



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

HEART offers help and strength to **victims** of domestic **violence**



By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Hart of Grant County staff members are bringing attention to Domestic Violence Awareness Month. They started off October with a Color Me Free Run and Walk on Oct. 4 and decorated their John Day office with purple T-shirts and a banner that states “Domestic Violence Hurts, Heart of Grant County Helps.”

Heart is a nonprofit domestic violence and sexual assault protection program serving county residents. The organization helps about 75 to 100 clients a year and sees four or five new clients a month as well as ongoing clients, said Heart’s executive director Shelly Whale-Murphy. The staff at Heart also includes office coordinator Tammy Larkin and advocate Cindy Kalin.

“We are there to help them navigate their journey to get free of violence in the best way that we can.”

Shelly
Whale-Murphy
Heart’s
executive director



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Heart of Grant County’s executive director Shelly Whale-Murphy, left, and advocate Cindy Kalin stand outside the Heart office, which is decorated for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

All three work with a network of local supporters to help families break the cycle of violence. Domestic violence, which Whale-Murphy said has roots in power and control, can include sexual assault as well as verbal, emotional and psychological abuse. It can also include social, financial and spiritual control, stalking, harassment, threats and intimidation.

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information,” Whale-Murphy said.

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Advocates help lives turned ‘upside-down’ by domestic violence

Victim Intervention Specialist Kimberly Neault, left, and Victim Assistance Program Director Andrea Officer.

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Cases of reported domestic violence handled by local law enforcement and the district attorney’s office show Grant County is not immune to the problem. In 2016, the Grant County District At-

torney’s office served 108 victims of domestic violence, providing 2,249 services to those victims.

- Domestic violence cases included:
- Domestic and family violence, 73
 - Child abuse, 12
 - Child sexual abuse, 11
 - Stalking, 5

• Violation of protective order, 3
• Adult sexual assault, 2
“Many people believe that domestic violence is an isolated event, and they’re more aware of it happening in bigger cities,” said victim assistance

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County extension office expands into new offices

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

From supporting 4-H kids and county fairs to advising farmers and ranchers, the Oregon State University Extension Service offers a wide variety of programs and services for Grant County residents.

The local extension office recently moved out of a county-owned building on East Main Street to a suite of offices in the Madden Brothers Performing Arts Building on Bridge Street.

As the local office added the Open Campus and STEM programs and staff increased from four to six,



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

The Grant County Extension Service has moved to new offices in the Madden Brothers Performing Arts Building. From left, Shanna Northway, Kristal Hansen, Didgette McCracken, Carol Waggoner and Christal Culley.

additional office and meeting space was needed. “We increased from 900 square feet to 3,100 by mov-

ing,” office coordinator Carol Waggoner said.

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Voters to see 911 dispatch levy on ballot

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County voters will have a local option tax proposal on the ballot this November, intended to fill a funding gap for 911 dispatch in Grant County.

The goal is to raise \$208,916 per year beginning in fiscal year 2019. The tax impact on a \$100,000 home would be \$38 per year. Ballots for the Nov. 7 election will be mailed to voters on Oct. 18.

According to John Day City Manager Nick Green, the cost of running the city’s emergency communications center is \$492,115 for the current fiscal year. About \$270,000 will come from the state’s 75 cent surcharge on monthly telephone bills, and

\$22,921 will come from Blue Mountain Hospital and the U.S. Forest Service.

That leaves a deficit of \$199,194 this fiscal year, which must be covered by John Day property taxes. The estimate for 2019 is \$208,916.

“The cost of 911 goes up each year due to increases in the Public Employees Retirement System, insurance, utilities and a 1 percent cost of living adjustment for staff salaries,” Green said.

The rising deficit affects the city’s budget and longterm goals. Public safety expenditures in fiscal year 2015, about half for city police, totaled \$813,629 — 289 percent of the city’s property tax revenue.

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