

MEMORIALIZING THE FALLEN

Veterans and civilians remember those they have lost



Ed Heiple plays trumpet during the Memorial Day ceremony in the Prairie City Cemetery on Monday, May 29. "It's a special day to remember those people who contributed so much to our country," Heiple said, "and to remember my son who passed away in the military."

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

Dozens gathered at the Prairie City Cemetery to honor fallen military personnel on Monday.

The American Legion Post 106 performed a ceremony and gun salute for Memorial Day.

Trumpet player Ed Heiple said he takes part in ceremonies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day to honor those who have served.

"I believe a lot in what the military has done for us," Heiple said.

He has played the trumpet since grade school and taught music for years. Playing at the Memorial Day ceremony is a way for him to commemorate those who have died.

"It's a special day to remember those people who contributed so much to our country," Heiple said. "And to remember my son who passed away in the military."

Retired Capt. William Campbell also took part in the ceremony.

"My stepdad saw combat, I saw combat and my son saw combat, so it means a lot to me," Williams said. "A lot of my friends don't make it back, and they'll be forever young."

Williams is one of four brothers who all served in the military.

He served in the Navy for almost 36 years and was stationed in New York when the twin towers fell, spent 13 months at the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Korea with the Third Marine Division and took part in the Tet Offensive in Vietnam.

"I feel fortunate to come back," Williams said. "I did my job and relied on the other military personnel to do theirs."



Members of American Legion Post 106 salute the flag during the annual Memorial Day ceremony in the Prairie City Cemetery on Monday, May 29.



Retired Capt. William Campbell stands for a photo on the Bridge Street bridge following the annual Memorial Day ceremony in Prairie City on Monday, May 29. "My stepdad saw combat, I saw combat and my son saw combat, so it means a lot to me," Williams said. "A lot of my friends don't make it back, and they'll be forever young."



Members of American Legion Post 106 stand and sit for the annual Memorial Day ceremony in the Prairie City Cemetery on Monday, May 29.

81 DAYS: Total Solar Eclipse countdown is on

Cities prepare for flock of visitors

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Tammy Bremner opened the May 17 total solar eclipse planning meeting asking if anyone knew the number of days left until the big event.

Prairie City city recorder Taci Philbrook's hand shot up with the correct answer — 95 days.

As of Wednesday, May 31, the countdown is 81 days.

That's less than three months for county and city officials and local residents to plan for the expected hordes of visitors to the area.

Bremner, who is the Grant County Chamber of Commerce office manager, said they don't know how many people to expect — it could be 10,000 or 100,000, she said.

She said some local residents are looking forward to the event and visitors while others are not.

Whatever the feelings are, she said there needs to be a "focus on local understanding" to stock up on supplies such as food, water, medication and pet food early, fill fuel tanks on vehicles, don't count on the internet and have some cash on hand. She noted ATMs could be down, and businesses may have to handle credit cards manually.

She suggests residents have these things taken care of more than a week before the eclipse, which takes place at approximately 10:22 a.m. Monday, August 21.

"Be prepared," she said. "The highways are going to be packed," she said. "Local people are going to be inconvenienced."

She said if property owners are concerned about visitors trespassing, they should post signs indicating private property and no parking.

"Take the initiative," she said.

Bremner said some visitors will stay for the three-day weekend, Saturday through Monday, and others will stay for a week.

She called on city officials and others who are helping prepare for the influx of tourists to share their plans.

Angie Jones, the transportation manager at the People Mover in John Day, said they are planning on having eight routes with stops in John Day, Mt. Vernon, Prairie City and Dayville.

In John Day, they will have two loops to the Industrial Park, one on West Bench Road and another on Adam Drive.

The People Mover's eight



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

A crowd of about 50 Grant County residents were in attendance at the latest monthly solar eclipse meeting, where Chamber of Commerce office manager Tammy Bremner spoke about preparations being made and answered questions.

vehicles have a total of 108 seats, and they plan to add to that by possibly leasing one to three Prairie City School buses, one Dayville School bus and a Burns Paiute Tribe bus. They also plan to hire extra drivers.

About 250 parking spots will be available, during the time of the event, at the old Hudspeth Mill at "Mill Corner Pond," with space on the east side, near Mills Building Supply, and to the west, in a paved area.

John Day city staff member Julie Larson said their 286 camping spots at the Industrial Park are filling up.

At last check on Friday, there were 40 spots left.

The Industrial Park has a total of 160 dry camp tent sites with potable water access and 126 RV sites with water and sewer.

One resident, who lives on West Bench, said she has rented 12 campsites to visitors who are from Russia and Germany.

Bremner said activities in John Day include the Moon-LIT Music Festival at the Grant

County Fairgrounds on Saturday, Aug. 19, featuring five local acts with a variety of talent.

Some cities will have moves and yard sales.

In Mt. Vernon, property owned by Mike Kilpatrick behind city hall will be used for a venue called the "Solar Slam," solarslam2017.com, with 400 dry campsites, including RV spots, with live music, helicopter tours, souvenirs and a beer garden, and will also have food, water and ice available.

Prairie City city recorder Taci Philbrook said property owners on County Road 60 said they would open parking space.

"It's going to be a congested area," Philbrook said, noting that Prairie City is a hot spot to experience the totality. "Parking is going to be a big deal," she said.

In Monument, a dry camp called the Off the Grid Eclipse Festival, offthegridentclipse.com, includes spots by the river and live music.

The local RV park and motel will have extra campsites,

and some accommodations are also available in Kimberly.

In Long Creek there are 13 acres for parking.

Several areas of concern were discussed at the meeting, including fire and lightning safety, EMT services, highway traffic congestion and safety, air traffic and even garbage disposal and port-a-potties.

State Fire Marshal Dave Fields and Irene Jerome with Firewise talked about lightning and fire safety.

Fields said they're working on public safety announcements.

Tom Davis, ODOT's Region 5 operations coordinator, said they are organizing emergency services operations with crash teams.

"If there is a crash in the Gorge, we'll be able to respond from both sides," he said.

He stressed tripcheck.com will be important for travelers as information is updated live.

There will be no highway construction during the time of the eclipse, and they are bumping up resources, he said.

The Grant County Regional Airport in John Day will be closed to eclipse traffic — pilots can fly in, if they have a hangar to park in, otherwise the airport will be used for fire and medical emergencies.

Bremner said the chamber rented 150 port-a-potties, which are now difficult to find without driving a great distance.

Chamber volunteers are

trying to locate all the RV and garbage dump sites.

"We're trying to encourage people to pack it out," she said.

Bremner added they're still adding to the list of properties for rent in the county.

"It would make it easier if we knew how many to pre-

pare for," she said. "You can only prepare the best you can, and hope it goes well."

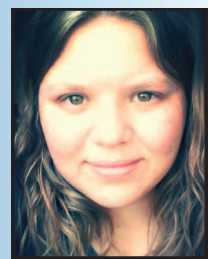
Last week, Bremner said they're looking for volunteers, including parking attendants, help at the chamber office, garbage pick up, etc.

For more information, call the chamber at 541-575-0547.

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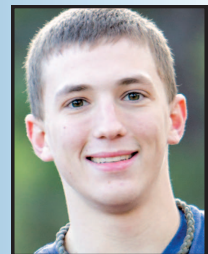
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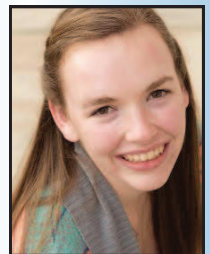
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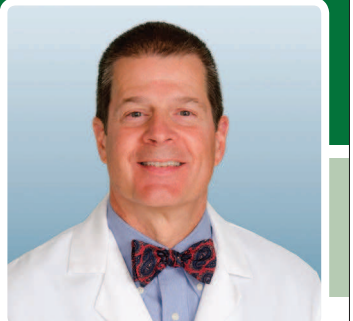
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