

CAMP

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prizes for the ladies, a BB gun drawing for the kids, a pie and cake auction, and a prime rib and chicken dinner. The dinner auction has been held at the camp, located in Logan Valley, in past years. That gave people a good look at the camp facilities, but organizers felt the distance was discouraging some attendees. Fundraising results were not final early this week, but Bastian is certain the success of this year's auction will enable the camp operators to complete one of the new cabins being built at the camp. They also obtained a grant from the John and Linda Shelk Foun-

datation for the cabin work, which entails replacing several old A-frame structures that were in bad shape. The camp is in the Malheur National Forest, but is operated by the nonprofit Lake Creek Camp organization and its local board. The facility specializes in a forest camp experience for youth groups, but also is available for use by individual campers and groups, and is a popular site for family reunions. Bastian said some people mistakenly believe the camp is a government operation. "We're totally self-supporting," she said, noting that the annual auction is important for the camp's success. For more information on the facilities and cabin rates, visit www.lakecreek-camp.com.

CUTS

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improving programs, investing in curriculum, enhancing technology, and in general improving the quality of education," Gerry said. That's a trend he and others see ending with the \$7.24 billion funding level. Gerry said funding schools at \$7.5 billion would essentially flat-fund the Prairie City district, while \$7.875 billion would provide for continued growth and development. The Oregon Legislative Revenue Office, meanwhile, responded to the outcry with its own projections, contending they are more accurate than those from the Department of Education. The legislative analysts contend the impact will be positive, not negative, because of increasing property tax collections and other factors. However, State Rep. Cliff Bentz (R-District 60) questions the legislative office's assumption that there will be a 5 percent increase in local property taxes. ODE is going

with a more conservative 3.5 percent – Bentz notes the average over the past decade has hovered at 3 percent. Adding complexity, the state is proposing a 50-50 split of the education money over the two-year periods. In past cycles, the funding has been greater in the second year, with the current budget cycle using a 49-51 split. The strategy of the uneven split is to make sure the funding covers costs that are sure to rise in the second year. Critics say the 50-50 split will set up the districts for even more cuts in the second year. In testimony at the Legislature last week, Beaverton Superintendent Jeff Rose called the debate over \$7.24 billion vs. \$7.5 billion "a smokescreen." As reported On oregonlive.com, he noted the cuts in school days, libraries, P.E. and other losses. "This erosion ... has a cumulative effect," he said. "We clearly have become desensitized relative to what we are doing to schools over time." Bentz said his research indicates that schools have indeed seen a reduction in their share of the state budget.



The Eagle/Scotta Callister
Diners await their turn for the buffet line in the decorated Pavilion, as others check the silent auction sheets.

HIRE

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He'll receive his regular pay through Grant district, while the contract will have Baker paying Grant \$650.44 a day for Witty's consulting services plus related costs, such as travel, lodging and meals.

"My first priority is with this district," Witty said at the March 18 meeting. "I told them that is how it had to be." Cronin noted that on the days Witty is in Baker, "he's only a phone call away." "Mr. Witty has done an outstanding job, and the board is confident in his commitment to our district to the completion of his current contract,"

Cronin said this week. In their final evaluation of Witty for the 2014-15 school year, the board stated that he will be missed and lauded him for his "integrity, energy, vision, and insight to the district throughout his tenure in John Day." Their statement continued, "We are grateful that he has positioned our district to continue a trajectory of increasing

student achievement and financial stability. We owe Mr. Mark Witty a debt of thanks for his remarkable contributions to our school system, and we wish him continued success in the next phase of his educational career." The next District No. 3 board meeting is set for 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 15, at Seneca School.

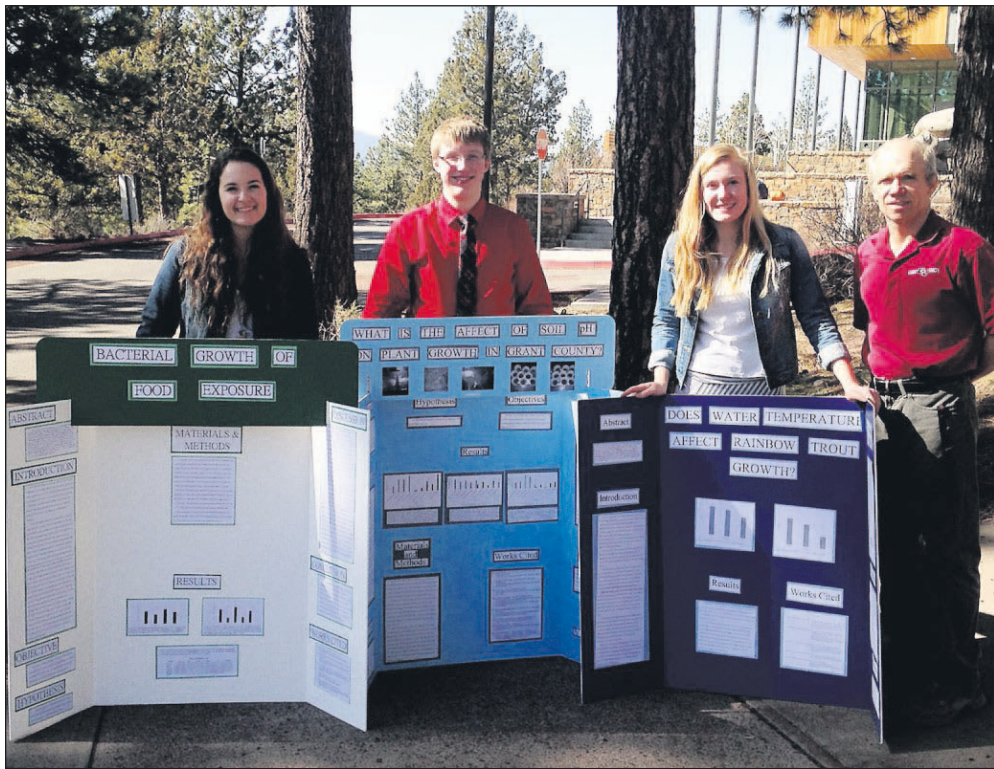
Three budding scientists win at Expo

Jocelyn Smith first in Physical Science

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

BEND – Three Grant Union science students won awards at the regional Intel Northwest Science Expo science fair in Bend. Receiving honors at the March 7 event were juniors Dawson Quinton, Jocelyn Smith and Taylor McCluskey – all students in Randy Hennen's advanced biology class.

"All three students investigated relevant questions and had good experimental design and analysis," Hennen said. The event was held at Central Oregon Community College with projects grouped into four categories: Human Science, Engineering, Life Science and Physical Science. Smith received first place in Physical Science for her



Contributed photo
Standing with their biology teacher Randy Hennen, right, are the Grant Union science students who participated in the regional NWSE Expo, including Taylor McCluskey, left, Dawson Quinton and Jocelyn Smith.

project dealing with the effect of water temperature on rainbow trout growth. She also received five additional awards: Outstanding Project in Atmospheric Science, Outstanding Geoscience Project, the U.S. Regional Stockholm Junior Water Prize, U.S. Air Force Outstanding Project,

and a \$2,000 scholarship from Oregon State University. Quinton placed third in Life Science for research on the effects to soil pH on native and naturalized plant growth and germination. McCluskey received an award for the project that best illustrated the Surgeon

General's health recommendations. She studied bacterial contamination of food left on the floor for various lengths of time. Both Smith and Quinton qualify to advance to the NWSE state science fair in Portland set for April 3 at Portland State University. "There is great value in participating in the process of science, because science is so much more than a body of knowledge," Hennen said. "Becoming involved in the scientific process teaches students to think critically and logically."

The Mt. Vernon City Council will hold a public Hearing on an Ordinance of the City of Mt. Vernon Establishing Time, Place, and Manner Regulations Concerning Medical Marijuana Dispensaries; and Declaring an Emergency. The hearing will take place at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, April 14th during our regular council meeting at the Mt. Vernon City Hall, 199 W. Main St., Mt. Vernon OR 97865. The Document is available for public review at Mt. Vernon City Hall.

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ROAD

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John Ely of the county's road advisory board also cautioned against going forward on assumptions. "You need to look at it with eyes wide open," he said, adding there would be costs to adhere to road standards and to meet environmental challenges. Stout questioned the assumption that there would be litigation. Myers, however, said he felt it would be ripe for legal action and the county would need to tap its road reserve fund to pay the cost. Melissa Brooks suggested the Court form a committee to look into the idea and develop a business plan that would address the concerns.

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