

# A passion for helping children

CASA volunteers are a 'voice' in the system

By Cheryl Hoefler  
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – A new executive director is at the helm of the Grant-Harney County Court Appointed Special Advocate program.

Tracey Blood oversees volunteers in both counties who are trained to advocate for abused and neglected children going through the dependency system.

CASA's mission, Blood said, is to recruit, train and support people who can be a voice for children in court, and educate the community regarding that responsibility.

The program's goal is to advocate for a safe, permanent and nurturing home for



Contributed photo

Tracey Blood is the new executive director for Grant-Harney County CASA.

every child it serves.

Blood works 30 hours per week between Grant and Harney counties.

While in her new position for only a few months, Blood's interest in CASA was sparked back in 2004, when she was a CASA volunteer.

It's a community-based program, Blood said, with local staff and volunteers working to help local children.

She stressed that the children served are in the system through no fault of their own.

The Court Appointed Special Advocate program began

in Seattle in 1977, the idea of Juvenile Court Judge David Soukup. Ten years later, the Oregon legislature mandated that all abused or neglected children should have an appointed CASA representative.

Grant-Harney County CASA was launched in 1999.

Blood said there are four volunteer advocates in Grant County and two in Harney County, who are able to serve about 50 percent of the children who come into care.

"Our goal is to have enough CASA volunteers to serve 100 percent of the children in care in our community," she said.

According to Blood, the cost to serve one child going through the judicial system is about \$1,500. She said although CASA is a state-mandated program, the state only funds 30 percent of the need for Grant-Harney CASA.

CASA depends on community support and grant funding

for the balance of the expenses involved.

"Even if you are unable to act as a child advocate, volunteers can help the program with fundraising and outreach events for CASA, or by making a donation to the program," she said.

Blood is a Grant County native, and a 1999 graduate of Grant Union High School. She has a bachelor of science degree from Portland State, with a major in health science and a minor in psychology.

Blood previously worked as a mental health specialist at an acute psychiatric facility for two years before starting at CASA.

She and her husband, David, live in Mt. Vernon with their two teenage children, Kade, 15, and Tyler, 13.

Her hobbies include enjoying outdoor recreational activities with her family, such as camping, hiking, fishing and

hunting.

Community health is also a major interest for Blood.

"I enjoy working with other health-minded people toward the common goal of improving the overall health of our community," she said.

Blood said CASA is in need of new advocates, and there will be training for volunteers coming up this summer. She encourages anyone interested to give her a call or stop by the ESD building at 835 Canyon Blvd., where the CASA office is located, to talk with her.

It's certainly a service about which she is passionate.

"I love working together with other community members to improve the quality of living for the children who are such an important part of our community," Blood said.

CASA office hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Call 541-575-5574 or email to casa@grantesd.k12.or.us.

## Youth Visit Senate



Contributed photo

Homeschoolers Kate Hughes, left, and Katie Johnson of Mt. Vernon visited with Sen. Ted Ferrioli on April 16 when the two 12-year-olds served as honorary pages in the Oregon State Senate.

## Hospital board sets meetings

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – The Blue Mountain Hospital Board of Directors will hold a series of meetings Thursday, June 18,

at the hospital.

The sessions include a budget review at 3 p.m.; the annual budget meeting, with opportunity for public comment, at 4:30 p.m.; and the regular

board meeting at 5:30 p.m.

The regular meeting is scheduled to have an executive session regarding employment of a public officer, employee or agent at the end.

## Umatilla NF super picked for regional job

Blue Mountain Eagle

PENDLETON – Kevin Martin, Umatilla National Forest supervisor, has a new job as fire and aviation management director for both the Pacific Northwest and Alaska regional offices of the U.S. Forest Service.

Martin said he was excited about the new oppor-

tunity. He reports to his new job July 12.

He succeeds David Sumner, who retires in July.

Martin has been a member of the agency's National Line Officer Team for several years and is a coach for agency administrators at the National Fire Training Center, which he helped create. He current-

ly is a leader in reworking national fire management leadership.

The promotion was announced Friday by Jim

## Tour focuses on post-fire management

Blue Mountain Eagle

MT. VERNON – In addition to its regular meeting Thursday, the Blue Mountains Forest Partners is taking a field trip to the South Fork Complex fire area from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. this Wednesday.

The tour follows a workshop, held Tuesday at the Mt. Vernon Community Center, to examine the current science surrounding snags on the landscape, post-fire habitat and woodpeckers, soil impacts, and management actions to enhance forest health after fires.

Speakers scheduled were: Chris Dunn, a wildland fire researcher and post-doctoral scholar at Oregon State University; Ari Cowan, a master's student in forest ecosystems at OSU's College of Forestry; and Vicki Saab, a research wildlife biologist with the Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Research Station.

The Partners' regular meeting will be at 4 p.m. June 18 at the Grant County Regional Airport in John Day.

The group will hold a sec-

ond field trip on Friday, June 19, to the Camp Lick project area. Participants should meet

at the Malheur National Forest Supervisor's Office parking lot.

**ATTENTION GRANT COUNTY VETERANS:**

Did you know there may be VA benefits available for you as a result of your spouses' military service?

See your Grant County Veteran Services Officer today for more information, located at Grant County Court House.

**Call 541-575-1631 for an appointment**

Open: Mon., Wed., & Fri. 10 am - 4 pm. Appointment available at other times.

*Your Rural Family Health Clinic*

**Services Provided:**

- Primary Care
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- Men and Children Exams
- Immunizations
- Family Planning
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- Pregnancy Testing & Referrals
- HIV Testing & Referrals
- Cocoon
- WIC
- High Risk Infants
- Maternity Case Management

**Grant County HEALTH Department**

528 E. Main, St. E.  
John Day

**Monday - Friday  
8am - 5pm**

**Karen Triplett, FNP**

*Appointments available*

Call and schedule your appointment today!

TOLL FREE  
**888-443-9104**  
or 541-575-0429

Grant County Health Department does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

## OTEC elects officers, plans for transition

GM for 8 years plans to retire in February 2017

Blue Mountain Eagle

BAKER CITY – Oregon Trail Electric's Board of Directors named a new slate of officers this month and also began planning for a staff change in command in 2017.

Officers picked at the June 2 meeting are George Galloway of Union County, chair; George "Austin" Bingham of Union County, vice-chair; and Charlene Chase of Baker County, secretary/treasurer.

At a strategic planning session June 1, the board discussed financial goals, conservation, distributed generation, renewables, rate redesign and succession planning. As part of that discussion, Werner Buehler, general manager at OTEC, announced his plan to retire at the end of February in 2017.

Buehler, 61, has been in the electric utility business for over 44 years and has been general manager of OTEC for the past eight years.

"I want to give the board enough time so they

can adequately search and go through the long vetting process. I'm honored to help them with that," he said, promising the transition would be as seamless as possible.

**Nominate Your Educational Hero**

*Educators play an extremely important role in our community and are often underappreciated.*

This year, **Doug's Motor Vehicle Repair** is saying "Thank you, educators" by honoring an "Educator of the Month."

Each month one local educator will be highlighted in the *Blue Mountain Eagle* and will receive a \$50 gift certificate from Doug's Repair. Educator of the Year will receive \$1,000 to be donated to school of their choice.

*Nominate your Local Hero by picking up a nomination form at the Blue Mountain Eagle or Doug's Repair, or download a copy from the Blue Mountain Eagle's website -www.bluemountaineagle.com.*

**Doug's Motor Vehicle Repair, Inc.**  
24 Hour Towing 541-575-0544 Phone Mechanical & Collision

**SHRED DAY**  
**FRIDAY, JUNE 26TH**  
**10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Muzzy's 123 Dollar Store parking lot - 637 W. Main • John Day

Sponsored by  
**Old West Federal Credit Union**

The event is open to the community with Secure Shredding provided by Accu shred of La Grande

**Clean out file cabinets & stacks of outdated documents.**  
Old West Federal Credit Union is providing a free community shred day.

A secure way to dispose of unneeded documents. Guard your personal information against identity theft. Here are a few examples of what to throw away:

- **Bank statements:** OK to destroy after one year, unless you need them for tax purposes.
- **Utility bills:** Unless needed for tax purposes.
- **Tax records:** Destroy after six years.
- **Old investment statements.**
- **Insurance records:** Keep for the life of your policy.
- **Old credit card statements,** unless something was purchased with a warranty.
- **Mailed credit card solicitations.**

## MEETING NOTICE

**NORTH & MIDDLE FORK JOHN DAY RIVER AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN**

The Third Meeting for the Biennial Review of the North & Middle Fork John Day River Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan will be held on Tuesday, June 23rd, 2015 at 6:00pm at the Monument Senior Center at 269 Main Street in Monument.

Contact Steve Ussery at 541-934-2141 with any questions.

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## Recruiting Volunteers

**Grant County is looking for volunteers to fill vacancies on the following boards and committees. Obtain an Application to Volunteer by contacting the County Court office at 201 S. Humbolt, Canyon City OR 97820; 575-0059; or ferriolim@grantcounty-or.gov Applications due June 26, 2015.**

**Library Advisory Board.** Seven members serve four year terms and meet monthly to promote public awareness and support of library services, receive public input, review and update library materials, and coordinate activities with the Grant County Library Foundation. Membership is limited to one re-appointment.

**Mental Health Advisory Board.** Seven members (including two consumer representatives) serve three year terms and meet no less than quarterly to facilitate the provision of quality mental health services to county residents and enhance community knowledge of available programs and services. Acts as the Local Alcohol and Drug Planning Commission and Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board.

**Road Advisory Board.** Seven members serve three year terms and meet as needed to make recommendations on major and annual road decisions such as construction schedules, road vacations, budgeting and policy development, and to participate in hiring staff.

**Senior Citizens Advisory Council.** As a Type-A Area Agency on Aging, five members serve a three year term and meet quarterly to define the needs of older adults, promote special interests and local community involvement, and represent senior citizens as an advocate to the local, state, and federal government and other organizations. Membership is limited to one re-appointment.

**Wildlife Advisory Board.** Nine members serve three year terms and meet as needed to discuss issues regarding big game management and make recommendations to Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, including tag allocation and hunting season structure as they relate to population and damage of property.

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