



FIRE SEASON STRIKES

By Tim Trainor
Blue Mountain Eagle

A powerful thunderstorm ripped through the area June 28, bringing electricity to a landscape that had been scorched by high temperatures for days.

The results were expectedly flammable.

In the days since, fire crews have battled the blazes, despite unrelenting temperatures and hold-over fires continuing to ignite.

The largest fire in the area — and all of central and eastern Oregon — is currently the Sugar Loaf Fire, which has burned more than 5,000 acres roughly eight miles north of Dayville. It is believed to be a lightning-caused fire, which touched off June 27. As of Tuesday, containment was just 20 percent.

Hundreds of firefighters had already set up camp in Dayville on June 29 to battle the blaze, which was mostly burning through grass and shrubs on BLM Prineville District lands, but also on some private property.

An outbuilding and a vehicle were destroyed by flames, though there were no serious injuries reported by press time.

This incident was being managed as a full suppression fire. Crews constructed a fire line along the north flank. Engines patrolled the perimeter roads and the Dick Creek Road, which cuts through the middle of the burned area, attempting to douse hot spots.

But Sugar Loaf is just one fire in the area, and Dayville is currently the epicenter of a number of large fires.

The human-caused Blue Basin Fire burned about 400 acres east of State Route 19, largely within the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

A large new fire, the Corner Creek Fire, is burning 11 miles south of the small town. It grew quickly overnight Tuesday into Wednesday to reach 850 acres in size. Helicopters and air tankers were dispatched to suppress it. Another fire,

See FIRE, Page A10

Meredith Thomas took this photo Sunday by Dayville looking toward Aldrich Mountain. She said one of many strikes she captured started a fire she reported.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

The Harper Creek Fire burns June 29 south of Mount Vernon, shortly after igniting. By Tuesday, it had grown to more than 300 acres.

Marijuana faces hazy future in Grant County

By Tim Trainor
Blue Mountain Eagle

As legal marijuana arrives on the scene in Oregon, its future remains hazy in Grant County.

The County Court has not banned medical or recreational dispensaries, and the state Legislature continues to finalize a plan that gives counties that voted against Measure 91 back in November, the ability to ban all dispensaries.

In a brief conversation during the June 24 Court meeting, Commissioner Boyd Britton said he would be in favor of banning both medical and recreational dispensaries from the county while Commissioner Chris Labhart said he would not want to override decisions made by other municipalities. Britton said he would have no

problem overriding those decisions.

In John Day, the city council carved out a small space on the far east end of town as the sole place a dispensary could locate within city limits. The council made no distinction as to whether that could be a medical or recreational dispensary, but the state has said business licenses will not be ready for recreational dispensaries until at least 2016.

After much debate, Prairie City's council decided to take no steps to ban or put restrictions on dispensaries.

Instead, the city is in the process of instituting a first-ever business license, which all businesses located within the city will have to pay upon opening and annually thereafter.

See POT, Page A10



Whooping cough reported in county

Three cases confirmed, others treated

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The Grant County Health Department reports there are three confirmed cases of pertussis (whooping cough) in the county which started at the beginning of June.

In addition to the three cases a number of other families with symptoms are being treated for whooping cough while awaiting test results.

County and state public health officials recommend individuals age 2

months and older should receive regular DTaP vaccinations (for children through age 6) as well as one routine TDaP booster (every 10 years for adolescents and adults, starting at age 10) to protect themselves and those around them from whooping cough, especially people who are in contact with infants.

The health department, 528 E. Main, will hold a special DTaP/TDaP vaccination clinic from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, July 10.

The immunizations will be offered

for minimal to no cost, and free for people without insurance. The staff can also check to see if a person's vaccination schedule is up to date through the online ALERT Immunization Information System.

Pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by bacteria.

Experts say pertussis is dangerous, even fatal, for infants who are too young to be immunized. Since 2003, babies less than 1 year old accounted for greater than 80 percent of pertussis hospitalizations in Oregon. Five of those babies, all younger than

See COUGH, Page A10

HERE COMES THE FOURTH!

Parades, food, fireworks and games on tap

Blue Mountain Eagle

Four Grant County towns — Prairie City, Monument, Dayville and Long Creek — are rolling out the red, white and blue carpet with a full slate of activities for the 2015 Fourth of July celebration.

Here are the highlights on each community's schedule. Most activities are in each community's city park, unless otherwise noted. Each town will also have an array of food throughout the celebrations.

Dayville — "2015 — Let Freedom Ring"

Friday, July 3

• 8 p.m. — Happy hour, no



Eagle file photo

From left, Ryah Johns, Stella Johns and Marilyn Moore ride easy as they wave to the crowd during the 2014 Fourth of July parade in Dayville. Independence Day festivities will abound in several Grant County communities this weekend.

host bar, Community Hall
• 9 p.m. and after fireworks — Dance with live music by The NeverCanEvers, Community Hall
• 10 p.m. — Fireworks, east

of town near the red barn
Saturday, July 4
• 10:30 a.m. — Parade, with grand marshal Marina Martin

See FOURTH, Page A10

Meet the grand marshals

Among all the colorful parade entries, three sets of grand marshals — in Prairie City, Monument and Dayville — will be riding and waving to onlookers during the Fourth of July festivities.

Here's a brief glance at the honored dignitaries:

Prairie City

Jim and Lynette Sullens were born and raised in Prairie City. Both worked for the Forest Service, and Jim is also retired from the Prairie City Fire Department, on which he served as chief. The couple have three children and several grandchildren, and are active in Prairie City community events.

Dayville

Marina Martin has lived in Dayville since 1977. She has held many roles at Dayville School — art teacher, bus driver for 25 years, baseball coach and sports team medic. She was an EMT for 16 years, and has served on several clubs. She has three children and four grandchildren.

Monument

Bob Cox comes from pioneer stock. His grandparents homesteaded in the Monument area soon after 1900, in the Top area. Cox has spent his life farming the family homestead and has also been involved with 4-H and other community activities.

