

Ankle monitors track offenders in real time

Alcohol monitors conduct tests on the half hour

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle



Todd McKinley

Tracking offenders has come a long way from the days of blood hounds and knocking on doors. Ankle monitors with real-time global-positioning system technology will soon be available for use by the Grant County Community Corrections office.

Attached to an ankle with a bracelet capable of alerting staff if it's tampered with, the GPS monitors will constantly transmit a signal informing corrections staff of an offender's exact location.

The goal is to allow offenders a chance to continue working — earning money needed to support a family, make house payments or even to pay fines and restitution while making sure they stay out of further trouble.

A contract with Vigilnet to provide an unlimited supply of monitoring bracelets to the Grant County Community Corrections office is under review, but the staff has been trained and has 10 units available now, Community Corrections Director Todd McKinley said. The devices cost the county nothing until they are attached to an offender and put to use.

The office has tested the monitoring system on a Grant County offender using a Vigilnet unit borrowed from Harney County, which has seen success with the devices, he said.

"I was pleasantly surprised at how well they work," McKinley said.

Vigilnet also provides continuous transdermal alcohol-monitoring devices that detect chemicals emitted from the skin of anyone who consumes alcohol. The tests take place every 30 minutes but, unlike the GPS monitors, the data must be uploaded to special equipment on a regular basis.

Offenders could have a wireless device in their home or come to the Com-

munity Corrections office, McKinley said. They simply sit down near the device for about five minutes while the data is uploaded, he said.

McKinley said some type of ankle-monitoring devices may have been used in Grant County in the past, but they weren't as sophisticated as the current devices.

His office currently has five GPS monitors and five alcohol monitoring devices, but the contract with Vigilnet can be expanded for as many devices as are needed. As soon as the contract is approved, offenders who fit the criteria for release will be fitted with the devices.

In some cases, use of the device will allow an offender to get out of jail and return to work. In other cases, offenders who would have been released on probation can now be tracked more thoroughly.

Corrections staff can set up inclusion and exclusion zones on a digitized map so offenders who cross those boundaries trigger an alarm. The monitors can be used on juveniles as well as adults, but that will depend upon the types of sentences a judge will issue.

McKinley said he is developing policies on how to use the ankle monitors, but he expects offenders who want to use them will end up helping to pay for them. If they damage a device, they will be responsible for the replacement cost, he said.

Overall, the ankle monitoring system is expected to save money for the county and be a cost-effective method to monitor medium-risk offenders, McKinley said.

Crews mop up 30 acre wildfire near Starr Campground

Blue Mountain Eagle

Malheur National Forest crews extinguished a fire approximately 2 miles northwest of Starr Campground near Forest Road 4920.

Forest Service officials stated in a press release that the fire, estimated at approximately 30 acres, started Thursday when a falling snag struck a powerline.

Resources, including three engines and 11 firefighters, staffed the fire throughout the night. Additional crews were dispatched in the morning.

Crews prepped existing roads and constructed about 200 hundred yards of line to contain the fire.

For information about fire restrictions, visit fs.usda.gov/malheur or call 541-575-3000.

John Day Taxi

September is
CASH CAB MONTH!

4 questions, 4 prizes!

Call 541-620-4255 for a ride & try your luck!

Cowpie, formerly known as John Day Taxi, is not a taxi service, per se; we cannot pick up riders off the street who are hailing cabs. Instead, Cowpie is a car-for-hire service that relies on cell-phone tech to dispatch drivers and manage fees. Also unlike taxi services, Cowpie drivers do not possess special licenses; rather, we use our personal vehicles to offer discounted-fare rides - a snazzy bright blue Turbo for ride-sharing, a big Dodge Ram 4x4 for the heavier stuff. This month we're celebrating our 2 year anniversary by starting a (cash cab) type quiz game based on Oregon history, reduced fare prize based on difficulty of the question. You may answer the question yourself, call a friend or shout out to a bystander, like the show. No fair Googling.



Richie Colbeth
Owner/Operator

78317



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Silvie Holliday, 9, and Clyde Holliday, 11, exit Frank Stinnett's airplane during Saturday's Fly-In at the Grant County Regional Airport in John Day.

Fly-In draws a crowd

Blue Mountain Eagle

Saturday's Fly-In & Breakfast gave the opportunity for 79 children and chaperones to soar over Grant County.

Four seasoned pilots, Bob Baggett, Frank Stinnett, Robert Watt and Doug Ferguson of Grant County Air Search provided 33 flights in all.

Tom Berry, also a longtime pilot with the air search crew, showed visitors his plane, discussing airplanes and aviation.

Ron Lundbom flew his ultralight over the event with a candy drop for the children, and Dave Traylor did a flyby in his powered parachute with the United States flag.

Children also had the opportunity to examine a Blue Mountain Hospital District ambulance.

The Forest Service opened their helicopter simulators for exploration, and Oregon Department of Forestry conducted a water drop from one of their helicopters pouring out 343 gallons of water.

The Safflebit Dinner House offered a breakfast menu.

"We had a great turnout this year, and the weather was perfect for flying," said airport manager Haley Walker who organized the event.



Contributed photo/Charlene Ferguson

Dave Traylor flies a flag over the Fly-In visitors on Saturday in his powered parachute aircraft.



Contributed photo/Charlene Ferguson

Children run on the tarmac toward the candy drop during Saturday's Fly-In event at the Grant County Regional Airport in John Day.



Contributed photo/Charlene Ferguson

Ron Lundbom, left, chats with a visitor at Saturday's Grant County Fly-In. Lundbom made a candy drop for children, flying his ultralight aircraft.

Online Distance Education Opportunity Available



Burnt River School
An Oregon Public Charter School

We are:

- A free, public, accredited school.
- Available online or locally.
- A group of highly qualified, accountable caring, supportive teachers.
- Able to provide one-to-one instruction!
- Able to provide home school support.

We are not:

- Willing to let you slip through the cracks.

To enroll visit our website at :

www.burntriver.k12.or.us

If you have additional questions, we would enjoy visiting with you about our program.
Please call 541-446-3336.

Committee Volunteers Needed

Grant County is now recruiting volunteers to serve on active boards and committees. Obtain an Application to Volunteer from County Court, 201 S. Humbolt, No. 280, Canyon City, OR 97820; (541-575-0059)

wrightl@grantcounty-or.gov
Applications are due by
Friday, October 5th, 2018

Committees are formal public bodies required to comply with Oregon Public Meetings Law ORS 192.610.

Senior Citizens Advisory Council ORS 410.210. Five members serve three year terms and meet semi-annually to define the needs of older adults, promote special interests and local community involvement, and represent senior citizens as an advocate to the local, state and federal government and other organizations.

78358