

Mobile Vet Center coming to John Day

First visit will be May 23 at Elks Lodge

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

Special counseling for veterans will become available in John Day through the use of a Mobile Vet Center vehicle, which will arrive for its first visit May 23.

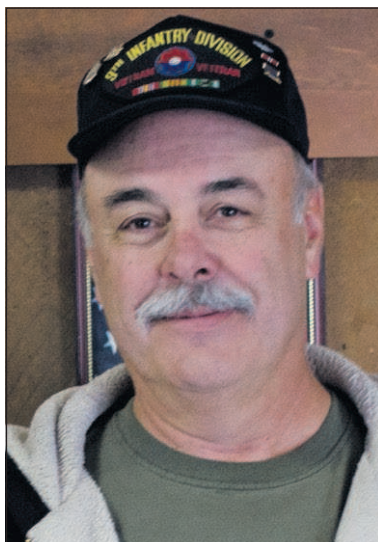
The RV-type vehicle will be at the John Day Elks Lodge from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., according to Greg Ford, the veteran outreach specialist at the Central Oregon Veteran Center in Bend. The vehicle will travel to John Day on the fourth Wednesday of each month until weather prevents travel, he said.

The Department of Veterans Affairs Readjustment Counseling Services maintains a fleet of 70 Mobile Vet Centers. Each vehicle provides confidential counseling space for direct service provision and features state-of-the-art satellite communications, Ford said.

The VA's goal is to provide focused outreach to communities that



Katee Hoffman



Bob Van Voorhis

do not meet the requirements for a brick-and-mortar vet center but where there are eligible veterans, service members and families in need of counseling services, Ford said.

"In many instances, these communities are distant from existing services and are considered rural or highly rural," he said.

Counseling services will be made available to eligible combat veterans and their families and people who suffered military sexual trauma, in addition to bereavement counseling for family members who lost an active-duty service member, Ford said.

Bob Van Voorhis, an active supporter of local veterans in the John

Day area, said he and John Day Elks Lodge members pushed hard for these services.

"It's one of our guiding principles to help vets," he said.

Van Voorhis said about 780 self-identifying veterans live in Grant County. If those who wish to maintain their privacy are included, the total is probably about 1,000, he said.

"About one third of vets live in rural areas," he said.

Van Voorhis said the Mobile Vet Center service is new to Eastern Oregon and will make monthly trips to John Day, Burns and Christmas Valley. He said the program will be in transition this summer and could ramp up to include Ford, a nurse and a counselor, depending on participation by local veterans.

The service will help fill a void left after Steve Bull, the former director of the VA clinic in Burns, retired. Bull traveled to John Day on Wednesdays to meet with about a dozen veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. The program ended after about two years when Bull left, and veterans were

expected to travel to Burns or Boise, Idaho, for similar counseling.

Katee Hoffman, the Grant County Veteran Services Officer, called the Mobile Vet Center "a good idea."

"The outreach will help," she said. "Being at the Elks Lodge is good because the veterans are already comfortable going there."

She noted that many veterans prefer counseling through Veterans Centers because they don't share information with the VA.

"Many veterans want confidentiality," she said.

Hoffman said she was looking into whether the Grant County People Mover could provide rides to the Mobile Vet Center when it comes to John Day for veterans living in Monument, Long Creek or other outlying areas.

Hoffman wanted to remind veterans her office has moved from the Grant County Courthouse to the L Building in John Day. Her new address is 530 E. Main St., Suite 5. The American flag will be flying outside when she's in the office, she said.

The deadline for What's Happening items is 5 p.m. Friday. Call the Eagle, 541-575-0710, or email editor@bmeagle.com. For meetings this week, see our list in the classifieds.

THURSDAY, MAY 17

Chamber of commerce meeting

• 10:30 a.m., chamber office, 301 W. Main St., John Day

The public is welcome to attend the business and board meeting of the Grant County Chamber of Commerce, with an adjournment to the Outpost restaurant at noon. The guest speaker will be Grant County Fair Manager Mindy Winegar. For more information, call the chamber at 541-575-0547.

Farmers market meeting

• 5:30 p.m., Outpost restaurant, John Day

People interested in becoming a part of the local farmers market are encouraged to attend the meeting, with a no-host dinner. Updated guidelines and vendor applications will be available. For more information, call 541-932-4718 or 541-733-8778.

FRIDAY, MAY 18

Interior decorating class

• 6:30 p.m., House to Home, 131 E. Main St., John Day

The first of a three-part feng shui series, the class's theme is "Making the most of small spaces." The cost is \$5, and participants can register on House to Home's Facebook page or in the store on the sign-up sheet. For more information, call Kattie Piazza at 541-575-0233.

Jeff Crosby & the Refugees concert

• 7 p.m., Madden Brothers Performing Arts Center, John Day

Doors open at 6 p.m. Opening act Brass Tacks plays at 7 p.m. The headliner starts at 8:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$15-30, available at maddenbrothers.tix.com or at the door.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY, MAY 18-19

Community art show

• 5-8 p.m. Friday
• 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday
• Madden Brothers Performing Arts Center, John Day

Artists, photographers and authors are encouraged to display their work at the 12th annual art show. Art will be accepted from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, May 17, and from 10 a.m. to noon Friday, May 18. There will be a \$5 charge for displaying three pieces of work from artists and photographers, and a \$5 charge for authors. Help setting up for the show would be appreciated. To enter work into the show or for more information, contact Patricia Ross at 541-932-4856 or Joan Hopper at 541-379-8963.



Eagle file photo

Brady Long prepares oysters at the Seneca Oyster Feed last year. The event will take place Saturday, May 19, this year.

SATURDAY, MAY 19

Lake Creek Youth Camp cleanup

• 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Lake Creek Camp, Logan Valley

Anyone interested in helping clean up can show up, and groups of three or more may call ahead in order to provide a general head count for lunch, which will be provided for the volunteers. Those who plan to be working outside are asked to bring gloves and rakes. For more information, call RoseAnn Palmer at 541-575-2831.

Living History tours

• 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Grant County Historical Museum, Canyon City

Tours will cover the museum, featuring live actors and presentations of Grant County's background and some of its most famous figures, and will also visit nearby St. Thomas Episcopal Church, a 142-year-old church that has survived three fires during Canyon City's history. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 7-17, and children under 7 are free. Participants are asked to preregister at bmlt.org/upcoming-events/2018/5/19/living-history. For more information, visit the registration website or call Blue Mountain Land Trust at 541-620-5754.

Seneca Oyster Feed

• Noon, Seneca park

The 27th annual Seneca Oyster Feed will feature live music, a softball tournament, a golf scramble and all-you-can-eat oysters. A hamburger stand will also be open, and a beer garden will be provided by 1188 Brewing. A raffle and silent auction will hand out over \$1,000 in prizes. The People Mover will provide shuttle services from John Day to Seneca. Citywide yard sales will be held during the event. To register for softball, call Andrea at 541-620-2603; for the golf scramble, call Shane at 541-620-4910. For more information, contact Seneca City Hall, 541-542-2161.

MONDAY, MAY 21

Donkey basketball

• 6 p.m., Grant Union Junior-Senior High School new gym

All are welcome for a fun-filled family night watching teams from John Day, Prairie City, Seneca and Mt. Vernon battle it out on the donkey basketball court. Advance tickets are \$8 for adults, \$6 for students in grades 7-12 and \$4 for those in grades K-6. At the door, prices are \$2 more. Tickets are available at Les Schwab Tires, Ed Staub & Sons and from any Grant Union FFA member. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, MAY 22

Spring concert

• 7 p.m., Grant Union Junior-Senior High School

The Grant Union junior and senior bands and combined choir will present their spring concert with a superhero theme at the new gym at the school.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23

Choir and handbell concert

• 6:30 p.m., New Life Bible Church, Long Creek

The Singers and Handbell Choir of Cornerstone Bible Institute, based in Hot Springs, South Dakota, will perform. For more information, contact the church at 541-421-3888.

Grant County Democrats meeting

• 6:30 p.m., Canyon City Community Hall

Local Democrats are encouraged to attend. For information, call 541-542-2633.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 30

Malheur National Forest open house

• 5 p.m., Grant County Regional Airport

The public is encouraged to learn about projects and activities being implemented in the Blue Mountain and Prairie City ranger districts during 2018. Subject matter consists of on-the-ground projects that have completed the planning phase. A comprehensive map will be available at the open house, and can also be found at fs.usda.gov/malheur. For more information, call 541-575-3000.

BABY STEPS
Birth & Beyond

We believe having a baby means so much more than just labor and delivery. Prenatal classes help parents feel calm and confident with the birthing process, while reducing the duration of labor. Parents also gain a profound awareness of the importance of their role. The first 1,000 days of a child's life provide the foundation for success in school and in life.

This prenatal class will cover:

- Touring the family birthing unit
- Prenatal and postpartum nutrition
- Relief of common discomforts during pregnancy
- Creating a birth plan
- Stages of Labor
- Comfort Measures & relaxation tools during labor

Please call
FAMILIES FIRST
to register, 541-575-1006

Blue Mountain Hospital
www.bluemountainhospital.org

For more information
CALL 541-575-1006

Families First
PARENT RESOURCE CENTER

Teresa Aasness ffedta@gmail.com or Katrina Randleas fffvkat@gmail.com

CENTRAL OREGON MOBILE VET CENTER

WHEN/WHERE
May 23rd in John Day-Elks Lodge
May 24th in Burns - Hines Thriftway
May 25th in Christmas Valley-Community Clinic

WHO ARE WE?
CENTRAL OREGON VET CENTER
1645 NE FORBES RD, SUITE 105
BEND, OR 97702
541-749-2112

WWW.VETCENTER.VA.GOV

Mission Statement:
To welcome home and honor those who served, those still serving, and their families by reaching out to them, engaging their communities, and providing them with quality readjustment counseling and timely referral.

READJUSTMENT COUNSELING
Civilians...they just don't get it!
Come down and let's talk...Veteran to Veteran.

BENEFITS
Find out about what is available that you may have earned.

For more information contact
Grant County Veterans 541 620-8057