



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

**Newly appointed mayor Eva Dougharity converses with council member Jan Lowry during a city council meeting Thursday, Sept. 1.**

# New Mt. Vernon mayor steps up for short term

## Council discusses old hotel, wastewater system

By Rylan Boggs  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Eva Dougharity was sworn in as mayor of Mt. Vernon Thursday, Sept. 1.

Dougharity accepted the title during a casual city council meeting held in Mt. Vernon's City Hall.

Dougharity, the former council president, replaced former Mayor Andy Anderson after he stepped down because of personal and health issues.

As the president, Dougharity was required to step up and become the mayor.

"That's part of being council president," Dougharity said.

She has been a Mt. Vernon resident since 1981 and on the city council since 2011. Before that, she lived in Prairie City and has family scattered across Grant County.

Though she is willing to step up temporarily, Dougharity says she is too busy with her full time job as a park ranger in the Clyde Holiday State Park to consider becoming a permanent mayor. The mayor position is up for election for a two-year term in November. Kenny Delano is the only candidate who filed to run.

During the city council meeting, Dougharity and the council focused discussion on a Community Development Block Grant from the state that would be used to update their wastewater treatment facility, as well as



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working with residents to keep their properties tidy and other city maintenance projects.

They also discussed what was to be done with the Mt. Vernon Motel, which was destroyed in a propane explosion two years ago. The motel has yet to be cleaned up and is still sitting in a state of destruction.

Councilwoman Jan Low-

ry also proposed approaching the Oregon Department of Transportation about relocating a road sign that was misdirecting people traveling to Pendleton into the cul de sac where she lives.

Lowry said that moving the sign a hundred yards down the road would solve the problem, but they couldn't act because it was state property.

# Sweet sorrow

**Kam Wah Chung curator promoted to supervisory state role**

By Rylan Boggs  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Kam Wah Chung Museum Curator Christy Sweet has been promoted to help supervise all Oregon Parks and Recreation Departments heritage and museum sites.

Sweet says she is excited about the promotion but leaving John Day is bittersweet.

"It's a great job," she said. "I hate to leave it, but this is a great opportunity."

The Kam Wah Chung Museum was originally a Chinese medical clinic, general store, community center and residence run by two Chinese immigrants, Ing "Doc" Hay and Lung On. The museum has been kept almost exactly as it was found by historians.

Sweet moved to John Day nearly a decade ago for the curator job at Kam Wah Chung after working in Ne-



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**Curator Christy Sweet gives a tour of the Kam Wah Chung Museum Friday, Sept. 2.**

braska for the National Parks Service.

Taking a tour from Sweet, it's apparent that she loves her job. She knows the history of almost every artifact in the museum. She excitedly tells a couple traveling from Boise that a container containing "dragon bones" are actually ground up dinosaur bones labeled as such by the Chinese.

"It's been a lot of fun," Sweet said. "I love working with the objects and showing

them off to people."

Despite showing people the same artifacts during each tour, Sweet says she never gets tired of giving the tour as she can cater to each group's interests.

Kam Wah Chung has gained national and international attention during Sweet's curating. She has worked hard to publicize the museum and facilitated pieces done by the Oregonian and Oregon Public Broadcasting.

# Unemployment decreases but remains above national, state averages

Blue Mountain Eagle

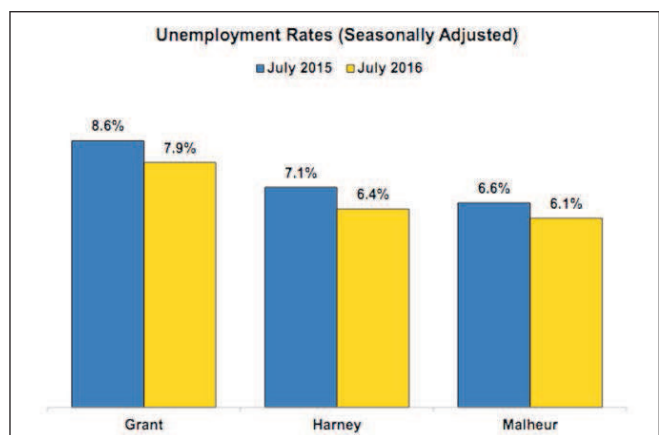
County unemployment rates are improving but are still above the national and state unemployment rates.

Grant County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped from 8.6 percent to 7.9 percent between July 2015 and July 2016.

Grant County gained an estimated 50 jobs over the last year, with 40 in the private sector and 10 in the public.

Broken down by industry, wholesale trade, financial activities, mining and logging and manufacturing increased, while construction, leisure and hospital and local government decreased.

Over the same time period, Harney County's unemployment rate dropped from 7.1 percent to 6.4 percent, and Malheur has dropped



Contributed by Oregon Employment Department

from 6.6 percent to 6.1 percent. Harney County gained an estimated 100 jobs, and Malheur County gained an estimated 210 jobs.

All three counties are still above the state average of 5.2 percent and the national average of 4.9 percent.

## Vacant Council Position

The City of Mt. Vernon has a vacant position on the Council. The Council is accepting applications to fill this vacancy until September 13, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. The term of this vacancy ends December 31, 2016.

The applicant must be at least 18 years of age, a registered voter and citizen of Mt. Vernon for 1 year or more.

**Applications are available at:**  
Mt. Vernon City Hall  
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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