

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The deadline for What's Happening items is 5 p.m. Friday. Call Cheryl at the Eagle, 541-575-0710.

THURSDAY, JULY 9

MNF open house

• 5-7 p.m., Supervisor's office, John Day
All are welcome to the informational open house to discuss wildland fire suppression on the Malheur National Forest. MNF officials will be on hand to answer questions and provide information on long-term fire situations, seasonal outlooks, aviation, dispatch and initial attack, and where to get updates as fire season kicks up. Smokey Bear will also be on

hand to help youth learn how to prevent wildfires. The Supervisor's office is at 431 Patterson Bridge Rd. For more information, visit www.fs.usda.gov/malheur or call 541-575-3000.

SATURDAY, JULY 18

26th annual Demolition Derby

• 7 p.m., Grant County Fairgrounds, John Day
Watch local competitors smash and crash as they vie for a variety of trophies and prizes, including \$1,500 for first place, \$1,000 for second and \$500 for third. Entry fee is \$50 per car, which includes the driver and one pit crew person; pit passes are \$30 a person. Car inspection begins at 3 p.m. Presale admission is \$10 for adults and \$6 for chil-

dren 12 and under; at-the-gate prices are \$2 more. Children under 6 get in free. The annual event is sponsored by the Whiskey Gulch Gang. For more information, call 541-575-0329 or email farrellhugh@yahoo.com.

SUNDAY, JULY 19

40th annual Ritter schools reunion

• Noon, Ritter Hot Springs
Former students, families and friends are welcome to the 40th annual reunion for Ritter, Range and Three-Mile schools. A potluck will be at noon, with coffee, lemonade, paper goods and silverware furnished. For more information, call Vivian Morris, 541-421-3868.

Program assists folks in the 'golden years'

Meals for all ages are served in three communities

By Cheryl Hoefler
Blue Mountain Eagle

Ah, the "golden years." A wonderful time of life.

But when those "golden years" turn out to be not as smooth and shiny as expected, the Grant County Seniors Program can be a caring and helpful friend.

Fixed incomes, limited physical and mental abilities, isolation, and the loss of family and friends, are all factors that can adversely affect people in the senior season. They are also among the many ways the senior program can provide assistance.

Overseeing those services is program manager Veanne Weddle. Weddle, who has led the program since 2011, takes on a multitude and variety of tasks. On any given day, she might be managing federal funds from nine programs, seeking out new services, presenting senior needs to the County Court or fielding phone calls with requests for energy or housing assistance.

If it can improve the lifestyle needs of seniors, Weddle, through the Grant County Senior Program, strives to achieve the goal.

A valuable component in the overall program are three senior centers in John Day, Prairie City and Monument. Aside from hiring cooks, Weddle isn't involved in the details of those operations. Locals in each town - both volunteers and paid staff - are in charge of the meals, facility rental and arranging for servers, sponsors and gift donors. Inquiries on any of those services should be made directly to one of the centers.

However, Weddle is often at the John Day meals, and pays regular visits to the other two, making announcements, arranging for speakers and helping serve meals.

Providing hot, fresh, nutritious and delicious lunches every week is just part of the senior meal program. The meals offer an opportunity for seniors to socialize with others and keep in touch with the community, which can be difficult to do, especially in a rural area.

"It's not just about the food - it's the camaraderie, too," said Weddle.

And weekly meals are NOT for seniors only. People of all ages are welcome to enjoy the family-style lunches. The centers are for everyone, too, and can be rented for a fee by local groups. A valuable asset to the community, they are often the local gathering place for a va-



From left, Billy Drinkwater, Jean Kline and Dorothy Blasing chat after lunch at the Strawberry Grange Hall in Prairie City.



Cook Lisa Pereira sets out the silverware prior to a meal at the John Day Senior Center.



The Eagle/Cheryl Hoefler Shay Lewis loads baked potatoes into the oven at the John Day Senior Center.

riety of functions: meetings, funeral potlucks, family reunions and other celebrations, community holiday dinners and more.

See the sidebar box for meal days/times, rental fees, contact information and more, for each of the centers.

The Grant County Senior Program was launched 40 years ago in John Day, in 1975. At that time, the group rented the Alec Gay Hall on Southwest Dayton Street in John Day, where they met for meals and other activities twice a week.

Two years later, the present John Day center on Northwest Dayton was built, opening for its first meal in July 1977.

According to Weddle, the program in John Day is funded through a trust established by Helen Bogart, and her late husband, Ken, which takes care of the day-to-day expenses, utilities and insurance.

Other funds for the meal program come from excess money the bingo board donates to the senior center board.

In the early years, the John Day facility was open from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. With pool and card tables, lounging areas, and hot coffee often ready, it served as a daily hang out and gathering spot.

Today it's open on a regular basis for senior meals two days a week, Mondays and Thursdays. The centers in Prairie City and Monument are open for

meals once a week. The Monument center was built in 1994, on the site of an old grange hall. Longtime resident Jack Caven-der donated adjacent property to add to the project.

The John Day cooking crew has added catering to their services. Meals can be arranged either at the John Day Senior Center or catered at another location. Anyone interested should call the John Day center for details.

Weddle also reminds people that the John Day center maintains a supply of durable medical goods available to loan out, such as canes, crutches, wheelchairs and more. There's no warranty, and borrowers use the items at their own risk. The service is free, though donations are accepted.

Caring for our seniors and disabled community members is something in which we can all be involved, she said.

Weddle encourages the community to be watchful and aware of anything unusual. Neighbors, delivery people and shop clerks can all be vital eyes and ears if they notice something out of character with a person they know, such as confusion and forgetfulness at the check-out line, mail accumulating at a house, or simply an unexpected or lengthy absence of an elderly friend.

Anyone who sees something out of the ordinary can give her a call.

Let's do lunch!

Not just for seniors, meals are served at noon at three senior center locations in Grant County.

Each meal is served by volunteers, with entrées sponsored by local individuals, businesses and organizations. Drawings are also held for prizes, such as free meals or gift certificates from area businesses. Birthdays are recognized monthly with a cake sponsored by local businesses.

Fresh or frozen meals can be delivered to the homebound. Call the day before or by 10 a.m. the day of the meal.

Meals are not served on major holidays.

For more information, contact the centers.

John Day
John Day Senior Center, 145 N.E. Dayton St.

Meals are served Mondays and Thursdays. The cost is \$5 for ages 13-59, \$4 for people over 60 and children ages 4-12, and \$3 for those under 3. Bingo starts at 1 p.m. after the Thursday meal.

Rental fees: Hall, \$60; kitchen, \$40; both, \$90; card room, \$15. No fee for funeral potlucks.

Extensive free library of books, puzzles and other materials, organized and managed by Linda Stoltz.

Other features include a game room, large screen TV and an electric bingo board.

Call 541-575-1825.

Monument
Monument Senior Center,



Contributed photo

The Monument Senior Center, in addition to being the site of the town's Tuesday senior meals, is often the community's gathering spot for meetings, family gatherings and other major functions.

269 Main St.

Meals are served on Tuesdays. The cost is \$4 for seniors and \$4.50 for other adults. Children's cost is based on age. "Mexican train" card games are played afterward and cribbage, for those interested. The last Saturday of the month is potluck bingo night at 7 p.m.

For meal information or facility rental questions, call 541-934-2700 on Tuesday mornings, or 541-934-2056 at other times.

Prairie City
Strawberry Grange, 204 N. McHaley Ave.

Meals are served on Wednesdays.

A well-stocked library is free to all.

For senior meal information, call 541-820-4100. For hall rental questions, call 541-820-3701 or 541-820-3530.



Contributed photo

Not for seniors only - community members of all ages are welcome to the weekly, fresh meals. Bob and Soo Yukawa's children keep busy while waiting for lunch to be served in Monument.

While exhausting, and seemingly endless in need, Weddle finds her job quite rewarding.

"People are appreciative and grateful," she said. "And ready to help, if you just ask them."

Grant County Senior Program hours are 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

For assistance or questions, call 541-575-2949.

ELTRUM HISTORIC THEATER
1809 First Street • Baker City • (541) 523-5439
BARGAIN MATINEE IN (1) Adults \$7 ALL FILMS \$4 ON TUESDAY
MOVIE SCHEDULE JULY 10 - 16

MINIONS PG
Minions Stuart, Kevin and Bob are recruited by a super-villain who hatches a plot to take over the world.
FRI - THURS (4:20) 7:20 9:35

TERMINATOR GENISYS PG-13
John Connor sends Kyle Reese back in time to protect Sarah Connor, but when he arrives in 1984, nothing is as he expected it to be.
FRI - THURS (4:00) 7:00 9:40

MAGIC MIKE XXL R
Three years after Mike bowed out of the stripper life, he and the remaining Kings of Tampa hit the road to Myrtle Beach to put on one last performance.
FRI - THURS (4:10) 7:10 9:45
() = Bargain Matinee
\$9 Adult, \$7 Senior (60+), Youth

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.

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debbie.ausmus@countryfinancial.com
COUNTRY FINANCIAL

26th Annual DEMOLITION DERBY
Sponsored by Whiskey Gulch Gang

PRESALE
\$10 - Adults
\$6 - 12 - Under
FREE Under 6
\$2 MORE AT GATE
Available at Ace, True Value & Les Schwab

Saturday, July 18, 2015
Grant County Fairgrounds - John Day, OR

Car Inspection begins at 3 pm
DERBY BEGINS at 7 pm
DERBY ENTRY FEE - \$50/car, driver & 1 pit crew
PIT PASS - \$30/per person
Trophies Plus - \$250/each heat • Texas Barrel Race - JACKPOT
Trophy for Best Looking Car
Most Aggressive Driver - \$250.00
Donated by True Value Hardware
Door Prize - Awarded at Heat Drawing
Donated by Ace Hardware

1st \$1,500
2nd \$1,000
3rd \$500

For further information & rules please call Hugh Farrell 541.575.0329 or email farrellhugh@yahoo.com | www.grantcountyfairgrounds.com

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