

## SUICIDE

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Authority. About 25 percent of suicides in Oregon occurred among veterans.

Suicide rates increase as people age, peaking after 85. In Grant County, 22 people died by suicide from 2003 to 2012. Nine were over 65 years, six were from 45 to 64 years, and five were from 25 to 44 years. One was from 18 to 24 years, and one was from 10 to 17 years.

Young people tended to suffer more from poor family relationships, while older people tended to suffer more from physical health problems. Adults between 18 and 44 years who died from suicide were more likely to have had problems with intimate partners. Mental illness was most common among suicide vic-



The Eagle/Richard Hanners  
**Community Counseling Solutions Clinical Director**  
**Thad Labhart has been working as a counselor in Grant County for more than two decades.**

tims between 45 and 64 years.

A little more than half of suicide victims in Oregon in 2012 used firearms, and about three-quarters of all firearm deaths were suicides, according to the Oregon Health Au-

## Suicide prevention resources

- Community Counseling Solutions in John Day, 541-575-1466
- David Romprey Oregon Warm Line, 1-800-698-2392
- Oregon Youth Line, 1-877-968-8491, text 839863, youthL@linesforlife.org
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-TALK
- Spanish Language National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-888-628-9454
- Crisis Text Line: 741741
- Military Helpline: 888-457-4838 or text MIL1 to 839863
- Alcohol and Drug Helpline: 800-923-4357 or text RecoveryNow to 839863
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center, sprc.org
- SafeOregon reporting line: 844-472-3367 or tip@safegoregon.com

thority. About 19 percent of suicides in Oregon that year were by poison, and another 19 percent were by hanging or suffocation. Men accounted for 61 percent of suicides by firearm, while women accounted for 42 percent of suicides involving poison.

Women accounted for 63 percent of hospitalizations

following a suicide attempt in 2013. The highest rate was for women 35 to 44 years and 15 to 24 years of age. About 90 percent of these hospitalizations involved poisoning, such as overdosing. Only 2.2 percent were by firearms.

*The final installment of the suicide series will be published next week.*

## CITY

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at bringing other events to John Day.

The city's strategy for growth hopes to attract digital commuters, active retirees and young working families to John Day by providing more recreational amenities, broadband internet access and improved housing stock.

At the same time, the city needs to question spending that does not align with this growth strategy while finding funding for these growth programs. The city was successful in obtaining more than \$2 million in grants

last year.

Green presented a five-year plan with 10 capital projects to accomplish these goals: increasing broadband access with a fiber optic cable, improving the housing stock through an Urban Renewal Agency and incentives, renovating the Weaver Building on Main Street, completing a new sewer treatment plant, installing a tenant in the completed fire hall, improvements to the city shop, implementing a GIS system for city services, extending Seventh Street west, negotiating a package deal that includes sale of the land around the Kam Wah Chung State Historic Site and city pool and build-

ing a new pool at a new park and completing the Innovation Gateway project at the former Oregon Pine mill site.

Green said residents could expect to see several changes this year. Transitioning the dispatch center and reducing the police force to three officers would cut city staff by 30 percent, he said. A review of personnel compensation will evaluate whether city pay is fair and how benefits compare to other local governments.

A local income survey is underway that will determine if John Day is eligible for \$2 million in federal funding for its new sewer treatment plant, Green said. Financing for the

project should be in place by the end of the year, and preliminary engineering should begin after that.

A citywide housing development district and the city's first greenhouse should be operating by the end of the year, and an area development plan for the former Oregon Pine mill site should be completed by June 2019.

The city is actively working its strategy for growth and raising capital to fulfill that strategy, Green said.

"It's time for our community to start a new kind of conversation, one that focuses on our future instead of the past," he said.

## ADVISER

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Myers also expressed concern about how to continue funding the position. Hamsher agreed sustainability was an issue, but he made a motion that the court at least try filling the position for a year.

The county budget is facing important changes this fiscal year, including loss of federal funding under the Se-

cure Rural Schools Act and the possibility that the Grant County Sheriff's Office might take over law enforcement responsibilities in Prairie City from John Day, which might relinquish its police contract with Prairie City.

Britton raised concerns about the nature of the natural resource adviser position and how it would be structured. Hamsher said the person would advise the court on natural resource issues, and side-

boards limiting the scope of the position were established in the request for proposals that was sent out.

Britton, however, noted that the county's counsel, Ron Yockim, had taken a hatchet to the RFP. Myers agreed.

Pointing out that he won't be on the court next year, Britton said he wanted a clear understanding of what the natural resource adviser would actually do.

Hamsher asked that the court establish a hiring committee to review the three candidates. Britton noted that the hiring process could be lengthy, leaving little time left to perform the job this year, and Myers noted that he already serves on 27 different boards and wouldn't be available.

Hamsher's motion died for lack of a second, and Britton asked him to address the

questions raised during the meeting and bring the matter back at the March 28 court meeting.

The court reached consensus to advise the county budget committee when it meets March 19 to find a way to fund the natural resource adviser position through January 2019.

Myers later told the Eagle that he was concerned about hiring a person to fill the position for such a short period of time. He also noted that five county court candidates in this year's election were in the room during the discussion, and the court's makeup could dramatically change by next January.

Hamsher has filed to run against Myers for the county judge position, and six candidates have filed to fill Britton's position. Britton is not running for re-election.

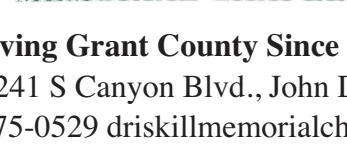
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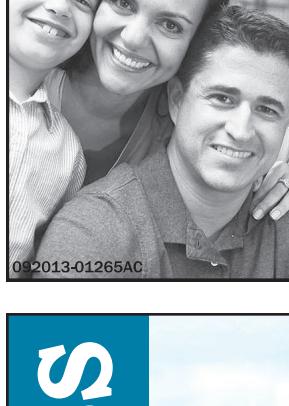
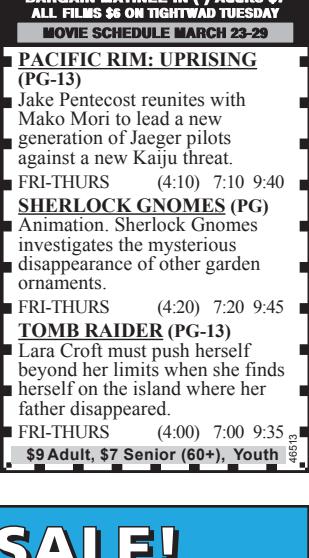
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