



GU dancers strike GOLD!

Team earns 1st place at Thurston event

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

SPRINGFIELD – A shining performance earned the Grant Union Gold dance team a first-place finish last weekend.

The team's success came at the March 6-7 Thurston High School competition in Springfield, where they were up against Sweet Home (2nd), Santiam (3rd) and Bandon (4th).

The varsity dancers have steadily im-

proved their scores for their routine at various competitions this season – their last local performance will be at the Spring Showcase at Grant Union at 7 p.m. Thursday.

Grant Union Gold will compete at the OSAA Dance & Drill State Championships March 18-21 at the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum in Portland.

"Every year is a work in progress, from the time we start the routine in December, until we end at the state competition," Adair said. "We usually add to the routine in sections and then make changes as we receive judges' comments at each competition."

She said they continue to make im-

provements until their last practice, "from changing formations to cleaning the smallest details so that everyone is in sync."

The team has shown a desire to work hard and make the routine its best, she added.

"This particular group has been so fun to work with this year," Adair said. "They have great attitudes and work ethic – I couldn't ask for anything more."

The Grant Union Gold dance team with head coach Shannon Adair show their trophy earned at last weekend's Thurston competition in Springfield.

Contributed photo/Cindy Dougharity-Spencer



SPRING, and dancing, in the AIR!

Showcase is 7 p.m.
Thursday, dinner 5:30 p.m.

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – The popular Spring Showcase, featuring dancers from preschool to high school age, is set for 7 p.m. Thursday, March 12, at the Grant Union gym.

Admission to the showcase is by donation.

At 5:30 p.m., the community is invited to a barbecue pulled-pork sandwich dinner which will also include salad, desserts and beverages. The cost is \$7.50 for adults, and smaller portions are \$5.

Proceeds support the varsity girls' trip to state competition in Portland the following week.

Included on the night's program will be performances by the high school varsity Grant Union Gold team and Body, Fitness, Dance groups, including Levels 1, 2 and 3, and the Junior Gold dance team.

Solo and small-group performances are also on the program.

Shannon Adair, who spearheads the annual event, is head coach of Grant Union Gold.

Mackenzie Woodcock, a Grant Union junior, and Carli Gardner, a senior, coach the Junior Gold team.

Coaching the younger dancers are: Chandra Holliday, Level 1; senior Jennifer McCluskey and sophomore Rebecca Batease, Level 2; and Stephanie Parsons, Level 3.

Grant Union Gold's big presentation for the night will be their state competition routine.

The performance features high-energy choreography to "Shatter Me" by Lindsey Stirling and Lizzy Hale.

Adair said the physically demanding number is a welcome challenge for the team, and fun for the audience to watch.

"We are looking forward to our Spring Showcase and the state competition coming up," she said.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Grant Union Gold will perform at the Showcase, kicking off their ride to state competition next week.



Contributed photo/ODFW
Mule deer

TRACKING GOES HIGH TECH

ODFW will use GPS devices to monitor deer

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

SALEM – Some 500 deer in Eastern Oregon are going digital.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife plans to place GPS radio collars on 500 female mule deer, mostly in the Southern Blue Mountains, to track their movements and gain a better understanding of their ranges.

Capture and collaring of the deer began March 1 between Prineville and Ontario on public land and on some private land where ODFW has permission of the landowner.

The operation is expected to take 10 days or more, depending on the weather.

A helicopter crew from Leading Edge Avia-

tion, based in Clarkston, Wash., is handling the mule deer captures using a specially designed net gun.

Once netted, the deer are blindfolded and restrained to calm them, then after the GPS device is fitted, the deer are released on site.

Each capture typically takes 5-10 minutes, and the limited handling time reduces stress on the deer, ODFW officials said.

Location data from the GPS collars is transmitted via satellite, up to several times a day.

The collars, which typically have a three-year battery life, can also indicate if a deer has died, when no movement is detected; once ODFW biologists receive the special "mortality" signal, they can use the GPS information to find the deer and potentially determine the

cause of death.

The cost of the project is about \$3.2 million over five years for the collaring, plus the continual annual surveys, smaller captures to replace collars, analyzing and reporting of data, officials said.

A federal fund covers 75 percent of the cost – from Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration funds, the federal excise tax on hunting equipment – and 25 percent comes from license revenue.

ODFW planned the collaring project while deer are on their winter range, and partly because of helicopter availability and collar readiness.

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Prospectors kick off baseball season next week

Team hosts March 27 dinner, auction

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – It's time to dust off those baseball caps, and mark calendars for the Grant Union Prospector's annual fundraiser dinner and auction.

The dinner is set for 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 27, at the Grant Union old gym.

Catered by Kris and Kjer Kizer, the menu includes pulled pork, roasted red potatoes, Hawaiian coleslaw and cobbler.

A silent auction, raffle and bid on baseball players – Grant Union baseball players will be auctioned off for up to four hours of manual labor – will also be a part of the event.

Tickets are \$10 each and available from the athletes or head coach Brian Delaney.

For more information, contact Delaney at 541-792-1068.

Grant Union's baseball season starts with a doubleheader at Culver beginning at 2 p.m. Thursday, March 19.

The Pros host Pilot Rock/Nixyaawii for a doubleheader at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 21, with the second game scheduled for 2 p.m.

The Les Schwab Icebreaker Tournament is set for Thursday through Saturday, March 26-28, with Grant Union's game times starting at 1:30 p.m. each day.



Middle school wrestlers place at regional qualifier

Three advance to state tourney

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

BOARDMAN – Eleven Grant Union middle school wrestlers competed at Middle School Regional Qualifier

at Riverside High School last Saturday.

"All wrestled hard to cap off a great season," said head coach Andy Lusco. "There was tons of competition from all over the state."

Braden Spencer went 6-1 to finish third in his weight class; Roen Langum went 3-2 for fourth; and Drew Lusco

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Contributed photo/Angie Lusco
Grant Union middle school wrestler Drew Lusco competes against a La Grande opponent at the regional tournament.



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