

ON TO STATE

Three area teams head to playoffs
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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2016 • No. 8 • 20 PAGES • \$1.00

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Managing retirement

Peggy Gray plans to travel, visit family, take walks, sleep in

By Cheryl Hoefler
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The next item on the agenda for Peggy Gray is ...

Retirement. Gray, who has been the John Day city manager since 2001, will retire July 1. She said her time with the City has been "great ... and a real education."



"My job has been to make the council look good," she said, adding she hopes she accomplished a few good things along the way.

Gray said the thing she will miss most is the people. "I love working with the employees, especially when we get projects done," Gray said.

One of the most memorable accomplishments for the city during her time is a recent one — the long overdue construction of a new fire station in John Day.

"It was a community effort," Gray said, adding it was the overwhelming support from everyone involved that made it finally happen.

"It's great to see it finally go up," she said.

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Police licensing agency recommends the DOJ investigate Sheriff Palmer

Chief, dispatch manager complain sheriff's support of militia endangered the public

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day's police chief and dispatch manager's complaints that the Grant County sheriff's support for the militia occupying the Malheur refuge endangered the public have been sent to the justice department for further investigation.

Chief Richard Gray and Dispatch Manager Valerie Luttrell were among at least eight who filed formal complaints against Sheriff Glenn Palmer with the state Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, which licenses Oregon police officers. The department sent the complaints to the Oregon Department of Justice recommending an investigation.

Palmer said in an email Friday morning he is being represented by an attorney, but he declined to discuss the complaints.

"As of this morning, I have not been contacted by the DOJ but I have re-



Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer.

ceived a packet from DPSST," he said in the email. "Other than that, I am not discussing anything further."

Luttrell said in her complaint Palmer was openly supportive of the militia and met with members who are under

investigation "for numerous felonious crimes." She said Palmer's support placed other law enforcement officials and the public at risk, because he was not trusted.

As the FBI and Oregon State Po-

lice planned to arrest the leaders of the refuge occupation on Highway 395 en route to a meeting in John Day Jan. 26, she said, they opted not to inform city and county law enforcement officials in Grant County out of concern Sheriff Glenn Palmer might be a "security leak."

Even though militia supporters and Palmer were awaiting the meeting in John Day, she said Chief Richard Gray was unable to obtain information about the law enforcement action unfolding on Highway 395.

"Sheriff Palmer's blatant disregard for the potential consequences of pushing his personal agenda over the welfare and safety of the general public that he is sworn to protect is at the very least an ethical transgression," she said in the complaint. "... This became a serious safety issue for our (Dispatch) Center and local Law enforcement during the events on January 26th."

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“Sheriff Palmer’s blatant disregard for the potential consequences of pushing his personal agenda over the welfare and safety of the general public that he is sworn to protect is at the very least an ethical transgression.” — Dispatch Manager Valerie Luttrell



The Eagle/Sean Hart

Cody Wilson stands in the doorway for the crowded Grant County Court session Feb. 17 and discusses a proposed resolution condemning the occupation of the Malheur refuge.

Resolving the refuge resolution

Discussion about condemning occupation continues today

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

A proposed resolution condemning the occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge has drawn large crowds at the last two Grant County Court meetings.

At the Feb. 17 meeting, with people lined up in the hallway unable to enter the room, the commissioners decided to postpone the

discussion to the Feb. 24 meeting when a larger room could be procured. Discussion is scheduled to resume at 11:30 a.m. today, Feb. 24, upstairs in the Circuit Court room at the Grant County Courthouse.

At the first meeting, Feb. 10, the majority of people who spoke out were in favor of the resolution.

The crowd seemed more evenly split Feb. 17 before the commis-

sioners decided to table the issue until the next meeting.

Several people, some of whom spoke at the first meeting, offered their support for the resolution.

Mark Cerny said the resolution was well written and necessary to address concerns people have that militia members might come to Grant County.

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Fatal crash near Pilot Rock seriously injures two from PC

Blue Mountain Eagle

Two people from Prairie City are recovering after being seriously injured in a fatal crash Friday near Pilot Rock.

Alexxyss L. Therwhanger, 20, was pronounced dead at the scene of a head-on wreck at about 4 p.m. on Highway 395 south of Pilot Rock, according to Oregon State Police.

The Kennewick woman was driving a 1998 Buick Century sedan when it failed to negotiate a left hand curve in the roadway. The Buick, which was traveling northbound, crossed over into the southbound lane and collided with a 1994 Lincoln Continental.

Francis (Frank) Charles Wimberley, 60, of Prairie City, the driver of the Lincoln Continental, was transported to Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Richland, Washington, by air ambulance with serious injuries. A passenger in Wimberley's vehicle, Donnetta Marie Kulbis, 54, of Prairie City, was transported by ambulance to St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton, also with serious injuries.

Wimberley's daughter, Crystal, said in a Facebook post both are fine. She said it would be a long road to recovery, but they are fighters.

