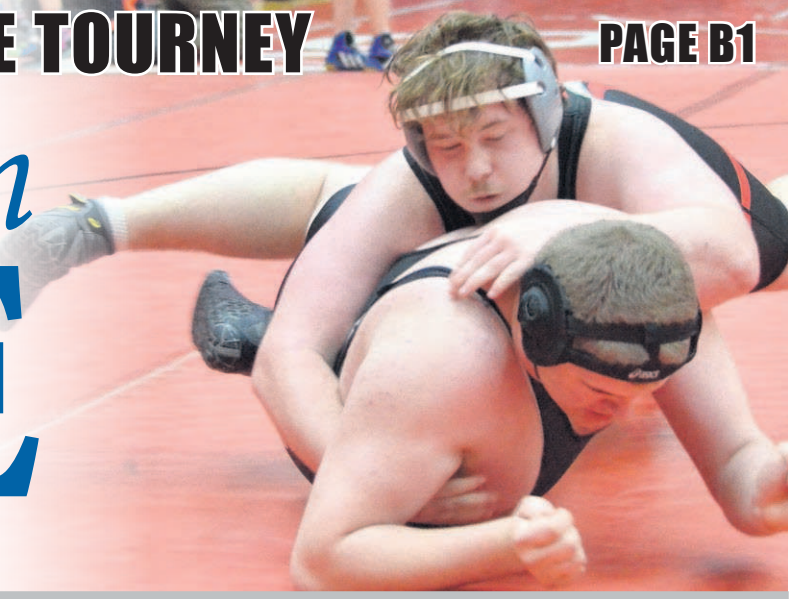




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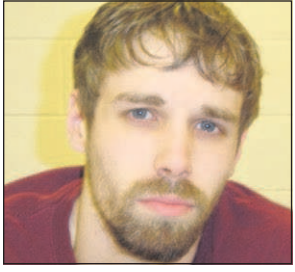
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Bradley David Moles

Moles convicted of first-degree sexual abuse

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

A jury convicted Bradley David Moles of one count of first-degree sexual abuse Jan. 17.

Moles, 31, of John Day was remanded into the custody of Grant County Corrections until a sentencing hearing at 10 a.m. Jan. 31 in Grant County Circuit Court, according to a statement from the Grant County District Attorney's Office.

The 12-person jury deliberated for about 14 hours before returning the verdict at about 9 p.m. Jan. 17. The jury considered five charges involving a single alleged victim younger than 14 between February and April 2016, according to the court documents. The jury found Moles guilty of first-degree sexual abuse, and not guilty of charges of first-degree rape, first-degree unlawful sexual penetration, second-degree sodomy and incest.

First-degree sexual abuse, a class B felony, carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 75 months in prison under Oregon's Measure 11.

"Trying this case was a big job for a county as small as ours," lead prosecutor Mara Houck, the deputy district attorney, said in a statement. "There really aren't any truly happy outcomes in cases like this, but we have to focus on keeping our Grant County kids safe and healthy. And we appreciate the thoughtful public service by the jurors, on what was not an easy case to listen to."

The trial began Jan. 8. It was the second trial, after a jury failed to reach a verdict in the first trial that began Sept. 11. Moles pleaded not guilty to all the charges April 27, 2016.



SEISMIC UPGRADE

Eagle photos/Richard Hanners
Humbolt Elementary School will get a new steel roof as part of a seismic upgrade project this summer.

New roof, shear walls planned for Humbolt Elementary

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

A new roof is one of the big benefits that will come out of a seismic update project at Humbolt Elementary School. The Grant County School District lined up \$942,300 in funding from Oregon's Seismic Rehabilitation Grant Program to pay for the work at the school this year. Another \$1.23 million from the same program will be used to address structural issues at the Grant Union Junior-Senior High School gym next year, Superintendent Curt Shelley said.

"The funding has to be used by fall 2019," he said. The school district was well aware of the age and condition of its buildings before architects from Design West conducted a facilities analysis in 2014, Shelley said. When he learned about the state's seismic grant program, Shelley saw an opportunity to upgrade the district's buildings.

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Grant County School District Superintendent Curt Shelley at his office in John Day Jan. 22.

Elliott pleads not guilty to manslaughter

Motion to suppress police interrogation filed

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County Circuit Court Judge William D. Cramer Jr. reluctantly accepted a not guilty plea from Thomas Joseph Elliott during a hearing Jan. 18. Elliott's attorney also filed a motion to suppress portions of a police interrogation that took place after Elliott's arrest.

Elliott, 55, John Day, appeared in court wearing a jail uniform. He faces one count of first-degree manslaughter with a firearm and one count of unlawful use of a weapon for the shooting death of Todd Alan Berry near Dog Creek Road and Marysville Road near John Day on Aug. 24.

Motion to suppress

According to a seven-page motion filed by defense attorney Matthew Baughman of Bend, Grant County Sheriff's Office Deputy Daniel Komning responded to the scene about 8:11 p.m. and saw Berry lying on his back in the roadway. Komning also saw Mary Elliott, Thomas Elliott and another woman at the scene. The woman left before being identified.

Komning observed signs that Elliott was intoxicated, including slow and thick speech and the odor of alcohol on Elliott's breath, Baughman's motion states. Elliott also admitted to consuming five or six



Thomas Joseph Elliott

drinks, the motion states.

Komning handcuffed Elliott and told him he was not under arrest but being detained, Baughman's motion states. Elliott was then transferred to the hospital in former John Day Police Officer Mike Durr's patrol car,

the motion states.

When hospital staff requested that Elliott's shirt be removed, Durr told Elliott that he would remove the handcuffs if Elliott promised to be "cool," Baughman's motion states. The shirt was collected as evidence.

"After the interrogation had proceeded for some time, Mr. Elliott stated to law enforcement, 'OK, I'm not talking no more,' and then raised his left hand with his palm facing out in what appeared to be a stop motion," Baughman's motion states. "Shortly thereafter and after continued interrogation, Officer Durr acknowledged Mr. Elliott's invocation. After acknowledging this invocation,

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Idea floated for joint county dispatch



John Day City Manager Nick Green

Grant and Harney county representatives meet in Burns

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

Officials from Grant County presented the idea of a joint Grant County and Harney County 911 dispatch center during a meeting in Burns Jan. 11.

Nothing was decided at the meeting, but the idea is one of several options available as the city of John Day plans to close its dispatch center by 2019 because state funding does not cover the cost of operation. The city dispatch center currently covers all of Grant County, and

each city and county is required by law to be covered by a dispatch center.

Grant County Judge Scott Myers said he, John Day City Manager Nick Green and John Day chief dispatcher Valerie Maynard traveled to Burns for the meeting. Seneca Public Works Director Josh Walker told the Eagle he also attended the meeting.

Two counties meet

According to Harney County Sheriff Dave Ward, this was a regularly scheduled, quarterly 911 meeting for Harney County's user agencies and officials, including representatives from the cities of Burns and Hines and from federal and tribal agencies.

"Representatives of your dispatch wanted to meet and discuss the position your dispatch center is in and discuss

ideas on how to provide the best services to your community," Ward told the Eagle in an email. "Whether that consists of pooling resources, finding a way to stay local, or closing the doors and going with an outside service."

Ward, who also serves as Harney County's 911 supervisor, said it was a great meeting and he was sad to learn about the position the John Day 911 dispatch center was in.

"I believe that having a local dispatch center provides a much better service to your community members in their time of need," he said.

Harney County Judge Pete Runnels said he and other members of the Harney County Court were not able to attend the meeting.

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