



## Monmouth boy drowns in John Day River

By Sean Hart  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Authorities recovered the body of a youth from Monmouth who drowned in the John Day River Sunday near Spray.

The body of Cody Lane Watson, 16, was recovered from the river near mile post 82 on Highway 19/207 at about 10 a.m. Monday, Wheeler County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy Michael Boyd reported.

At about noon Sunday, Wheeler County deputies responded to a report that Watson had disappeared beneath the surface of the river while swimming with friends about 8 miles west of Spray. They were assisted by Wheeler County Search and Rescue, Wheeler County Fire and Rescue, the Oregon State Police and members of the Spray Fire and Ambulance departments, which searched extensively without success. About two hours after the search began, members of the Grant County Fast Water Rescue Team also responded to help.

Boyd said the initial investigation indicated the incident was an accident.

"The John Day River continues to be deceptively dangerous with sudden changes in both the current and the underwater features of the riverbed," Boyd said in the press release. "Swimmers should use extreme caution when swimming in any natural waterway."

## Four celebrations planned for 4th



Grayson Schmedeka of Dayville, left, and Kendall Skillings of La Grande at the 2015 Dayville Parade.

Dayville event Saturday features memorial car show for Jake Streeter

Blue Mountain Eagle

Dayville, Long Creek, Monument and Prairie City will all proudly display their stars and stripes during the Fourth of July weekend.

Several fun events are on schedule, including parades, fireworks displays, music in the park, contests and barbecues. Dayville has a new schedule this

year, with their main events on Saturday, July 2.

"I've been enjoying Dayville's 4th of July Celebration for decades," said city recorder Ruthie Moore. "This year, things are definitely different, but I'm sure the event will still be full of fun, family and friends. I am especially looking forward to the car show; I think it's a great way to honor a man (Jake Streeter) who gave so much to the Dayville community. And an evening parade should be lots of fun — come to Dayville, and celebrate with us."

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# IS SCHOOL WATER SAFE?

By Sean Hart  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Local schools are testing their water taps for lead, joining a scramble of other Oregon districts who are doing the same.

Schools are hurrying to test in the wake of large amounts of lead found in the Flint, Michigan, city water supply and, more recently, in Portland public schools.

Federal law does not require schools test for lead. Although the Oregon Board of Education is working on a new rule, current Oregon law only requires schools with their own water supply to test.

Most districts in Oregon use city water systems, which handle their own testing. While public systems test on a regular basis and treat water to help reduce corrosion, lead in pipes and fixtures can enter the water at the tap and later into anyone who drinks from it.

The Eagle asked all of the school districts in Grant County for records of lead tests. Dayville was the only district that had completed testing, but other districts indicated they plan to test soon.

Dayville tested the elementary, high school and gym drinking fountains and the kitchen sink June 9. The results were sent back from Box R Water Analysis Laboratory in Prineville June 24.

"Dayville Schools passed the lead test well within accepted (Environmental Protection Agency) levels," Superintendent Kathryn Hedrick reported Tuesday.

The EPA's maximum allowed level of lead in drinking water is .015 milligrams per liter. The highest level detected in Dayville was .00374.

## Local districts testing after lead problems elsewhere



EO Media Group/Kathy Aney  
Most area school districts are testing for lead in drinking water at the schools this summer.



EO Media Group/E.J. Harris

The U.S. Forest Service has said the roadside memorial to Robert "LaVoy" Finicum on Highway 395 north of Burns must be removed.

## F.S. says Finicum roadside memorial must be removed

By Amanda Peacher  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Supporters of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge occupiers are in conflict with the U.S. Forest Service and other agencies over an impromptu memorial site for Robert "LaVoy" Finicum, the Arizona rancher killed by law enforcement during the occupation.

Rocks, flags, balloons, photos and flowers are in place at the remote site along U.S. Route 395 north of Burns, where the spokesman for the armed occupation died in a confrontation with Oregon State Police troopers.

The Forest Service says the memorial, which sits on Malheur National Forest land, is illegal.

"While the placement of a monument or memorial on public land may help some individuals through difficult times, these memorials are generally of significance to only those most closely tied to a specific person or event," said Mike Stearly, public affairs officer with the Malheur National Forest. "Others may feel that memorials intrude on their experience of the forest."

Two men have been guarding the memorial for nearly three weeks, in response to several instances when the memorial was altered or disappeared completely in the middle of the night. William Fisher, of Salmon, Idaho, and Jamey Landin, of Burns, say these three weeks are the longest the site has been untouched.

"They know we're there," said Fisher, referring to anyone who might want to alter the site. "We're doing something here."

After reaching the 14-day limit allowing the nearby designated campground, the two moved across the road and founded a dispersed campsite. There, they can stay for an additional 30 days.

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