

Aircraft fascination leads to Army service

By Cheryl Hoefler
Blue Mountain Eagle

A broken neck cut short George Hiller's plans to pursue a career in the Army, but it didn't dampen his interest in aircraft nor his desire to give back to other veterans.

Hiller said ever since he was a young boy, he was fascinated with planes in general, especially military aircraft.

He said he used to fly with his grandfather, who was a private pilot, back and forth from the Chicago area, where Hiller grew up, to a family summer home in the Gunnison, Colo. area.

He was a freshman in high school when the 9/11 terrorist attacks happened, and that "solidified" his decision to go into the military.

From Feb. 2007 to May 2014, he served in the U.S. Army as a specialist E-4. He worked doing aircraft pneudraulics systems repair, and was a door gunner on CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

Hiller's service took him to South Korea; Ft. Bragg, North Carolina; Afghanistan; and Wheeler Army Airfield in Hawaii.

During his service in Afghanistan, from 2009-2010, he received an Air Medal with "V" Device, a combat action badge, an Army Commendation Medal and other certificates and achievements for volunteer work.



George Hiller

It was while Hiller was in Hawaii that he broke his neck and received a medical discharge.

"I did everything I could to try to stay in," he said, but just couldn't keep up with his assignments and duties.

Despite the injury which cut short his military career plans, Hiller said, "I enjoyed 99 percent of my experience and wouldn't change any of it for anything."

Hiller said he definitely recommends the military to others.

Upon his discharge, Hiller, who had a good friend in Grant County, moved here for a couple of months while weighing options.

He enjoyed his time in Grant County and plans to return here to vacation and hunt. But his determination to continue working

with aircraft compelled him to move to Michigan where the job market is stronger in that field. He plans to head to college to pursue his airframe and powerplant license to become a certified aircraft mechanic.

Hiller will also be closer to family there and will take care of his ailing grandfather who helped give wings to his interest in aircraft.

The move also offers him the opportunity to volunteer for the Honor Flight Network – a program which helps provide flights for veterans to visit memorials in Washington, D.C. – which has a station in Kalamazoo, Mich.

"Giving back my military service allows me to help other veterans," Hiller said.

"My life's not about me – it's about helping others."



American Legion and VFW meetings

American Legion
• **Ellis Tracy Post 77**
Commander and Adjutant Art Pereira
Meets at 7 p.m. the third Thursday of the month
Alec Gay Hall
176 S.E. Dayton St.
John Day, OR 97845
541-575-1841

tant Earl Pettit
P.O. Box 395
Monument, OR 97864

• **Alexander Harper Dayville Post 115**
Currently inactive; no commander

• **Prairie City Post 106**
Commander Ed Negus
Adjutant Tom McAuslan
P.O. Box 540
Prairie City, OR 97869

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3597
Commander Gregg Starr
Meets at 7 p.m. the third Wednesday of the month
240 S. Canyon Blvd.,
John Day
541-932-4113

• **Monument Post 148**
Commander and Adjutant

VFW, Legion serve vets and the community

Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County is home to several groups dedicated to serving both local veterans and communities.

Three towns have active American Legion posts – John Day, Prairie City and Monument. Dayville's post is currently listed as inactive, and in need of a commander.

The local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3597 is headquartered in John Day.

Any honorably discharged veteran or person currently serving in one of the five United States military branches – Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force – may join the American Legion.

VFW membership is for active or honorably discharged officers or enlisted people who meet one of the following requirements: served 30 consecutive or 60 nonconsecutive days in Korea, received hostile fire or imminent danger pay, or been awarded a military campaign medal for overseas service.

Veterans may belong to both organizations.

Both groups hold flag ceremonies and remembrances on Memorial Day, Veterans Day and other special patriotic occasions.

The American Legion Auxiliary is a patriotic service organization for spouses and family members of military personnel. Traditionally, in years past, the group was comprised of mostly wives. However, with an increasing number of women serving in the military today, husbands and other male family members are welcome into Auxiliary membership.

In addition to serving the needs of veterans, involvement in local schools and communities is also a key component to the groups.

Jim Jerome, the District 10 adjutant for the American Legion and VFW Post 3597 quartermaster, said, "The big thing for any veterans organization is involvement with the citizens of the community."

The Legion and Auxiliary head up youth leadership and citizen programs, Girls and Boys State, and both the Legion

and VFW sponsor youth essay competitions – Americanism Essay for the Legion, and Patriot's Pen for the VFW.

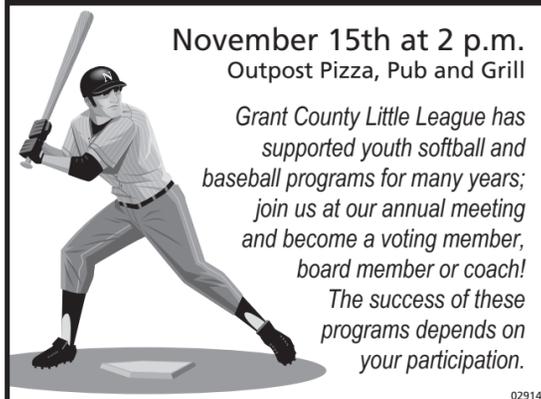
The Auxiliary also runs the annual Memorial Day poppy program which raises community awareness and by-donation funds to help hospitalized veterans.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the American Legion, Legion Auxiliary

or the VFW, or participating in any of the groups' service activities, is encouraged to contact their local representative.

To learn more, visit:
• American Legion, Oregon, <http://www.orlegion.org/>
• American Legion Auxiliary, Oregon, <http://www.alaoregon.org/>
• Veterans of Foreign Wars, Oregon, <http://www.vfworegon.org/>

Grant County Little League 2016 Annual Board Meeting and Officer Elections



November 15th at 2 p.m.
Outpost Pizza, Pub and Grill

Grant County Little League has supported youth softball and baseball programs for many years; join us at our annual meeting and become a voting member, board member or coach!
The success of these programs depends on your participation.

02914

Notice Grant County Taxpayers

The first installment of the 2015-2016 property tax is due Monday, November 16, 2015 by 5 p.m.

Payments may be made at the Tax Collector's office in the Grant County Courthouse in Canyon City or the payment may be mailed and postmarked no later than November 16, 2015. Please remember that delinquent taxes accrue interest at the rate of 16% per year.

If you have any questions, please call the Tax Office at 541-575-0189 or the Tax Assessor's direct line at 541-575-0107.

PO Box 185
Canyon City, OR 97820

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