

# Sagaser is granted new lawyer

## Status hearing is scheduled for Dec. 23

Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY — A Mt. Vernon man who previously pleaded guilty to six domestic violence- and drug-related charges was allowed a new court-appointed defense attorney to help represent him in court.

Matthew Eric Sagaser, 31, is also requesting permission to negate the guilty pleas.

Sagaser, court-appointed attorney Robert Raschio, and Grant County Judge William D. Cramer, Jr. met at the county's circuit courtroom Monday, where Cramer granted Sagaser permission to replace Raschio.



Matthew Eric Sagaser

Grant County Deputy District Attorney Matt Ipson is prosecuting the case.

Sagaser, who is being held at the Grant County Jail, will be represented by court-appointed attorney Ted Martin of Nyssa.

A status hearing is set for Dec. 23 where Judge Cramer will consider Sagaser's request to drop the guilty pleas.

Sagaser previously pleaded guilty on Nov. 5 to:

- One count of coercion.
- Three counts of

fourth-degree assault.

- One count of strangulation.
- One count of possession of methamphetamine.

Sagaser, who was arrested in early October, was initially indicted on 29 counts of domestic violence, including second-degree kidnapping, five counts of coercion, nine counts of fourth-degree assault, strangulation, four counts of menacing and nine counts of recklessly endangering another person.

The Grant County Sheriff's Office and John Day Police Department investigated the case.

The alleged abuse of the victim, a woman, took place

in several locations within the county.

In the original indictment, Sagaser is alleged to have kidnapped the woman by secretly confining her in a place where she was not likely to be found. He reportedly committed coercion by threatening the woman to not leave an area, not tell hospital staff about the nature of her injuries and not tell a third-party about the cause of her injuries.

The woman was injured by Sagaser allegedly strangling her, striking her head against concrete, head-butting, kicking and elbowing her and shooting at her with a CO2 "airsoft" gun from within five feet, according to the indictment.

# CASA

Continued from Page A1

abused and neglected children, to make sure they don't get lost in the legal and social service system, and stay with each case until the child is placed in a safe, permanent home.

"With the help of a CASA, children get through the trauma of the foster care system safely, quickly and effectively," Blood said.

She shared these points:

- Children in the court system can move from foster home to foster home an average of 6.6 times, but with the help of a CASA, experience less trauma by reducing that number to an average of 3.9 moves.
- A child is twice as likely to receive the counseling needed to treat serious issues due to abuse and neglect with a CASA advocating on their behalf.
- Children spend an average of 23 months in the foster

care system. With a CASA advocate overseeing the process, the time can be reduced to an average of 15 months.

• Oregon tax payers spent \$26,000 per child per year in foster care. With the help of a CASA, the child moves quickly through the system reducing the tax payers' cost to \$17,333 a year.

• Cases with a CASA are more likely to be permanently closed by finding a safe and permanent home so children do not re-enter the system.

Blood said the CASA volunteers are eager to make a positive difference in the lives of local children in foster care.

"I feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work with these dedicated volunteers in supporting young people in our community," Blood said. "As I've become acquainted with these individuals ... I've come to realize just how exceptional the advocates and volunteers of Grant County truly are."

For more information, call Grant County CASA at 541-575-5574.

# County court gets a new secretary

By Carl Sampson  
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY — Laurie Wright has known Grant County Commissioner Chris Labhart since she was a student at Grant Union Junior-Senior High School.

She took his U.S. history and economics classes.

Now Wright is again taking notes from Labhart — and County Judge Scott Myers and Commissioner Boyd Britton.

She is the county court's new secretary, taking over for Mary Ferrioli, who retired after 18 years.

"It's actually been really nice," she said as she prepared for the Nov. 18 court meeting. "I enjoy all of the people I work with."

Wright was a paralegal and secretary for John Day lawyer Dan Cronin for seven years. Before that, she worked for the prosecuting attorney in Valley County, Idaho, she said.

She lives near John Day with her daughter, Makenna Adair, who is a junior at Grant Union Junior-Senior High School. Her other daughter, Kyra Adair, lives in Boise.

Her first day at the courthouse was Oct. 26.



Carl Sampson/The Eagle

Laurie Wright is the new Grant County Court secretary. She took over the job Oct. 26.

# COPS & COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

### Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 125 calls during the week of Nov. 23-29. Along with the various traffic warnings, trespassing, injured animals, noise complaints and juvenile complaints, these calls included:

- **John Day Police:** Nov. 25: Arrested a John Day man for assault.
- **Grant County Sheriff:** Nov. 24: Responded to a report of a person lost in the Smith Creek area; report of vehicle racing on Ingle Street; report of a rollover accident near the Grant-Harney county line.
- **Nov. 28:** An Albany man was arrested in Linn County on Linn and Grant county warrants.
- **U.S. Forest Service:** Nov. 28: Report of people trespassing and cutting gates in the 12-180 Forest Road area.
- **John Day ambulance:** Nov. 23: Paged for an 83-year-old man in Prairie City.
- **Nov. 25:** Responded for a 76-year-old man; responded

to a vehicle accident east of Mt. Vernon.

Nov. 26: Responded for a 40-year-old man with possible asthma attack; responded for an unresponsive 24-year-old man.

• **John Day Fire Department:**

Nov. 26: Responded for a structure fire in Riverside Mobile Home Park.

### Justice Court

CANYON CITY — The Grant County Justice Court reported the following fines and judgments:

- Use of cellphone while driving: Robert James Bryant Jr., 18, Prairie City, fined \$135.
- Driving while suspended-violation: Deanna Lynette

Griffin, 44, Hines, fined \$435.

• Failure to change name/address on license or permit: Deanna Lynette Griffin, 44, Hines, fined \$110.

• Driving uninsured: Deanna Lynette Griffin, 44, Hines, fined \$260.

• Exceeding maximum weight limit: Roger L.

McKinley, 75, Prairie City, fined \$75.

• Hunting in a prohibited area outside of unit boundaries: Wade F. Keith, 23, Prairie City, fined \$110.

• Violation of the basic rule: Stephen Casey O'Connor, 53, Tigard, 79/55 zone, fined \$260.

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