the hearing, the board reviewed a Dec. 9 psychological evaluation and heard testimony from Porter, as well as arguments against his release from Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter and relatives of Ward.

The board concluded Porter "suffers from a present severe emotional disturbance that constitutes a danger to the health or safety of the community."

The decision moves his possible release date to June 7, 2020, with a review hearing likely in December 2019.



Eagle file photo

**Sidney Dean Porter**

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