



Wednesday, December 12, 2018

150th Year • No. 50 • 18 Pages • \$1.00

BlueMountainEagle.com

Missing hiker recovered from Fields Peak

By RICHARD HANNERS
Blue Mountain Eagle

Search and rescue crews located the body of a hiker Dec. 6 on a steep southwest slope on Fields Peak.

Lucas Francesco Cavalle, 38, of Mt. Vernon, was found about 11:45 a.m. and was extricated from the scene by Grant County Search and Rescue personnel, Grant County Sheriff Glenn

Palmer said in a press release.

He had been missing since Dec. 3.

An investigation into his cause of death is ongoing, and the Oregon State Medical Examiner's Office has ordered an autopsy.

A preliminary investigation indicated that Cavalle had attempted to build a fire but was unsuccessful.

Temperatures were in the single digits, with winds and 9-10

inch deep snow, Palmer said.

Cavalle was wearing hiking boots, blue jeans, shirts and a jacket. He also had a backpack.

He was reported missing by his girlfriend at 12:30 p.m. on Dec. 4 after failing to return from a hike the previous day. Cavalle recently moved to Grant County and was unfamiliar with the area.

Cavalle told a shuttle driver he was going for a hike and planned to be picked up the next morning,

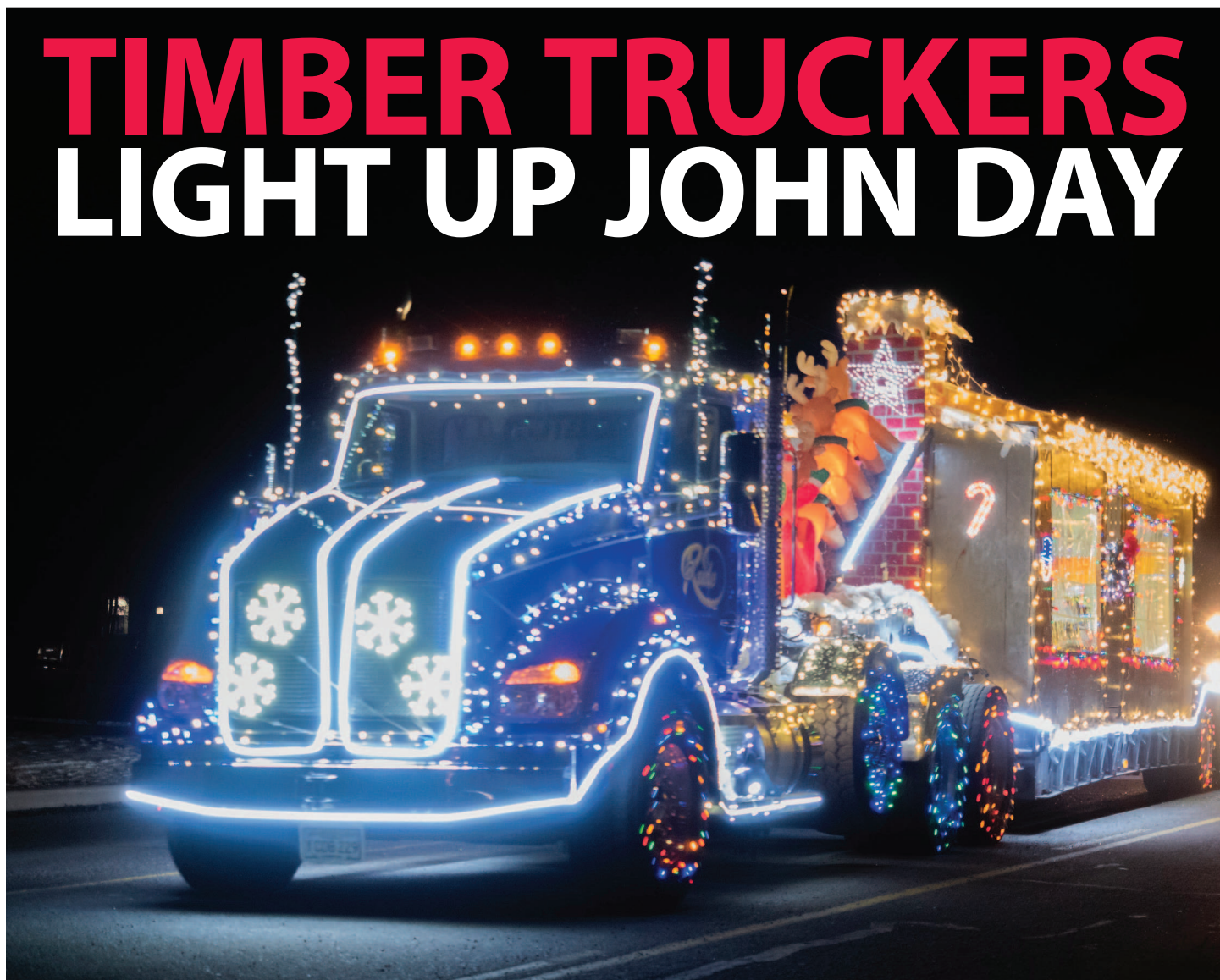
but he didn't get on the shuttle or report to work.

He told several people he planned to hike from the Fields Peak area north toward his residence between Mt. Vernon and Dayville, about 9 miles away. The area where he planned to hike had about 5-10 inches of snow and was steep and rocky in places.

Members of the Grant County Sheriff's Office, GCSO Search &

Rescue, BLM and Forest Service law enforcement, local Amateur Radio Emergency Service, local Air Search Group, search and rescue personnel from Crook, Baker, Morrow and Deschutes counties, Life Flight of Oregon, the Oregon Army National Guard and others assisted in the search effort.

A K-9 team, drone aircraft, helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft flew over the area during the search.



Contributed photo

The Rude Logging entry in the 2018 Timber Truckers parade in John Day on Dec. 8 won first place in the timber category and second place in the people's choice as well as the sweepstakes award.

By RICHARD HANNERS
Blue Mountain Eagle



Leslie Traylor has headed up organization of the Timber Truckers parade in John Day for 17 years.

Flashing lights and honking horns filled the brisk night air in downtown John Day Dec. 8 as the 25th annual Timber Truckers Light Parade rumbled down Main Street.

Spectators braved the cold to cheer on the decorated logging trucks, Forest Service rigs, commercial vehicles and family rides. There were 35 entries this year.

D.R. Johnson is credited with initiating the parade, organizer Leslie Traylor told the Eagle. He operated Prairie Wood Products in Prairie City and Grant Western Lumber Co. in John Day at the time.

See Parade, Page A18



The Eagle/Alixandra Hand

The Rude Logging entry in the 2018 Timber Truckers parade in John Day on Dec. 8 won first place in the timber category and second place in the people's choice as well as the sweepstakes award.

Bend man linked to local crime spree

Vehicles, firearms, other valuables recovered

By RICHARD HANNERS
Blue Mountain Eagle

A 27-year-old man from Bend who is being held in Grant County Jail is facing multiple charges for burglary, theft and unauthorized use of a motor vehicle after a series of crimes were reported on Dec. 5.

According to a Grant County Sheriff's Office press release, the first call to John Day dispatch came at 4:40 p.m. and involved a stolen motor vehicle in the Belshaw Creek area west of Mt. Vernon. Sheriff's deputies and state police responded.

Shortly afterward, dispatchers received two more calls involving a burglary in the John Day area and a firearm west of Mt. Vernon. During the course of the investigations, Stephen Meeks was identified as a suspect in the cases.

John Day police spotted Meeks the next morning around 11 a.m. as he exited a vehicle on Main Street. Meeks was taken into custody without incident by John Day police and state police.

He is being held in county jail on a felony warrant, and the investigation is ongoing. According to Oregon State Police dispatch records, two stolen vehicles, firearms, currency and other valuables were recovered.

Local law enforcement officials advise people who saw Meeks in the area since Dec. 3 or who have been the victim of a burglary to call the sheriff's office at 541-575-1131, John Day police at 541-575-0030 or Oregon State Police John Day Outpost at 541-575-0471.

Meeks is described as 6 feet tall and 180 pounds with short dark hair, a dark complexion, a facial tattoo and tattoos on his hand and left arm. He previously had a goatee or trimmed facial hair.

Sheriff Glenn Palmer reminds county residents to secure their vehicles and homes and to report any suspicious activity as soon as it is safe to do so.

City projects hit financial hurdles

By RICHARD HANNERS
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day City Councilor Paul Smith summed up in one word the key factor influencing economic development plans during a special meeting at Grant County Regional Airport on Dec. 4 — money.

The Grant County Digital Network Coalition learned Nov. 29 that it wasn't selected for a \$2.9 million federal Community Connect grant, which will set back internet improvement plans until alternative funding can be found.

The council learned during the special meeting about funding difficulties or setbacks for the city's commercial greenhouse plans, aquatics facility and street projects.

Greenhouse plans

Materials for construction of five bays for a commercial greenhouse at the former Oregon Pine mill site were shipped by Euromex and are now in storage in John Day, City Manager Nick Green told the council.

While the first three bays would be dedicated to growing produce with confirmed local buyers, the use of the two additional bays to grow hops for craft beer makers was more risky and would be dependent on partnering with OSU and finding solid markets, Green explained.

But following a discouraging meeting with officials from Oregon State University and Business Oregon on Nov. 28, Green recommended against expanding the



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

Left to right, John Day City Councilors Paul Smith and Gregg Haberly and Mayor Ron Lundbom vote during a special joint meeting at the Grant County Regional Airport on Dec. 4.

greenhouse project from three bays to five.

"OSU is not able to directly invest

financial resources into our project currently," Green said. "They have faculty experience growing hops but do not have faculty with experience in hydroponic hops and very limited experience with hydroponics."

Furthermore, OSU's budgets had not recovered from pre-recession levels, Green said, so the university could not hire staff with the relevant experience unless they were grant-funded.

City staff also spoke to Ted Hausotter of Hop Heaven, a hop distributor in Baker City, about establishing a market for fresh hops in Eastern Oregon.

See Projects, Page A18

