

# FIRE

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"The community cares about the community, and that's the bottom line," she said. "It's a beautiful community."

## Lost everything

Ron White said he was working, and unaware of the situation, the day the fire went out of control.

He was living at a friend's house at Cougar Crossing in the canyon.

After delivering packages in Dayville for the company he works for, he headed home for the day.

"I was told that the Berry Creek Fire was under control and wasn't concerned about it," he said. "I came around the corner from work outside Dayville, and that's when I saw it (the big plume of smoke)."

He said he was stopped at a road closure in Canyon City near the Golden Dragon Restaurant.

"All I got was what I had in my work truck," he said, adding that he lost guns and other belongings in the fire.

He said that his company is taking good care of him for the time being.

Malheur National Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin said some of the firefighters, their friends and neighbors also lost homes.

"That hits home, and that's difficult," he said. "Our folks are doing everything they can to get that mountain under control."

## Can't do it alone

He added, "We can't do it alone, we need the help of everyone. Grant County is a resilient county and will come out



Visiting after the community fire meeting are volunteer firefighter Carl Metler, left, Canyon City property owner James Dunn, John Day Fire Chief Ron Smith and volunteer firefighter Ronda Metler.

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

the other side — they always do."

Fire behavior analyst Tobin Kelley said temperatures in the area would be hotter this week, but lighter wind speeds would keep the fire behavior quieter.

"We might see an increase in fires being established at a bottom of a drainage or the bottom of a slope ... but without the really strong wind, it's not going to want to push it," he said.

Jeff Surber, operations section chief, said there are engines, hand crews, air tankers, helicopters and two Type 1 hot-shot crews at work.

"They're building a line and making sure that gets secure up there," he said.

He said crews are working at Whiskey Gulch and Pine Creek to create a buffer between houses and the fire coming down the hill.

## Protecting structures

Red Team Incident Commander Jim Walker, who is the Oregon State Fire Marshal, said his team has structural respon-

sibility for the fire.

"In my opinion one structure lost is one too many, but they did a great job of protecting a large number of structures that day (Aug. 14)," he said.

Over 40 engines with career firefighters from throughout the state have arrived from areas including Hood River, Portland, Toledo, Bend and elsewhere.

"Those are communities that see your community as important," he said.

"They're here and will be here as long as they're needed to do the best job that we can possibly do in protecting the infrastructure of your community as well as your homes," he said.

Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer described the Canyon Creek area as "an apocalypse."

He said, "It actually looks like a nuclear bomb went off up in this canyon."

When the roads open up — which wasn't expected for a few more days — Palmer said he would like people to be respectful of private property, for drivers to be safety-minded and for caution to be used with fire.

## Perfect storm

John Day Fire Chief Ron Smith related the Aug. 14 event to the movie "The Perfect Storm" where a small fishing boat faces a 100-foot wave.

The wind event that came down through the canyon "created a perfect storm, and the fire won this one," he said.

He said the Berry Creek and Mason Springs fires — which became the Canyon Creek Complex — were understaffed from the beginning for the amount of terrain involved.

Ten local volunteer firefighters were fighting the fire along with U.S. Forest Service crews, which were also limited due to other fires.

"These folks stayed as long as they possibly could, trying to protect exposures until it got so unbearable, then for the sake of safety they were told to back out, come back down," he said.

"There is nothing here that we have that you can put in a suitcase or watch in your front



Courtesy of inciweb.nwcg.gov

A crew works along a road on the west side of the Canyon Creek Complex fire near Canyon City, Aug. 18.

room that is worth a firefighter's life," he added.

## Wind picks up

Had the circumstances happened on any other day, things may have gone differently, he said.

"The Berry Creek Fire was pretty much close to being a done deal — contained," he said.

The Mason Springs was acting up Thursday night, but later calmed a little, he said.

"It looked like we had a pretty good handle on it, and then the inversion came through, the cold front," he said. "We had a big wind, and that's what sort of blew everything up and sent it down the canyon."

"Think about trying to run 40 or 50 miles an hour — you can't keep ahead of a fire like that," he said. "We had brands, the hot spots that the fire picks up and blows, they were dropping those things anywhere from a half-mile to a mile ahead of the fire, so, with limited resources, you do what you can do, and that's all that you can do."

## Be a volunteer

He welcomed residents to consider signing up to be a volunteer firefighter for any of the city fire departments in Grant County.

"These firefighters went way above and beyond, and it just didn't turn out good," he said.

The meeting closed with a

question-and-answer session.

There were queries about when roads would be open and about power to the county.

One man asked about the fire lines.

An official said there are miles and miles of fire line and still not enough people to watch them.

He said planes fly overhead and people call in what they see.

Another person asked if there is any containment of the fire.

An official said the fire is only 5 to 10 percent contained because of natural barriers and added containment would mean they don't have to constantly watch the fire. He said once it's pulled in 100 feet, then it's somewhat contained, and this will happen as more crews fight the fire.

Steve Dunn had a suggestion for the audience.

"I grew up here, I love this county," he said. "Your forest supervisor said it best — he said they can't do it alone."

He said the community could come together to volunteer with the fire chief.

"Here's my suggestion so that it doesn't happen again: Get together, create a volunteer wildland fire team under the direction of the chief, and you want to work in partnership with these people," he said. "Thank them — they've done a great job — but do it. These are your forests, you live here, you protect them."

# Church Services In Grant County

**GRACE CHAPEL**  
Evangelical Methodist  
154 E. Williams St.,  
Prairie City • 541-820-4437  
gracechpl@ortelco.net  
Pastor Michael Harvey  
Early Worship ..... 8:45 a.m.  
Sunday School ..... 9:45 a.m.  
Worship ..... 11 a.m.  
Evening Worship ..... 6:30 p.m.  
WEDNESDAY  
Prayer ..... 8 a.m.  
THURSDAY  
Bible Study ..... 6:30 p.m.

**Seventh-Day Adventist Church**  
SATURDAY SERVICES  
JOHN DAY  
110 Valley View Dr. - 541-575-1216  
Head Elder.....541-575-2914  
Bible Classes (all ages).....9:30 am  
Worship.....11 am  
LONG CREEK  
E. Main Street - 541-421-3033  
Head Elder.....421-3468  
Bible Classes (all ages).....2 pm  
Worship.....3 pm  
Tune into  
3 ANGELS BROADCASTING  
KSPL 98.1 FM  
Blue Mountain Cable, Channel 2  
Antenna; Digital Channel 15  
& UHF Channel 8

**Cornerstone Christian Fellowship**  
139 N.E. DAYTON STREET, JOHN DAY  
541-575-2180  
Sunday Bible School (for all ages)...8:45 am  
Sunday Worship Service.....10 am  
Pastor Levi Manitsas  
cornerstonejohnday@gmail.com

**John Day Valley Mennonite Church**  
Meeting every Sunday  
at Mt. Vernon Grange Hall  
Sunday School.....9:30 a.m.  
Sunday Morning Worship...10:50 a.m.  
Pastor Leland Smucker  
Everyone Welcome • 541-575-5507

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church**  
Morning Prayer.....10 am  
(1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays)  
Eucharist & Sunday School.....10 am  
(2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays)  
139 S. Washington, Canyon City  
541-620-1436

**JOHN DAY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
541-575-1326  
JOHN DAY, 126 NW Canton  
Sunday Worship 9 am

**MT. VERNON PRESBYTERIAN Community Church**  
SUNDAY SERVICE.....9 am  
SUNDAY SCHOOL.....9 am  
541-932-4800  
EVERYONE WELCOME

**Prairie Baptist Church**  
238 N. McHaley St.  
Prairie City  
Pastor David Hoeffner  
541-820-3696  
www.prairie-baptist-church.com  
Sunday School for all ages ..... 9:00 am  
Sunday morning worship ..... 10:30 am  
Awana (Oct.-Apr.) ..... 3:00 pm  
Youth Group ..... 5:30 pm

**VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH**  
KJV Independent  
Fundamental • Premillennial  
Terence K. Crabb, Pastor  
A Bible-believing Church  
"He that hath the Son hath life ..." 1 John 5:12  
Sunday School 9:45 am • Sunday Preaching 11:00 am  
Junior Church 11:00 am • Sunday Evenings 3:30 pm  
Wednesday Bible Study & Master Club 7:00 pm  
Saturday Men's Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm  
108 S. Washington Street, Canyon City  
541-575-2688 or 541-575-0844

**New Life Bible Church**  
Corinthians 5:17  
Every Sunday in the L.C.  
Community Center  
(Corner of Second & Allen)  
Begins at 4:10pm  
Contact Pastor Ed Studtmann at  
541-421-3888

**St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church**  
Corner of S Canyon Blvd and SW 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Mon. - Fri. Mass - 12:05 pm  
Saturday Mass - 5:00 pm  
Sunday Mass - 9:00 am

Confession: Saturday 3:30-4:30 pm  
Anytime by appointment 541-575-1459  
**St. Anne**  
Monument - Sunday at 12:30 pm  
**St. Katherine**  
Dale  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 2:30 pm  
**Office Hours**  
Monday - Friday 9 am - 12 Noon

**Living Word Christian Center**  
Hwy 26 Mt. Vernon  
Celebration of Worship  
Sunday 5:30pm  
Kids Classes 0-6th grade  
Youth Connection  
Thursdays - resuming in Oct  
Kids K-6th Grade  
YOUTH GROUPS  
Fridays - resuming in Oct  
Jr Hi 7th-8th & Sr Hi 9th-12th  
PASTOR SHARON MILLER  
541-932-4910  
www.livingwordcc.com

**CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**  
Sunday School.....9:30 am  
Sunday Worship Service.....10:45 am  
Sunday Evening Service.....6:00 pm  
Children & Teen Activities  
SMALL GROUPS CALL FOR MORE INFO  
Weekdays: Sonshine Christian School  
Pastor Ron Roberson  
Associate Pastor Brad Williamson  
521 E. Main • John Day • 541-575-1895  
www.johndaynazarene.com

**Historic Remnant Church**  
Preparing for Jesus to come  
Meets Saturday at Mt. Vernon Grange  
Sabbath School.....9:30 am  
Church Services.....11:00 am  
541-620-0340

**Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
Come Worship with us at  
627 SE Hillcrest, John Day  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Worship  
& Communion .....4:30 pm  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Worship .....10 am  
Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....6 pm  
For information: 541-575-2348

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Sunday School.....10 am  
Church.....11 am  
Afternoon Service.....1 pm  
No Mid-week Services  
Pastor Ray Isenberger  
300 W. Main, John Day  
541-575-1355

**Strawberry Mountain CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**  
Calvary Chapel Outreach Fellowship  
Sunday Services .....10 am  
Seneca Outreach.....2 pm  
Midweek Services also available  
170 SE Dayton, John Day  
2nd & Ave. D, Seneca  
541-575-2006

**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
Sunday School.....9:45 am  
Sunday Worship.....11 am  
Sunday Evening Bible talk.....6:30 pm  
Saturday Men's Study.....7 pm  
Full Gospel- Come Grow With Us  
541-575-1202 Church  
311 NE Dayton St, John Day  
Pastor Al Altnow  
www.fccjohnday.com