



Mark Witty

Witty in running for Baker school job

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Grant School District No. 3 Superintendent Mark Witty is one of three finalists for the superintendent's job in Baker School District 5J.

The others are Betty Palmer, principal of the South Baker Intermediate School, and Robert Vian, superintendent of a district in Orofino, Idaho.

The Baker School Board has scheduled interviews and a "meet and greet" with the candidates for this Friday.

Witty told the Eagle he wasn't seeking a new post when he learned of the Baker job.

"I love it here, and I think we're doing tremendous things," he said.

However, he saw the position at Baker, a larger district, as "an opportunity for professional growth."

He said he wouldn't have been drawn to a position outside the region, noting, "I'm an Eastern Oregon boy."

Witty has been active in promoting the educational needs and objectives of Eastern Oregon schools and small rural districts.

He has been with District 3 for 17 years.

STUDENT ART



Sebastian Hodge
Fourth grade
Teacher: Sophie Cosgrove
Humbolt Elementary

GOVERNORSHIP IN TRANSITION

Exit Kitzhaber, enter Brown

By Peter Wong
Capital Bureau



John Kitzhaber



Kate Brown

SALEM — The fall of John Kitzhaber and the rise of Kate Brown to Oregon's governorship intersect Wednesday, as Brown is sworn in to the state's top elected office.

Last week, Kitzhaber became the first governor in Oregon history to resign under political pressure, amid three separate investigations of influence-peddling allegations against him and his fiancée, Cylvia Hayes.

While other elected officials in Oregon have lost their jobs under pressure, the only compa-

rable magnitude in recent times was the 1995 resignation of Bob Packwood, who faced expulsion from the U.S. Senate seat he held for almost 27 years on accusations of sexual misconduct.

In Packwood's case, the pressures took nearly three years to result in resignation.

In Kitzhaber's case, the

pressures took less than five months — and culminated only a month after he was sworn in for a record fourth term as governor.

Kitzhaber's political career spanned decades, from his election in a Roseburg-area district to the Oregon House in 1978, when he was an emergency room physician. He was in the Oregon Senate 12 years, eight of them as its president, and served two terms as governor from 1995 to 2003. He won a record third term in 2010, and was elected again Nov. 4 by just under half the votes cast in a six-way race.

In 1998, Kitzhaber won his

second term by the largest margin in 48 years. But in 2010, he won a third term by the smallest margin since 1956.

In recent times, only Mark Hatfield (46 years), Ted Kulongoski and Vic Atiyeh (28 years each) have been on Oregon's public stage longer.

As secretary of state, Brown will succeed Kitzhaber. Both are Democrats.

Brown will serve only until the 2016 general election, when the Oregon Constitution specifies an election for the remaining two years of Kitzhaber's term.

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Court, access group at odds over roads letter

Court awaits review of closure order

By Scotta Callister
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY — Public Access Board members told the Grant County Court they've identified more than 200 forest roads in the county that were closed by a September order.

At the Feb. 11 Court meeting, board chairman Jim Sproul noted the group was first told the order affected no roads in Grant County, only Harney County.

"Then it was a handful, or a few," he said. "Our documentation is that there are over 200 roads in the south end of the county closed by the action, or attempted to close."

He and others urged the Court to send a letter to Malheur National Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin, saying the closure order violates the county's access ordinance. Adopted in May 2013, that ordinance requires public lands agencies to consult with the Court and the sheriff when contemplating road or access changes.

The order was signed by Beverlin's predecessor, Teresa Raaf. The order covers a number of road actions that apparently went into effect earlier, but had not been finalized.

In earlier meetings, Beverlin has said he initially thought all the roads affected by the September order were in Harney County, which would not be governed by the Grant County ordinance.

However, he agreed to review the roads in the order, and later acknowledged that a preliminary review indicated some roads are in Grant County.

Beverlin said last week the review is still under way, and he reiterated the findings will be presented to the court when complete. He said the Harney County portion of the review is done and has been presented to that court.

Access board members raised a concern not just about the number of roads, but the location. They said many of the closed roads seemed to be clustered in a specific area.

Howard Geiger said that's the Myrtle Park area, which has long been used for snowmobiling, wood cutting, and other activities.

They also are concerned

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Fun & Games

Fair event keeps clues coming



Eagle photos/Angel Carpenter

Weighing their options in the Clue game are Aaliyah Marciel, 7, left, Tasha Marciel and Kayla Westlake.

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — It's no mystery — the Feb. 6 Clue Dinner at the Grant County Fairgrounds was a veritable success.

"Everyone had a great time learning how to play the game of Clue — Fairgrounds style," said Mary Weaver, fair manager, noting there were "lots of laughs."

There were eight tables set up for eight people each to play the game, with people waiting to join in.

The evening also featured a lasagna dinner and an auction of pies and other goods. The event raised \$4,450 to help buy a public address system and reader boards for the fairgrounds.

Weaver said the support of local business sponsors and volunteers made the event possible.



Zeke Rookstool, 6, shuffles through his cards during the Clue game.

A mill in Long Creek? No kidding

Company lays groundwork for chipping plant

By Scotta Callister
Blue Mountain Eagle

LONG CREEK — Things are looking up in Long Creek, as plans firm up for a small-wood chipping facility at the old mill site.

"It's a dream come true," said Mayor Don Porter. "We're really stoked about it."

The Long Creek City Council last week approved a conditional use permit for Grant County Fiber to operate a plant at 200 N. Eagle St.

The permit hearing drew about 25 residents,

plenty of support and no opposition.

Porter said one resident who had voiced concerns about noise earlier in the process has since done some research that resolved his concerns.

"The mood in town is 100 percent positive," he said.

Company representative Don Bodewig said the chip facility, owned by Richard and Janie Dodge, is not ready to open yet, but work has been underway at the site for a little over a month.



Eagle file photo

Residents of Long Creek are feeling an economic upsurge with the proposal for a chipping plant at the old millsite in the rural Grant County town.

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