

Students plant a better future

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

Eight-year-old Dominic Donathon digs his fingers into the root system of a mint plant, loosening them in preparation to be planted. It's dirty work, but he doesn't seem to mind.

Humbolt Elementary School has teamed up with the Forest Service to help educate kids on how to better the environment. Retired teacher Sophie Cosgrove is spearheading the operation with plants she bought from Better Blooms and Garden in John Day.

Better Blooms and Garden gave Cosgrove a discount on the native plants she bought to help educate students on the importance of supporting native species over invasive species.

The students will be planting mint, sage, irises and Karl Foerster Feather Reed Grass in an attempt to attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies. They hope, in turn, these species will bring birds and other creatures to the area.

"We're just trying to get more involved in the community and help bring everyone together," Cassandra Butler, a Forest Service wildlife employee, said.

Butler said, even though it is late in the summer, the plants are hardy enough to survive as long as they are cared for properly and there isn't an overnight freeze within the first week of planting them.



Eagle photos/Rylan Boggs

Gus McDaniel, 8, carries two mint plants while helping create a garden of native plants at Humbolt Elementary School on Tuesday, Sept. 13. McDaniel and other students donate their lunchtime to help plant the garden which is geared toward attracting pollinators like bees.



Humbolt Elementary School third-graders Dominic Donathan, 8, left, Gus McDaniel, 8, and Taylor Parsons, 8, help plant a native garden to attract pollinators like bees to their school on Tuesday, Sept. 13.

Suicide prevention resources available

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

To raise awareness of warning signs and risk factors of suicide, former school teacher Corinne Stennett is distributing Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention pamphlets.

In the wake of a Grant Union student's suicide, she says it is important the community has access to information.

The pamphlets outline risk factors, such as trouble with school or the law, stressful family life or the breakup of a romance, and how to identify warning signs, such as abrupt changes in personality, giving away possessions or a change in eating or sleeping patterns.

Coping strategies such as being open with your feelings, spending time with friends and family and not tolerating abuse of any kind are also provided.

The pamphlets include a small yellow card that can be cut out and given to someone to serve as a non-verbal cry for help. These cards encourage the recipient to stay with the person, to listen to what they have to say and to get help immediately.

Stennett hopes putting this information in the hands of community members will help them recognize those in need of help or seek help themselves if they need it.

If you or someone you know is considering suicide or are experiencing other emotional risks, call 800-273-8255 or 866-488-7386 or text 741741.

For more information visit yellowribbon.org.

Bates Pond group comes close to consensus

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

A stakeholder work group discussing the future of Bates Pond and Bates State Park finished their three planned meetings but failed to reach a consensus about a recommendation to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

Grant County Judge Scott Myers, who represented the county in the group, said all but one unidentified member agreed they would not challenge one of the six proposed options.

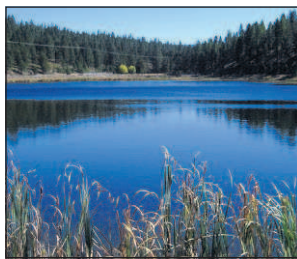
"It pretty much left the footprint of the pond about the same," Myers said of the option most agreed on. "It didn't put a stream alongside it. It didn't lower the dam. It didn't fully separate the stream from the pond."

Myers said the option would enhance riparian and wildlife features above and below the pond, clean and deepen the pond and repair the lower step of the fish ladder. He said the group plans to meet again in the spring to try to reach a consensus on a recommendation.

The 131-acre park, near Austin Junction at the confluence of Bridge Creek and the Middle Fork of the John Day River, opened in 2011 and includes a 28-site campground, camping for hikers and bicyclists, short trails and a small pond on Bridge Creek. Debate over the best management approach for the old mill pond, and especially balancing recreation with the pond's effects on water quality and fish passage, in part prompted OPRD to convene the group.

The park currently serves around 20,000 day visitors and provides 1,600 camper nights a year. A camper night is equal to one camper spending one night in a state park.

"We know the pond is important as both a historical reminder of the Bates Mill, and



Eagle file photo

Peaceful and still, the deep blue water of Bates Pond is a refreshing sight while meandering the trail that encircles the pond and others throughout Bates State Park.

as a recreation feature of the park," said Park Development Manager Scott Nebeker, who represented the OPRD executive team on the work group. "Balancing these facts with the need to improve water quality and fish habitat is a challenge, and we're thankful the stakeholder group came together to work through this openly. We expect the group will be able to develop an alternative when they convene again."

National Public Lands Day events planned

Blue Mountain Eagle

National Public Lands Day, the nation's largest single-day volunteer effort for public lands, is Saturday, Sept. 24.

Volunteer projects are planned, and Forest Service recreation sites and the Bureau of Land Management's Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City will offer free admission.

The Malheur National Forest will host a volunteer project targeting the previously unmaintained Reynolds Creek Trail No. 264 on the Prairie City Ranger District, just off of Forest Road 2635 in section 22. Project work will include clearing roughly 1.8 miles of trail through brush work and tread work. The event is planned to begin at 10 a.m., meeting at the trailhead. For more information, contact Susan Garner

at 541-575-3039. Following the trail work, a barbecue and interpretive talks are planned for the volunteers.

Volunteer trail and vegetation projects begin at 9 a.m. at the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. The first 30 participants receive a free T-shirt, and all volunteers will be offered refreshments provided by the Trail Tenders volunteer group and a coupon for free admission at

National Parks and federal recreation areas.

For 23 years, National Public Lands Day has been a nationwide effort to help care for parks, natural areas, historic sites, trails, watersheds and other public lands. An estimated 170,000 volunteers countrywide participated last year. More information on events can be found at neefusa.org/public-lands-day.

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Are you part of a **NONPROFIT** in Grant County?

We need your help!

The Blue Mountain Eagle is working to create a master list of nonprofits in Grant County. We are looking for the NAME of the nonprofit, CONTACT PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL, ADDRESS and WEB SITE if available to be added to or updated on the list for this year's Grant County Giving Back section, coming out in October.

Either call the information into the Eagle office at 541-575-0710 or email office@bmeagle.com.



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