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## Secure Rural Schools funding restored for two years

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County will receive more than \$3.7 million in federal funding from the Secure Rural Schools act (SRS) and payment-in-lieu of taxes (PILT), the Grant County Court learned last week.

As provided in the 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Bill signed by President Donald Trump March 23, SRS payments were reauthorized for fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

SRS funding helps provide resources for essential local services like schools, roads and law enforcement in Oregon's rural forested communities, Rep. Greg Walden said in a press release. As chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Walden authorized the sale of a portion of the nation's strategic petroleum reserve to pay for the two-year SRS extension.

Grant County's estimated SRS payment for fiscal year 2017 is \$3.1 million. The county's estimated PILT payment for 2018 will be \$651,861.

According to data provided by Grant County Treasurer Julie Ellison, the county received \$3.5 million from the Department of Agriculture for fiscal year 2017 but only \$200,248 for fiscal year 2018. The county court had a mixed reaction to the news.

"It's a good deal for us," Grant County Judge Scott Myers told the Eagle. "It's not a permanent fix by any stretch of the imagination. We need timber receipts — activity on the forest with monetary benefits to the county."

Myers said he admired the forest stewardship work performed by Iron Triangle, but that provided local employment without bringing in timber receipts. He recalled a time when local timber mills were busy and more logs were coming in from the forests.

"It made a big difference — more money was available for schools, roads and Grant County's cities," he said.

Commissioner Jim Hamsher applauded the reauthorization.

"It's very good news," he told the Eagle. "It will make a world of difference for the small cities and schools."

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## Presidential wallet



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter  
**Ten-year-old Sawyer Quinton, who sent President Trump a handmade duct tape wallet with a patriotic design, shows another one of his many creations.**

### President Trump lauds Canyon City boy's craftsmanship and inventiveness

By Angel Carpenter  
Blue Mountain Eagle

**T**en-year-old entrepreneur Sawyer Quinton is taking to heart some encouraging words in a personal letter from President Donald Trump.

Quinton launched SQ Wallets last year, creating wallets from duct tape, and was inspired when he came across a roll of tape featuring an American flag pattern. He said the design made him think of the president, so he made a wallet, emblazoned with "Trump," and sent it to 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

"Because he's a businessman, I thought it would be cool to send him a wallet," he said.

In his letter to Trump, Quinton told the president about his business and said he is "making America Great Again one wallet at a time."

"I would just like to thank you for making America Great Again," Quinton wrote, "... I would like you to have this duct tape wallet that I made."

Quinton said he sent the wallet to Trump in early December and checked the mail daily, hoping to hear back.

In February, a manila envelope arrived. It was from the president.

In a letter, Trump thanked Quinton for the wallet and said he loved the patriotic design.

"Your craftsmanship and business spirit are impressive," Trump wrote. "I am inspired every day by the inventiveness of young Americans, like you, who take the initiative to create products and start businesses. You are a very promising entrepreneur."

The president congratulated Quinton for his success and wished

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The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

**Sawyer Quinton received a letter encouraging him to follow his dreams from President Donald Trump after sending a duct tape wallet he made for the president to the White House.**



Contributed photo

**Sawyer Quinton was 9 years old when he sent this wallet to President Trump.**



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

**Sawyer Quinton shows the inside of one of his handmade duct tape wallets.**



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

**Sawyer Quinton of Canyon City shows a collection of SQ Wallets he made.**

## 17 years of crime and punishment

### Sgt. Damon Rand hangs up his badge

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

After 17 years with the John Day Police Department, Damon Rand has given his notice and moved on. His last day with the department was March 5.

"I saw the handwriting on the wall," he said. "I wanted to be ahead of

all that." Rand said he was concerned with the direction City Manager Nick Green was taking the department. His departure left the city with two full-time certified officers, down from four in 2017.

### Long-held goal

Rand moved to Grant County in 1992 and graduated from Long Creek School three years later. His stepfather, John Pebley, was a Grant County sheriff's deputy, and his aunt is Valerie Maynard, the John Day 911 dispatch manager, but Rand said his interest in a law enforcement career started when he was young.

After high school, he worked at the Prairie Wood Products mill and then with Dakom Logging before landing a job as a corrections deputy at the Grant County Jail. He signed on as a reserve officer with the John Day Police Department in 2001 and five years later became a certified police officer.

Rand took on acting chief duties in October 2013 after Chief Richard Tirico suddenly resigned and Sgt. Richard Gray was away elk hunting. On Sept. 1, 2014, after four weeks at the police academy in Salem, Rand was promoted to sergeant.

"As officers, we're always studying, keeping up on case law and training," he said.

During his time at John Day, Rand served as the department's evidence tech, logging in evidence and tracking items sent to the state crime lab — and making sure property was returned to its owners after a case closed.

Rand also managed the department's shooting range.

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Sgt. Damon Rand

## Kitzhaber agrees to settle ethics case for \$20K



Capital Bureau/Paris Achen

**Former Gov. John Kitzhaber speaks to the Oregon Ethics Commission in Salem in February.**

By Paris Achen  
Capital Bureau

Former Gov. John Kitzhaber has agreed to settle a state ethics case against him for \$20,000.

The proposed agreement between the Oregon Ethics Commission and the former governor who resigned in February 2015 amid an influence-peddling scandal is 20 times more than a previous proposed settlement, which the commission rejected.

In February, the ethics commission voted to pursue 10 alleged violations of state ethics law by Kitzhaber.

The "preliminary findings of violation" were based on

a 135-page report released in February by state investigators.

Kitzhaber violated law prohibiting use of his office for personal financial gain at least twice when he took actions that benefited his fiancée, Cylvia Hayes's environmental consulting firm, 3E Strategies, in the report. Hayes lived in the governor's residence in Salem with Kitzhaber, and her payments from clients were counted as part of the couple's household income in mandatory statements of economic interest.

"The commission made no finding that former Governor Kitzhaber intentionally used

his position as governor to advance the financial interests of Ms. Hayes or 3E Strategies," states the proposed stipulated final order, released March 28. "Such intent is not a necessary element."

As governor, he was "personally responsible to ensure that he did not engage in any policy decisions, discussions, speeches, meetings, directives to staff or official actions that would further the financial interest of 3E Strategies," they wrote.

Kitzhaber attended meetings for which Hayes was either being paid or was seeking contracts with environmental

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