



Contributed photo

Students participating in Humbolt Elementary School's Farm-to-School Academy take an Oct. 14 field trip to Thomas Orchards in Kimberly. From left: Amelia Hall, Grant Hall, Alexander Hoffman, Destiny Pelayo (back) and Jamison Petroski.

FARM TO SCHOOL

By Angel Carpenter Blue Mountain Eagle

Humbolt Elementary students were having a hands-on lesson about the origin of the food on their tables — while digging into pumpkins. Scooping out pumpkin seeds to dry and eat later Nov. 18 was just one of many activities the fifth- and sixth-grade students have participated in during Humbolt's Farm-to-School Academy, offered through the South Fork John Day Watershed Council. Program coordinator Elise Delgado of the watershed council said the students have been enjoying the activities. "The feedback from the students has been outstanding," she said. "There is something for every student to learn." Academy days have included field trips to a farm and an orchard, as well as planting classroom gardens and baking bread.

See FARM, Page A10

The students are able to connect with different people in the community, from ranchers to natural resource personnel."

Elise Delgado, South Fork John Day Watershed Council Farm-to-School Academy coordinator



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Cleaning out a pumpkin during a Farm-to-School lesson are, from left, Grant Hall, Ernie Shorts, Amelia Hall and Alici Archibald.

Off-leash dog kills another in John Day

By Rylan Boggs Blue Mountain Eagle

Dog problems persist in Grant County, and the latest incident left one canine dead in John Day.

Chris Labhart, a current county commissioner and former mayor, said he allowed a Lab mix he was walking as part of his animal care business off leash at the Seventh Street Complex Nov. 28, and the dog attacked and killed a Schnauzer another man was walking in the park.

Labhart said he had walked the dog for two years without incident. He said he was walking two dogs at the time, and he allowed both off their leashes because they had never been a problem before. He has operated his business, Claws and Paws, for about five years without any problems, he said.

"I'm not trying to hide it," Labhart said. "It's a horrible accident."

Labhart was cited for maintaining dog as a nuisance, according to John Day Police Chief Richard Gray.

This incident is only the latest in a string of dog problems.

Sept. 18 in Canyon City, resident Judy Kerr shot a dog she said attacked her while she was walking her own dog. Despite initial claims by the dog owner that it was shot while moving away from Kerr, District Attorney Jim Carpenter said the dog appeared to have been shot in the front of its chest. He said Kerr was within her rights to defend herself, and no charges were filed in the incident.

At a Sept. 13 John Day City Council meeting, Tim Unterwagner said he and his wife carry pepper spray and a baseball bat in fear of dog attacks.

In August, Dayville resident Cindy Bolman received four stitches after jumping in to rescue a Corgie mix being attacked by a pit bull in John Day.

There have been 35 incidents of aggressive dogs since July 2015 with more than \$3,000 paid in restitution to victims, according to Justice of the Peace Kathy Stinnett.

When a dog keeper is cited under Oregon state law, it can lead to multiple hearings where the district attorney, victims assistance and court collections get involved because someone did not maintain their dog properly, Stinnett said.

"I think everybody agrees it's a social issue," she said.

The John Day City Council considered adopting an ordinance to try to regulate and enforce aggressive dog activity. However, after receiving a coordinating draft of the ordinance, council members decided it would not meet the needs of the city and decided instead to continue education efforts.

City Manager Nick Green described the latest incident as "unfortunate" and "totally avoidable."

Green said he would keep the city council apprised but felt he had reached a roadblock in the issue he wasn't sure how to navigate.

"Short of an ordinance, I don't know what measures are available to the city," Green said, adding a countywide animal control solution seemed unlikely.

The Oregonian seeks \$78,000 in attorney fees from Sheriff Palmer

News agency says public records lawsuit led to disclosure of previously withheld documents

By Sean Hart Blue Mountain Eagle

Although the public records lawsuit against Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer was dismissed after the records were released, a judge will now decide whether he must pay more than \$78,000 in attorney fees to the party that filed the suit.

In a statement of attorney fees filed in Grant County Circuit Court Nov. 17, attorney Brad Daniels, on behalf of the plaintiff, Oregonian Publishing Company, argued the news organization is entitled to \$78,157.50 in attorney fees because the lawsuit prompted the release of public records that had previously been withheld. Daniels said in the statement The



Sheriff Glenn Palmer

2016, consistent with First Amendment press protections and pursuant to Oregon public records law. Daniels said

Oregonian — and reporter Les Zaitz, who has since retired from The Oregonian and is now the publisher and editor of the Malheur Enterprise — began requesting public records from Palmer and the Grant County Sheriff's Office in February

the defendants — Palmer, the sheriff's office and civil deputy Sally DeFord — did not provide the documents requested, including email, phone and other records.

In May, the plaintiffs filed a complaint in circuit court requesting a judge to declare certain records to be public records and to compel their disclosure. In August, Judge William D. Cramer Jr. issued a temporary restraining order preventing the sheriff's office from

See PALMER, Page A10

Heart test saves Walker's life



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

Kevin Walker, 38, shows a scar from his recent open heart surgery. A last-minute decision to receive a heart test Walker says he typically would have delayed saved his life.

Visiting cardiologist diagnoses problems requiring emergency surgery

By Rylan Boggs Blue Mountain Eagle

Thirty-eight-year-old Kevin Walker is still getting used to the regular metallic ticks coming from his chest. "It's a good noise," his wife, Haley, said.

Kevin recently had emergency heart surgery to replace his aortic valve and remove an aneurysm on his aorta.

The valve, normally 4.5 centimeters in diameter, had shrunk to less than 1 centimeter, and the wall of his aor-

ta had bulged out, forming an aneurysm. Both conditions were detected when he had an echocardiogram test as part of a physical for a job with UPS.

Kevin admitted he normally would have delayed getting the echocardiogram. It did not appear urgent that he receive the test, as he showed no symptoms of heart problems in the weeks leading up to his diagnosis and he had fought fires all summer for the Forest Service.

However, Dr. Bruce Mc-

Lellan, a cardiologist in Bend, was in John Day for a regularly scheduled visit and agreed to perform the echocardiogram for Kevin. The test revealed the dire condition of Kevin's heart, and within a week of receiving his results, Kevin was in Bend undergoing open heart surgery.

McLellan has been providing medical services to rural communities like John Day for 14 years to assist both patients and healthcare workers.

"We do it as a convenience for patients who can't travel easily, particularly during the winter," he said.

See HEART, Page A10

