



Swim Team finishes second at district meet

Athlete Quentin Hallgarth wins Bogart Award

By Angel Carpenter
 Blue Mountain Eagle

The John Day Swim Team had a second-place finish at the July 28-30 District Swim Meet.

Prineville's team won the meet with 778.5 points, John Day was second with 673 points and Lakeview had 577.5 points for third.

Of the boys teams, John Day won first place, and the John Day girls placed third.

"I am so overjoyed at the way all the kids swam," said John Day head coach Sabrina Howard. "They showed heart and determination in all their events."

Howard became head coach of the John Day team



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

John Day Swim Team member Quentin Hallgarth, back left, competes against teammate Justin Hodge, right, and other swimmers on July 22 during the home meet at Gleason Pool.

last season, after serving as assistant coach. Stephanie LeQueiu returned this season as Howard's assistant coach.

"It's been another honor to serve as the head coach for this team," Howard said. "I truly love the sport and go-

ing through this journey every summer with these kids. I hope I leave a positive impact on their swim team memories."

On Monday, July 31, the local athletes, coaches, board members, family and friends met for an awards banquet at



Contributed photo/Erin Hodge

John Day Swim Team head coach Sabrina Howard stands with her athletes who won high-point awards for the season, including, from left, Orion Houck, Quinn Larson and Quinten Hallgarth, during the team awards banquet on Monday at the John Day City Park.

John Day City Park.

Among those recognized were district high-point swimmers Orion Houck, Quinn Larson and Quinten Hallgarth.

Hallgarth, who swam in the 13-14 boys division, also won the Richard G. Bogart

Memorial Award for the highest point swimmer for ages 5 to 18. He also won the award in 2015 when he was 12. The award started in the '80s in memory of a Lakeview swimmer who was killed in a car accident.

Hallgarth said nobody ex-

pected John Day to place so well at the district meet.

"The reason we did so good was because of the coaches," he said, adding they pushed the team to do their best.

One memorable moment from the district meet for Hallgarth was racing in the 200-meter freestyle relay.

"We were on the last leg, and I was only a little bit behind of the other kid, who was a 17-year-old," he said. "I didn't pass him, but he told me after the race that I pushed him a lot."

Another good memory was seeing teammate Landyn Beil win four of his events in the boys 8 and under division.

"I don't think he was expecting to do that well," Hallgarth said. "The season was amazing for everyone."

See full meet results online at myeaglenews.com.

Trout outlook: Where to find a good catch



Eagle file photo

Kayden Moles of John Day catches a trout June 3 at McHaley Pond in Prairie City during the Kids Fishing Derby. His biggest catch of the day was 15 inches long.

Olive Lake stocked with 700 trophies in July

By Angel Carpenter
 Blue Mountain Eagle

For those on the lookout for trophy trout, there are plenty of spots to drop a line in Grant County.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife had their most recent fish stocking at Olive Lake.

John Day District Fish Biologist Brent Smith said repair work delayed their stocking schedule there, and on July 5 there were 1,000 legal rainbow trout and 700 trophies planted there. Legal-sized fish are 8 inches and trophies are 15 inches or more.

Some of the other lakes, ponds and reservoirs stocked in the county include:

- Magone Lake: 5,000 fingerlings, 1,000 legal, 1,300 trophy
- Holliday Park Pond: 2,000 legal, 100 trophy
- Seventh Street Pond: 1,000 legal, 100 trophy
- Long Creek Ponds: 1,000 legal, 100 trophy
- McHaley Pond: 2,000 legal, 50 trophies planted by the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs

- Trout Farm Pond: 3,000 legal, 300 trophy
 - Cavendar Pond: 100 trophy
 - Aldrich Ponds: 750 legal, 20 trophy
- Smith said some places, such as McHaley Pond, may be weeded over with aquatic vegetation.

He noted that Aldrich Ponds, while off the beaten path, has improved fishing opportunities.

"We've been working on restoration to deepen it and added habitat to help fish carry over in the summer," he said. "We've had some good angler success."

He added they're trying to acquire grant funding for restoration projects at other ponds.

Stocking in areas will happen again in the fall.

Smith said fishing for smallmouth bass on the John Day River is good, and there is public access between Kimberly and Service Creek, and other areas as well, with spots to float the river.

Phillips Reservoir, near Grant County, had a whopping 4,000 trophies planted, 2,000 in May and 2,000 in June, as part of an ODFW Fish Restoration and Enhancement Program to boost rural economies. Mixed in with the 4,000 big ones are

400 with brightly colored tags.

ODFW is asking anglers who catch a tagged fish to report it, and as an incentive, a \$50 gift card is being offered for 40 of the tagged fish.

The tag program, ODFW says, will add excitement about fishing opportunities and help biologists estimate catch rates and performance of the fishery.

"The larger the fish are grown in the hatchery, the greater the cost per fish," said Tim Bailey, ODFW district fish biologist in La Grande. "We want to make sure that the majority of the trophy trout that are released into the reservoir actually end up in the creel of our anglers."

Anglers who catch a tagged fish at Phillips can report their tagged catch, harvested or released, by cutting the tag off at the base and reporting non-reward tags in person, by mail, by phone or to the ODFW website at http://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2016/04_april/042516.asp.

Reward tags need to be returned in person or by mail to ODFW's East Region Office, located at 107 20th St., La Grande, OR 97850.

For more information about fishing opportunities in Grant County, call ODFW at 541-575-1167.



Eagle file photo

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon speaks at a town hall meeting at Grant Union Jr./Sr. High School in April. The senator has reintroduced a bill intended to make recreation on public lands easier.

Wyden revives outdoor recreation bill

Legislation to prioritize recreation opportunities

By George Plaven
 EO Media Group

While the issue of debating health care is causing a sharp political divide in Congress, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) took time recently to highlight what he described as the right way of advancing legislation.

During a conference call with reporters, Wyden announced he is reaching across the aisle to revive the Recreation Not Red-Tape Act — a bill that supporters say would make it easier for people to enjoy the great outdoors.

Wyden co-sponsored a version of the bill last year with fellow Oregon Democrat Rep. Earl Blumenauer after they made the rounds visiting each of Oregon's "Seven Wonders." This year, Wyden has reintroduced the bill alongside Rep. Rob Bishop (R-Utah), chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee.

The focus of the bill is to get more people outside enjoying national lands, Wyden said, by expediting the permit process for outfitters and directing federal agencies to prioritize recreation when making land and water management decisions.

"A number of key laws really stem from yesteryear," Wyden said. "To a great extent, I think this is really trying to come up with some policies that modernize the challenges of outdoor industries."

To illustrate his point, Wyden mentioned river guides who need to obtain multiple permits from multiple different agencies for trips that cross jurisdictions. The Recreation Not Red-Tape Act would require the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to review their permitting processes, shorten processing times and work with states so visitors can buy a state and federal pass all in one transaction.

The bill also directs agencies like the Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation and Department of Transportation to make outdoor recreation a priority for the first time, and holds land managers accountable for achieving recreation goals.

According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation generates \$887 billion in annual spending and 7.6 million jobs across the country. Yet Wyden said he has heard concerns from within rural communities that outdated laws are holding back these opportunities.

"Some of the concerns I've heard just sounded like bureaucratic water torture," he said.

Other provisions in the bill would extend to the U.S. military, requiring all branches to include information about outdoor recreation as part of the basic services they provide to veterans.

As for maintaining public lands, the bill establishes a pilot program for interagency trail management while also creating a system of National Recreation Areas, which would be managed to uniform guidelines.

Wyden said parts of the bill have been modified in this latest version, but still maintains the same intent while garnering greater bipartisan support with the help of Rep. Bishop.

"Cumbersome permitting processes and other bureaucratic roadblocks have significantly undermined access to recreational opportunities for lands that should be available for all Americans to enjoy," Bishop said in a statement. "This bipartisan bill cuts through that red-tape and ensures federal land managers are focused on their role in providing the public with high-quality outdoor experiences."

A number of outdoor recreation groups have come out in favor of the bill, including the Association of Northwest Steelheaders, International Mountain Biking Association, Trout Unlimited, the American Alpine Club and American Canoe Association.

ODFW offers free youth pheasant hunts

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife is hosting free pheasant hunts for youth hunters, ages 17 and under, around the state during the month of September.

One of the hunts will be held in Grant County on Sept. 16-17. The event runs from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days, and participants meet at Prairie Wood Products, 457 W. Front St., Prairie City.

ODFW stocks pheasants for these special hunts to give

youth a head start on regular pheasant seasons, which don't begin until October. Quail and dove can also be hunted.

The hunts are free, though participants do need a valid hunting license and upland game bird validation. They must also have previously passed hunter education.

"If your child made it through hunter education but is still new to the sport, this is a great way to get them started," said James Reed, ODFW hunter education coordinator. An adult 21 years or older

must accompany the youth to supervise, but is not allowed to hunt. Both hunter and supervisor must wear a hunter orange hat, eye protection and a hunter eye vest. Safety equipment will be provided by ODFW for anyone who needs it.

To register, visit odfwcalendar.com. Registration can also be done at a license sales agent or ODFW office that sells licenses.

For more information contact the John Day ODFW office at 541-575-1167.



File photo

Tucker Wright, 9 of Canyon City, had success at last year's youth pheasant hunt, sponsored by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The event this year is planned for Sept. 16-17 in Prairie City.