



The Eagle/Richard Hanners

**Ken Kirby is the new manager at the Les Schwab Tire Centers store in John Day.**

## John Day tire store has new manager

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

Ken Kirby has taken over management of the Les Schwab Tire Centers store in John Day. He replaces Cork Humphrey, who retired after 41 years.

Kirby grew up in Fossil. After graduating from Wheeler High School in 1997, he spent six years at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario and then went to work for Les Schwab in Bend.

"I'll have 21 years with Les Schwab in April," he said.

The company has roots in Central Oregon, and the John Day store is the fifth in the corporate chain, open for business since May 1, 1957.

Les Schwab was born in Bend in 1907. He founded the tire company shortly after he bought OK Rubber Welders in Prineville in 1952. That little tire shop grew to a chain of 488 stores by 2018 operating in

eight states with more than 7,000 employees.

Schwab died in 2007. The company moved its headquarters from Prineville to Bend in 2008. The company conducted more than \$1.8 billion in annual sales in 2018 and was the second largest independent tire retailer in the U.S.

The company is well known for hosting sporting events and sponsoring charitable programs. The 23rd annual Les Schwab Invitational basketball tournament featuring NBA stars was held in December 2018 in Hillsboro.

"We like anything to do with youths," Kirby said.

Locally, Les Schwab has partnered with the Oregon FFA for the Drive Away Hunger food drive, hosted the annual Icebreaker Tournament for high school baseball teams, offered a rifle to the winner of the Big Buck Contest and co-sponsored a tractor pull at the county fairgrounds.



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**Brad Clemens of B & M Timber LLC fells a tree. His company was named Eastern Oregon Area Operator of the Year for 2018.**

## Burns logger named Operator of the Year

By Blue Mountain Eagle

Harney County logger Brad Clemens of B & M Timber LLC in Burns has been chosen as 2018 Operator of the Year for the Eastern Oregon Area. The Oregon Board of Forestry will honor Clemens at its March 9 meeting in Salem. Other awardees are Jay Browning, J.M. Browning Logging Inc. of Astoria, for Northwest Oregon and Dave Wilkerson, Dave Wilkerson Logging LLC in Eagle Point, for Southern Oregon.

The board gives the Operator of the Year awards to recognize those who, while harvesting timber or doing other forestry work, protect natural resources at a level that goes above and beyond requirements of the Oregon Forest Practices Act. That law requires people to harvest responsibly and protect streams and water quality, protect and enhance habitat and

reduce landslide risks. The law also requires landowners to replant forests after harvesting.

Private Forests Division Chief Lena Tucker said, "These operators have shown how they can harvest needed wood products in Oregon forests while protecting natural resources. We're pleased to honor the excellent care and diligence they demonstrate, often in challenging circumstances."

Clemens earned the Eastern Oregon Operator of the Year award for minimizing soil disturbance during a winter harvest in a narrow valley while also protecting a fish-bearing stream that runs through the valley. Clemens has also been recognized for helping multiple landowners by careful salvage logging of their properties after a devastating 2015 wildfire in Eastern Oregon.



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**Grant County Search and Rescue trains with their side-by-sides last summer.**

# Search and rescue team keeps busy in Grant County

Deputy Dave Dobler is SAR coordinator

By Angel Carpenter  
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Search and Rescue team of the Grant County Sheriff's Office has had a busy winter.

In December, the group responded to six incidents, locating an overdue woodcutter and snowmobiler, a motorist stuck in the snow, an overdue hunter and an injured hunter.

On Dec. 6, SAR located the body of a missing hiker who was new to the area. The call to find Lucas Cavalle came Dec. 4 after he'd already been missing overnight in subzero temperatures near Fields Peak, west of Mt. Vernon.

Deputy Dave Dobler was hired on in August as the SAR coordinator and as a part-time forest patrol deputy for Grant County, working under Sheriff Glenn Palmer.

"For this size of a community, I think people would be stunned by the number of incidents that occur," Dobler said.

He brings a wide range of experience to his work in search and rescue and law enforcement, including several years with the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office where he was an SAR coordinator and training officer. He also spent time there as a canine supervisor, forest patrol officer, arson investigator and SWAT team member, he said.

His work history, dating back to 1982, includes stints with the Port of Portland Police and, later, Portland Police Bureau, working as a fraud and identity theft investigator. Most recently, Dobler was a deputy and undersheriff and SAR coordinator at the Wheeler County Sheriff's Office.

His work as the local coordinator includes administrative duties, such as reporting on the unit's missions, including how they deployed, and evaluations once incidents conclude. He also submits state reports, summarizing personnel hours and how far a missing person was located from the point last seen.

While he is usually manning the incident command



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**The Search and Rescue unit of the Grant County Sheriff's Office and mutual aid searchers meet at Fields Creek Road and Highway 26 during their mission to locate missing hiker Lucas Cavalle on Dec. 6. The SAR team had mutual aid from Deschutes, Morrow, Crook and Baker counties during the search. In the photo, Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer is fourth from right and SAR coordinator Dave Dobler is second from right.**

post for most missions, Dobler is also on the ground for some searches.

As busy as they've been, he said they are seeking more SAR members.

They have a roster of about 25 volunteers, with about a third of those active and another third as active as work will allow, he said.

He added there are many different parts to keeping the search and rescue running — more than just strong hikers who search in brutal weather conditions.

"Resource management is a big part of SAR — making the most of limited resources," Dobler said.

He said people who work in the background, including those who operate radios, shuttle people around and bring food supplies, play an important role.

"It's a good team to be on," he said. "It's nice to work together and see the fruits of your labor and be able to help people in the community."

He said SAR teams are tight and, when they operate as a unit, are more than the sum of all their parts.

"It's kind of a synergy," he said. "It doesn't take too many missions where you've helped someone or saved a life to be hooked."

He said regular trainings are improving, and the group is working more closely with Grant County Air Search and ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service), planning a coordinated training mission in the spring.

There are also people who provide help with their ATVs, UTVs and snowmobiles.

Others giving specialized assistance include Cindy Lemcke, who owns two search and rescue dogs. Gabby is a long-haired German shepherd trained in scent-specific trail, which means she can search for a specific individual. Mr. Oak is a 6-month-old German shepherd and Dutch shepherd mix in training. Kim Kell, also an SAR member, helps Lemcke train the dogs.

"(Gabby) doesn't have to follow every footstep a missing person left," Lemcke said. "She's trained to follow the scent, so her goal is to get to the missing person the closest and fastest way."

SAR members deploy when a rescue is needed, and they also spend time educating the public on safety measures to avoid sticky, even dangerous, situations.

Dobler said they are planning a Lucas Cavalle Initiative, reaching out at snowparks and trailheads with basic safety tips as well as sharing information with local students and community groups who would like training tips and techniques.

Some of these safety tips include:

- Use the buddy system when exploring. Don't hike or snowmobile alone.
- Let someone know your travel plans, and if those plans change, notify them.
- Prepare for the conditions, such as winter travel.
- Keep emergency supplies, including blankets, flashlight, batteries, food, water, proper clothing and fire starting materials.
- Travel with a full tank of fuel.
- Know how to use a map and compass.
- Know how to make a fire.

Carry a strobe light or a brightly colored military signal tarp or panel, which helps Air Search locate missing people.

Consider purchasing a satellite-based emergency locator device.

Dobler said when Cavalle went missing, temperatures dipped to a minus 12 degree windchill.

"Unless you have training and the mindset and the right equipment, your chance of survival is low," he said. "Mindset is your biggest tool — keep your head in the game and don't panic."

People, ages 18 and up, interested in volunteering for SAR can pick up an application at the sheriff's office. Volunteers need to have a good driving record and the process includes a questionnaire, interview and background check. For more information, call the sheriff's office at 541-575-1131.

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