

Board to discuss hiring new GU principal

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY – The consent agenda for this month's Grant School District No. 3 school board meeting includes an item to recommend hiring a new Grant Union Junior-Senior High School principal.

The meeting, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 15, will be held at Seneca School.

Superintendent Mark Witty said Monday that three applicants had met with an interview team, and one more was scheduled to be interviewed before Wednesday's meeting.

All the job candidates are from Oregon, but the names were not released.

School board president Chris Cronin said, "If all goes well, we hope to have a recommendation for the board to consider on Wednesday."



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter
Nate Watt is owner of Kilowatt Lighting in John Day, installing off-road lighting for vehicles for a brighter night view.

Watt lights up off-road paths

Light bar accessories touted as tough

By Angel Carpenter
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JOHN DAY – Nate Watt of John Day is lighting up the way to a brighter off-road experience for his customers.

He opened Kilowatt Lighting last October, and has outfitted many vehicles since then with lighting he says is 40 percent brighter, and more durable, than other brands.

He said stock lighting reaches 50-75 feet of usable light, while his light bars reach 250 yards or more.

His products range from 10-watt pods to 52-inch light bars with single- or dual-row lights, and are for off-road use.

Everything from 9-36-volt systems can be fitted onto trucks, cars, ATVs, UTVs, motorcycles and agri-

cultural and logging equipment.

Watt said the idea for the business began when he looked into purchasing a light bar two years ago.

"The competitor's price was a little over \$2,000, and I wanted to buy one cheaper," he said. "We now sell the same style for about \$550."

The Kilowatt light bars he sells are his own design and are manufactured in Japan.

"We always have new products coming in," he said. "They're half the price of other competitors, and a third to a quarter of some competitors."

A lifetime warranty on Kilowatt Lighting products covers deer collisions, wrecks and water damage; he added the products are durable, water tight and submersible. He said that if a customer finds water behind the lens, it will be repaired or replaced. To test the strength, "We parked a diesel pickup on a light bar," he said. A video showing this test is at the business



Contributed photo
This Polaris RZR sports a light bar from Nate Watt's Kilowatt Lighting business.

website, www.kilowattlighting.com.

He runs his business at JD Rents, where he is head of maintenance at the saw shop. JD Rents is at 727 West Main in John Day, and is owned by his parents Robert and Bonnie Watt.

For more information, call Nate at 541-575-1156.

Forestry consultant honored

Blue Mountain Eagle

RENO, Nev. – Local forestry consultant Irene Jerome received a 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Award at the International Association of Fire Chiefs Wildland Urban Interface Con-

ference held in Reno, Nev. on March 25.

Jerome was recognized for her efforts to raise awareness of fire protection strategies and issues, and her success in organizing the first Firewise Community in Eastern Oregon, in the Pine

Creek area east of John Day.

Jerome said, "I am thrilled about the award – it means that we are beginning to make a difference."

She was one of 21 people or groups receiving the awards, and the only one from Oregon.

BUSINESS BEAT

Ochoco wins grant for wood innovation

Project eyes torrefaction for energy plants

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – Ochoco Lumber Co. will receive a \$25,000 Cohesive Wildfire Strategy grant to explore a new biomass development.

The company is one of four operations chosen for a total of \$110,000 in grants targeted at biomass use, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry. The funding comes from the U.S. Forest Service.

Ochoco, which operates its sawmill and pellet-biomass operation in John Day, received the grant to explore the commercial viability of a torrefied wood facility in Grant County.

According to ODF, torrefaction is a thermal process used to produce high-grade solid biofuels from wood biomass. If the process is viable, Ochoco could sell torrefied wood to coal-fired power plants, helping to reduce their carbon emissions.

The other businesses chosen for the grants are:

- Wallowa Resource Community Solutions Inc. of Enterprise, \$30,000, to design and engineer conversion of three public buildings in downtown Enterprise from costly oil heating to regionally pro-

duced biomass fuel.

- Heritage Sustainable Resources, \$25,000, to design and engineer a kiln-dried commercial firewood operation in North Powder.

- North Slope Resources Co., \$30,000, for a project to use local low-value biomass to diversify its agricultural operation in North Powder.

In all, there were six applicants for the funding.

"The grant funding by our federal partners is aimed at forging solutions to forest health and community vitality," said Marcus Kauffman, ODF's biomass resource specialist. "The grants are designed to provide business the resources to jump-start new ventures that will utilize the low-value material resulting from forest health treatments."

Kauffman said that creating demand for the by-products of restoration – small trees and brush – enables agencies to accelerate the pace of restoration, and also puts people to work.

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