



Eagle file photo

From left, Sena Raschio, Sara Burns, Gage Brandon and Reitta Wyllie throw chalk and dance during the Color Me Free Fun Run and Walk at the John Day Industrial Park last year. The event is set for Sept. 30 this year.

## Color Me Free Fun Run and Walk planned Sept. 30

Blue Mountain Eagle

Heart of Grant County's fourth annual Color Me Free Fun Run and Walk to kick off Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October is coming up.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. with the event starting at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 30, at the John Day Industrial Park.

Participants receive a white T-shirt and can walk, run, skip or dance around the mile-long track as many times as they like, visiting color stations where paint throwers add bright colors to the shirts.

Registration is \$20 per

person or \$40 per family and is open to all ages. Free hot dogs and water will be available.

Proceeds benefit Heart of Grant County, which provides services and support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as educational programs to promote healthy relationships and a life free from violence.

For more information about the Color Me Free Fun Run and Walk, contact Heart of Grant County at 541-575-4335.

People in need of assistance can seek immediate help through the organization's 24-hour hotline at 541-620-1342.

# Sawmill operation coming to Ritter

### Landowners band together to solve juniper problem

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Ritter Land Management Team, a nonprofit group made up of nearly 30 local landowners, recently took delivery of a portable sawmill they hope will help rid the Ritter landscape of unwanted juniper and provide much-needed jobs.

Western juniper, although native to Eastern Oregon, has become invasive and overtaken upwards of 9 million acres of rangelands, using up water in an already dry landscape, according to a press release from the land management team. Mature trees can consume nearly 30 gallons a day, and crowd out native plants needed by both wildlife and livestock. An Oregon State University study showed that cutting juniper quickly restores watersheds and improves streamflows, which in turn improves grazing for cattle and habitat for species such as the greater sage grouse and mule deer.

When Ritter landowners identified the spread of juniper as one of the greatest threats to the health and productivity of their lands, the group began to wonder if a sawmill might be the answer.

"Everyone wants to get rid of juniper, but removal is both expensive and difficult," said Executive Director Patti Hudson. "Then once it's cut and on the ground, what do you do with it?"

The group contacted Sustainable Northwest, a nonprofit working on balanced solutions



Contributed photo/Eric Sines

Caleb Morris, rancher and Ritter Land Management Team board member, runs the first log through the new mill in Ritter.

to economic and environmental problems, and a strong advocate of the emerging juniper milling industry. Sustainable Northwest helped the team tap into the Western Juniper Industry Fund, created by the state Legislature to help jump-start the juniper sawmill industry. It provided funding for a feasibility study to determine if the idea of a sawmill in Ritter would work.

"We knew we had a lot of juniper, but we weren't sure we had enough to keep a mill going," said rancher and board member Caleb Morris. "But the

study showed there's at least a 20-year supply here, and more if we expand beyond the Ritter area."

Ritter landowner and board chairwoman Rhonda Kennedy said that in addition to examining the quality and quantity of the juniper supply, the study also looked at the financial feasibility of a small sawmill operation in Ritter.

"It showed us how this

could be done and how doing it could benefit the entire community," she said.

Soon after the study was completed, the team had to make a decision. The Western Juniper Fund still had money to help purchase some of the needed equipment for the Ritter sawmill, but not enough to do everything, and the program was about to end. Oregon Community Foundation quickly stepped up to help leverage the state funds and meet the match requirement.

"We had to act fast to take advantage of these funds while we still could," said Hudson. "We decided to take a phased approach and purchase the mill and a telehandler to get us started. It wouldn't have happened without the Oregon Community Foundation's commitment to Eastern Oregon, a lot of hard work at the state level and all the help and support Sustainable Northwest has provided."

The Ritter mill expects one of its major customers to be Sustainable Northwest Wood, a for-profit Portland lumberyard owned by Sustainable Northwest where juniper sales are growing at 50 percent per year.

"We're looking forward to collaborating with RLMT to sell juniper from the Ritter area. Our customers will enjoy supporting the group's rangeland restoration projects through the purchase of this lumber," said Ryan Temple, president of Sustainable Northwest Wood.

"The market is there. We have the juniper and the means to mill it. We're optimistic we can make this work," said Hudson.

## Pizza fundraiser benefits hurricane victims

### Old West teams up with Figaro's

Blue Mountain Eagle

Old West Federal Credit Union is teaming up with Figaro's Pizza of John Day for a fundraiser benefiting the victims of hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

There will be one size offered, extra large on original crust, with six different pizzas to choose from. Gluten free is available for an extra cost. Prices range from \$16-20. For every pizza purchased, \$5 is donated. Pizzas must be paid for at the time of the order.

Order forms can be picked up Old West's John Day and Prairie City offices and Figaro's.

Orders and payment must be placed or dropped off at Old West's John Day office by 4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 2.

If dropping off at the Prairie City branch, have orders and payment in by 4 p.m. Friday, Sept. 29.

Pizzas will be ready for pick up from 1:30-5:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 6, at Old West's John Day office.

**ATTENTION GRANT COUNTY VETERANS:**

Did you know there may be VA benefits available for you as a result of your spouses' military service?

See your Grant County Veteran Services Officer today for more information, located at Grant County Court House.

Katee Hoffman

\* Call 541-620-8057 for an appointment \*

*Your Rural Family Health Clinic*

**Services Provided:**

- Primary Care
- Acute Care
- Women's Health Exams
- Men and Children Exams
- Immunizations
- Family Planning
- Contraception
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- WIC
- High Risk Infants
- Maternity Case Management

**Grant County HEALTH Department**

528 E. Main, St. E.  
John Day

**Monday - Thursday**  
7am - 6pm  
**Friday** 8am - 5pm

**Mendy Sharpe FNP**

*Appointments available*

Call and schedule your appointment today!

TOLL FREE  
**888-443-9104**  
or **541-575-0429**

Grant County Health Department does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

## Grant County Entrepreneurs!

Do you have questions about starting a business in Grant County?

Would you share your ideas about what makes a good business?

Have an idea but don't know what to do with it?

**THIS IS THE PLACE:**

**Outpost Pizza Pub & Grill**  
201 W Main, John Day  
**10:00 am on September 26**

For More Information Email:  
[David@envme.com](mailto:David@envme.com)

**GRANT COUNTY ENTREPRENEURS ASSOCIATION**

## Benefit Dinner and Raffle for Cory Holland

**Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017**  
**Fair Grounds Pavilion**  
Dinner will be served from 4-7 p.m.  
Raffle will begin at 6 p.m.  
Silent Auction Items as well!

**Dinner Tickets:**  
**\$15 for adults or \$7 for 12 and under**  
Pulled Pork, Potato Salad, Coleslaw, and Beverages

**Raffle Tickets:**  
**\$1 each or 6 for \$5**

Tickets for sale at:  
Les Schwab, Timbers Bistro, Andy's Plumbing, Ace Hardware, West Shell, and Huffman's Market  
Prizes include a Gun, Cash, a Bow, Baskets, and Artwork!  
Prizes available to view at the Pavilion beginning at 11 a.m. on the 7th

Contact Lisa Holland for more information: 541-575-1327 or 541-620-8434

## Raise a voice of Awareness.

Join the Blue Mountain Eagle as we connect with local partners to campaign for Domestic Violence Prevention.

## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

We will be donating half of all the proceeds to the Heart of Grant County for Domestic Violence Awareness

Talk to Kim about pricing and supporting a great cause!

www.MyEagleNews.com

Call Kim Today  
541-575-0710  
[kim@bmeagle.com](mailto:kim@bmeagle.com)