



Eagle file photo

From the Eagle archives, volunteers help at the Grant County Food Bank in John Day in 2009.

County food bank to distribute a week early

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Grant County Food Bank will hold this month's distribution on Wednesday, Dec. 21, one week earlier than usual.

The earlier date is being scheduled so clients can have their items before the Christmas holiday, said food bank chairman Agnes Hall.

There are between 120 and 130 households who receive goods from the Grant County Food Bank each month, approximately 300 individuals. Hall said the number is higher than in past years, but those numbers have been fairly consistent over the past few months.

Hall said volunteers are welcome to join them, and donations are also needed.

"Monetary donations are best," she said, adding the donations have gone down the past couple years. Donations of nonperishable food are also gladly accepted, she said.

Hall said because canned fruits are expensive and hard to come by, they are a good option. Soups also offer nourishment and meat items, and stew or chili are a good source of protein, she said.

"We always use whatever we can get, because we run on a totally volunteer basis," she added.

Other area food banks were expected to operate on their usual schedule. For more information or to donate to the food bank, call 541-575-0299. The food bank is located at 530 E. Main St. in John Day.

Learning the skills of the future

STEM program provides hands-on education

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

A STEM Beyond School program is offering hands-on opportunities for Humbolt and Dayville elementary students in science, technology, engineering and math.

Friday had Humbolt students flying drones in the school gym, and students at Dayville School were also scheduled to fly the drones on Tuesday, Dec. 13.

Kristal Hansen who helps coordinate the program said Friday's turnout was great with 40 of the 45 fourth-through sixth-grade students who are signed up for the program in attendance.

"I think the kids like it," she said. "They are involved the whole time, and we feed them a snack."

The drones, 21 small and four large, were purchased through the STEM Beyond School grant, and will be used in future years as the program continues.

Both the Oregon State University 4-H and Portland Metro STEM received funding from the Oregon Department of Education to work with 11 Oregon STEM hubs,



Contributed photo

Alex Hoffman and Grant Hall build electrical light circuits with holiday lights and tinfoil during a recent STEM event at Humbolt Elementary School.

including Grant County.

Shanna Northway, director of the OSU Extension office in John Day, and Kristal Hansen coordinate the program for Grant County.

"Our program has hit the ground running," Northway said, adding the partnership between the schools and the OSU Extension is what makes it possible.

"The staff and administration have really allowed us to take our program to the next level," she said.

Students at Humbolt Elementary have Friday activities twice a month, and nine Dayville students in grades 3 through 5 have an in-class activity once a month.

Humbolt also hosted a student-led STEM night on

Nov. 17, where students and their parents took part in various experiments in the classrooms with help from Humbolt staff.

"I think it went well because it was hands-on learning, and they had their parents with them," said Hansen who instructs the students. "The parents were as involved as their children with building."

On Friday, Dec. 2, Humbolt STEM students visited Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. After watching the EOU choir practice their Christmas program, they went backstage to learn about lighting and sound for performances. They also met with EOU chemistry club members who conducted experiments with them and



Contributed photo

Alana Spence and her mother, Elsa, test the strength of a piece of paper at a science, technology, engineering and math event at Humbolt Elementary.

presented a "magic show," which included creating fire with various elements.

There are even more engaging activities ahead for those involved in the program.

"We'll visit Treasure Valley Community College in February, and travel to Central Oregon Community College in March," Northway said. "Students will also have the opportunity to take a local STEM industry tour, work on service-learning projects, and so much more."

"We are excited about the remaining months of the SBS grant — what a great opportunity for our local students."

Clever Mt. Vernon grandmother thwarts attempted phone scam

Caller claimed to be grandson in emergency

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle



Jan Lowry

Lowry said the man told her he had been in a wreck in Houston and did not have money to return

home. The man told her his voice "sounded funny" because he had been hit by the vehicle's air bag during the wreck.

But Lowry did not fall for the scam. "I might be an older lady — I'm 73 — but I'm up on all this stuff," she said. "Telemarketers or anybody, I don't fall for anything."

Lowry told the man she did not have the money,

tempted phone scam, however. About a year ago, she said, a man also claiming to be her grandson called with a similar story: He had been in a wreck in Mexico and needed money to return home.

In the first call, the man asked her to go to Wal-Mart to send him money. She said she realized then the man was unaware the nearest Wal-Mart was miles away from Mt. Vernon.

Lowry decided to turn the tables on the scammer and told him she would help. She told him to call back in an hour.

When he called back, Lowry told him the call was being recorded. He quickly hung up.

"I'm a sneaky, old broad," she said with a laugh. "I realize some of the older people do get scammed — not going to nail this old broad."

A phone scammer met his match when he attempted to trick 73-year-old Jan Lowry into sending him \$1,000 Friday.

The Mt. Vernon resident and city councilwoman said a man called at about 12:15 p.m. and claimed to be her grandson in need of emergency funds to return home. Surprisingly, she said, his voice actually sounded like one of her grandsons.

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OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED DEC. 26TH

Blue Mountain EAGLE

For more information or to place an ad:
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