Fifth-graders Amelia Hall and Destiny Pelayo handle a bullfrog during their school field trip.

Contributed photo

Student athlete drug testing on table at Grant Union

Issue to be voted on at June 8 board meeting

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY — Drug testing for student athletes has been a topic of discussion at Grant Union Junior-Senior High School.

The school does not currently use drug testing, but it may be implemented next school year.

The topic will be discussed and voted on at the 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 8, Grant School District No. 3 school board meeting at the district office at 401 N. Canyon City Blvd.

According to minutes of the April 20 school board meeting, held at Seneca School, Grant Union principal Ryan Gerry said the intent of drug testing would be to help students and provide them an opportunity to say no to drugs, rather than trying to catch kids using drugs.

He stated the testing would be random, and performed either weekly or bi-weekly.

The types of drugs to be tested would be defined by policy.

Board member Gordon Larson said he would like to know what happens to the data once it's collected, and how it would be protected, so it doesn't have consequences for the students beyond its intent.

Gerry said the same protocol as the current penalty process would be followed.

Board member Chris Cronin said she was interested to see how drug testing of student athletes is working at Prairie City School.

A meeting on the issue was held at the school for parents the evening of Monday, May 16, with seven people in attendance.

Parents were notified of the meeting through an automated phone message, the reader board at the school and the school's online calendar.

"This is a great subject to debate, and both sides have a good argument as to why drug testing should or shouldn't be facilitated," Shelley said.

He said a discussion and vote on whether it should be implemented for fall 2016 will take place at the June 8 meeting.

Eagle file photo

Denali Twehues of Dayville competes at a 2015 Cinnabar Mountain Playdays rodeo, moving through the pole bending course.

OUTDOORS

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and cycles, and this is easy for the kids to see, since it's a living thing."

The students — who wanted to — handled a bullfrog and fish, during the Dayville trip.

They also saw how fish in the John Day River are tagged and checked out a fish screen.

On May 12, the students watched and helped as ODFW staff members stocked Trafton Pond at Seventh Street Complex.

Boethin said they also study the ecosystem just outside their classroom.

"We feed the birds, as well as the local chipmunks, golden mantles,and deer," she said. "The kids always love anything they can get their hands on."

STATUE

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The complex also features playground equipment, basketball and tennis courts, a skate park and a mile-long walking path, as well as Trafton Pond for fishing.

Justice has been carving statues of bears, elk and even a cowboy over the past six years.

He said he approached parks and rec director Art Thunell a couple years ago about the adding a baseball

player statue to the park entrance.

"I just wanted to do something that would be around," Justice said. "They have a nice complex down there."

He said Thunell and others built up the park, starting with a baseball field when Thunell was a baseball coach for Grant Union High School, before he became parks and rec director.

Justice said Thunell was his PE and weight room teacher when he attended high school.

"Art's a good guy," he said.

Justice said he spends time carving on weekends for a couple months in winter.

"It was no big deal for me to make something," he said. "I really enjoyed doing it — just wanted to contribute to the park, and do something that would be around."

Mitch Wilson did the metal work, and Justice came up with a Vince Lombardi quote to add to the column below the statue.

It reads: "The measure of who we are is what we do with what we have."

RUSH

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Those who preregister pay a reduced entry fee and will receive

a heavyweight cotton T-shirt.

Registration forms are available at the Grant County Chamber of Commerce, 301 W. Main St., John Day. Pre-registration costs $15. Reg-

istration from 6-6:45 a.m. on race day costs $18, and will be available in front of Sels.

For more information, call the Chamber at 541-575-0547.
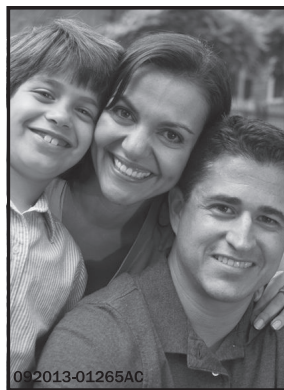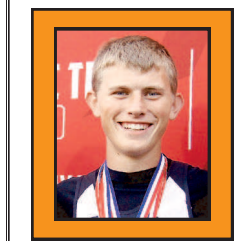
RODEO

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Membership in the Cinnabar Mountain Playdays is required — $30 each or $45 for a family — and must be paid in full to participate.

There is also a $2 entry fee for each event, or $10 for the day.

Proof of age is required (birth certificate, driver's license or immunization record) and must be presented to the director no later than the second Playday attended by the membership holder.

Contestants must compete in at least four Playdays to be eligible for the year-end awards.

For more information, contact one of the Playdays directors: Didgette McCracken 541-575-3520, Janet Plocharsky 541-792-0077 or Emma Winkelman 541-620-1199.