

The role of the veteran service officer

By Erin Osgood

For the Blue Mountain Eagle

Did you serve during World War II or the Korean War and suffer an injury? You may have been treated at the time, but many years later, health-related problems can surface.

In Vietnam, you could have been exposed to Agent Orange and are now suffering from prostate cancer, or possibly diabetes mellitus type II. Or, you are a returning Iraq or Afghanistan veteran who suffered a traumatic brain injury in a roadside bombing, or maybe a returning veteran who, fortunately, did not endure any trauma, but needs direction in obtaining educational benefits under the GI bill.

Is there any help available to you through the Veterans Administration?

Where do you begin to seek assistance and obtain guidance in pursuing benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs?

The answer: Your local County Veterans Service Office.

If you haven't met with your county veterans service officer, the first step is to call Erin Osgood, your local officer, at 541-575-1631 for an appointment, and bring in your military discharge (DD214 or Report of Military Separation) as this document is required in order to receive VA benefits. If you have lost or misplaced it, Osgood can assist you with obtaining a new discharge record from the Na-



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tional Personnel Records Center.

Under Oregon state law, every county is required to have a County Veterans Service Office. In Oregon's larger counties, the agency consists of a service officer and support staff. In smaller counties, such as Grant County, you may find just one or two people to assist you. The veterans service officer has a compassionate understanding of the problems which confront veterans, widows and dependent children. Through meetings and annual training, your veterans service officer is aware of laws passed by the U.S. Congress in the interests of veterans and their dependents, and they are familiar with the rules and regulations adopted by the Department of Veterans Affairs to clarify and implement those laws. Your

veterans service officer is well-versed in state laws as well, from veterans' real property tax exemptions to the Oregon state parks pass.

County veterans service officers act as a liaison between veterans and their families, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Service officers assist veterans in filing service-connected disability claims with the VA. They also assist veterans in obtaining benefits relative to vocational rehabilitation, VA home loans, education, burial benefits and non-service connected pension benefits.

Are you a veteran of a wartime period, or the widow of a veteran of a wartime period about to enter a nursing home? Osgood may be able to assist you in obtaining a non-service connected pension from

the Department of Veterans Affairs. Basically, she can take care of veterans' needs from their date of discharge until their date of death, and in many instances, she provides assistance to eligible dependents long after the veteran passes.

Your veterans service officer can also assist you in obtaining VA Healthcare. Whether you are a military retiree or the spouse of a military retiree, a family member of an active duty reservist, a widow of a veteran who died of a service-connected disability or a dependent of a veteran who was 100 percent service-connected at the time of his or her death, medical benefits may be available to you, and your service officer will assist you in filling out the paperwork.

Finally, the ultimate job of a veterans service officer

is to simplify what can be a very complex undertaking; that of obtaining eligible benefits from the Veterans Administration. As a veteran, you served your country honorably, and your local veterans service officer wants to say "thank you" by ensuring you obtain all of the benefits to which you or your family members are entitled.

The Grant County Veterans Service Office is located in the southwest corner of the County Courthouse in Canyon City. Office hours are from 10 a.m.-4p.m. Monday and Wednesday, with appointments available at other times.

If the flag's flying, Osgood is there to assist you.

Serving those who served,

Erin Osgood is the Grant County Veterans Service Officer



Contributed photo

Grant County high-school students meet with Dr. Jane Goodall, center, Oct. 15 in Portland. From left, Sophia Pettit, Monument; Kade Blood, Grant Union (back); Aubrey Werner, Monument; Cody Baker, Long Creek; Ryan Cook, Monument; Goodall; Tyler Blood, Grant Union; Jayne Davis, Long Creek; and Curtis Perry, Long Creek.

Local youth meet with Jane Goodall

Blue Mountain Eagle

PORTLAND – Several local high schoolers had the rare opportunity to meet Dr. Jane Goodall at an Oct. 15 Oregon Youth Summit hosted by David Douglas High School in Portland.

Cody Baker, Jayne Davis and Curtis Perry from Long Creek; Ryan Cook, Sophia Pettit and Aubrey Werner from Monument; and Kade and Tyler Blood from Grant Union, were among hundreds of youth from throughout Oregon who presented field studies projects at the Summit.

The Grant County students – the only participants from Eastern Oregon – shared a Grant County-themed presentation on restoration with statewide representatives and Goodall. Tyler Blood introduced the project to Goodall and Sophia Pettit offered an explanation on how important rivers are to people in Eastern Oregon.

Goodall, British anthropologist and primatologist, is widely considered to be the world's foremost expert on chimpanzees. She is the founder of the Jane Goodall Institute and the nonprofit Roots & Shoots program that encourages young people to take on projects that can help local communities, landscapes and wildlife.

Gail Beverlin, education coordinator for the North Fork John Day Watershed Council in Long Creek, organized the opportunity for the Grant County students. The Watershed Council will now be a local member of Roots & Shoots, and continue working with local youth who are enthusiastic about improving their world.

Monument School science teacher Darren Dailey, Tracy Blood and Linda Watson chaperoned the three-day trip.

Elaine Eisenbraun, executive director of the Wa-

tershed Council, knew attending the Summit was a golden opportunity for local students.

"When a long-time contact from the Diack Foundation called and asked if we could bring some students to meet Goodall, I knew without hesitation that Grant County would participate," Eisenbraun said.

"I think these students have a very special memory to carry through life," she said.

The eight students attending the Summit had to earn the opportunity by working at a restoration site on the Middle Fork John Day River and documenting their work for the presentation. Several had worked with the Watershed Council through the summer on restoration activities. Each was required to attend three Friday sessions working in the field, learning from resource specialists and

preparing for the presentation.

Field work was done on private lands under the leadership of the Watershed Council, along with David Evans and Allan Gillette of the Warm Springs Tribes, Jerry Ebeltoft of the Nature Conservancy, and Mark Croghan of the Bureau of Reclamation. The work included creating river habitat and complexity by weaving woody debris into new wood structures, and in the fall, preventing silt from entering the river by spreading grass seed and mulch.

Both Beverlin and Eisenbraun expressed gratitude for those who assisted in the educational opportunity, and noted the value of the experience for the students.

According to Beverlin, the Watershed Council's efforts offer a "fresh, hands-on component to the experience of young people, exposing them

to processes, actions and the many efforts that make Grant County tick."

"Our Watershed Council runs a very special youth program dedicated to helping kids kindle a personal, lifelong spark of enthusiasm for the outdoors," Eisenbraun added.

New wheels for veterans

State Elks Assoc. donates vans for Grant, Harney counties

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY – Veterans in Grant and Harney counties who need to get to medical appointments can ride in style thanks to two new vans donated by the Oregon State Elks Association.

According to Bob Van Voorhis, who heads up the local van program, the vans were donated to Veterans Affairs to provide transportation for veterans enrolled in the VA Health Care System and the Boise VA Medical Center, which includes all clinics and contract medical facilities in the Boise VAMC system.

Two Elks officials who were behind making the new vans a reality were Elks Association SE District Trustee Gary Miller from John Day Elks Lodge 1824 and Boise VAMC/Oregon Elks Coordina-

tor Ron Estep from Burns Lodge 1680. Both Miller and Estep are also van drivers in their respective areas.

More volunteer drivers are needed to help provide the service. For ride reservations or information on becoming a driver, call Jim Jerome at 541-620-4486.

Van Voorhis said they also coordinate with The People Mover transportation service in John Day to offer free, wheelchair accessible rides for veterans to the VAMC in Walla Walla, Wash., and the Bend VA clinic.

To schedule rides on The People Mover, call 541-575-2370.

For more information about the services, call Van Voorhis at 206-399-7291 or leave a message for him at the John Day Elks Lodge, 541-575-1824.

BREAKING NEWS ALERTS
myeaglenews.com/breakingnews

If You Bought a TV, Monitor, or Notebook Computer That Contained an LCD Flat Panel Screen, During the Years 2002 to 2006, You May be Entitled to Benefits from a Settlement.

Please read this notice carefully as your legal rights are affected whether you act or do not act.

PARA UNA NOTIFICACION EN ESPANOL, LLAMAR O VISITAR NUESTRO WEBSITE.

The Oregon Attorney General filed a lawsuit against certain manufacturers of liquid crystal display ("LCD") flat panels. The lawsuit alleges that LCD manufacturers illegally agreed upon the pricing of LCD-flat panels. The Attorney General filed this action in her law enforcement capacity and on behalf of the State of Oregon, Oregon natural persons, and all political subdivisions in Oregon and sought equitable relief, restitution, civil penalties and injunctive relief.

Oregon has settled with all defendants for a total of \$21,505,000 ("Settlement Fund"). The State of Oregon, political subdivisions and Oregon natural persons may be entitled to a portion of the Settlement Fund. "Political subdivisions" includes all Oregon counties, cities, municipalities, public universities, school districts, special districts, and all other local government entities. "Oregon natural persons" means a human, not a business.

Who Is Included?

The State of Oregon and all Oregon political subdivisions or natural persons who indirectly purchased at any time during the years 2002 to 2006, for their own use and not for resale, LCD panels incorporated in flat panel TVs, monitors or notebook computers. An indirect purchaser is someone that purchased products containing LCD flat panels from someone other than the company that manufactured the flat panel component, such as from an electronics retailer or a device manufacturer other than one of the Defendants.

What Are My Rights And Options?

Exclude yourself: Oregon political subdivisions and Oregon natural persons have the right to exclude themselves from this action. The State of Oregon cannot be excluded. If you opt out, you will not be legally bound by this settlement, but you will not get any money or other benefits from this settlement. You will retain any rights you currently have, if any. Please note that under Oregon law, authority to bring antitrust actions for indirect purchaser claims, like this action, was limited to actions by the Attorney General until January 1, 2010.

To opt-out, complete the opt-out registration online at www.OregonScreenSettlement.com or send a written letter stating that you want to be excluded from the case: *State of Oregon, ex rel Ellen F. Rosenblum v. AU Optonics Corp. et al.*, case no.

CV 10-933 MO. The letter must include the case name, your name, address, telephone number, and signature. A letter on behalf of a political subdivision must include the entity's name, and the name, title, and signature of the person authorized to sign on behalf of the entity. The letter must be **postmarked on or before January 15, 2016**, and mailed to: Oregon LCD Settlement, c/o GCG, P.O. Box 10240, Dublin, Ohio 43017-5740.

File a claim: Only Oregon natural persons need to file a claim to obtain benefits in this settlement. Claims can be completed online or by mailing the claim form, available for download at www.OregonScreenSettlement.com, to the Settlement Administrator. A deadline for filing claims has not yet been established. The State of Oregon and political subdivisions that are owed money under the distribution plan will be contacted and sent payment without any further action on their part.

Do nothing: If you or the political subdivision you represent do nothing, you will continue to be represented by the Oregon Attorney General. You will be bound by the terms of this settlement, and will release Defendants and related entities from any claims you may have relating to the allegations in this lawsuit. Oregon natural persons that do not file a claim will not be entitled to any benefits in this matter and will be bound by the terms of the settlement.

Who Represents Me?

The Attorney General of Oregon represents the State, Oregon political subdivisions, and Oregon natural persons. You do not have to pay the Attorney General. The Attorney General will request the Court approve attorney fees in an amount not to exceed 20% of the total Settlement Fund, plus costs and expenses. Additional costs to administer the Settlements will also come out of the Settlement Fund. If you want to be represented by your own lawyer, and have that lawyer appear in Court for you, you must exclude yourself and hire an attorney at your own expense.

How Do I Get More Information?

This Notice summarizes the lawsuits and the Settlements. You can get more information about the lawsuits and Settlements, the claims process or obtain a claim form at www.OregonScreenSettlement.com, by calling 1-877-940-7791, or writing to: Oregon LCD Settlement, c/o GCG, P.O. Box 10240, Dublin, Ohio 43017-5740.

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