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New programs support local veterans

Coffee, haircuts, counseling and more offered for those who've served

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

From coffee and doughnuts and free haircuts, conversations to counseling and technical assistance — there are many ways in which veterans and others are reaching out to local veterans to show their appreciation.

Katee Hoffman at the Grant County Veterans Service Office offers an array of assistance to local vets as the county's veterans service officer.

She's also involved in other ongoing and new ways to support veterans.

A free coffee time for vets from 9-11 a.m. on Wednesdays at the John Day Elks Lodge, at 140 NE Dayton St., has been available for the past five years.

"It's just about hanging out and camaraderie with people who 'get' you," she said.

Bob Van Voorhis, a veteran, provides coffee, and Hoffman, also a veteran, brings doughnuts.

Van Voorhis, the State Elks

Southeast District Veterans chairman, said there are usually 15-20 people at the Wednesday get-togethers, including younger and older veterans.

He said they like to discuss the differences in their experiences across the generations, from the gear they used to what boot camp was like.

"As much as things change, they don't," he said, adding there is that "human, emotional side" of things.

Once a month, on the fourth

full week of the month, Greg Ford, a readjustment counselor with the Central Oregon Vet Center in Bend, attends the gathering.

Besides shooting the breeze around the table, Ford also offers confidential counseling, outreach and referral service to veterans and their families.

Ford also visits Burns and Christmas Valley during that fourth week of the month.

In one or two months, a video

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The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Grant County veterans join together for coffee on Wednesdays at the John Day Elks Lodge 1824. On Jan. 30, from left, Josh Parker of John Day (Coast Guard), Bob Van Voorhis of John Day (Army) and Greg Ford of Bend (Navy).



EXTRA MEASURES

Fish protected during highway project

By Richard Hanners
Blue Mountain Eagle

Addressing the steep slope was an expensive option and constant maintenance was not a satisfactory solution, so ODOT chose to reconstruct about 600 feet of channel.

The Oregon Department of Transportation took extra measures to protect fish in Canyon Creek during a flood mitigation project on Highway 395 last summer.

ODOT personnel from Regions 4 and 5 and ODOT Environmental Services joined local Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife crews to salvage 1,794 fish, crayfish and mussels from the creek bed at mile markers 4.5 and 7.25 south of Canyon City.

The crews used handheld nets, electrofishing equipment and buckets as summer temperatures reached 100-plus degrees, Region 5 Environmental Coordinator Paul Kennington told the Southeast Area Commission on Transportation in John Day on Jan. 28.

A total of 985 fish listed as threatened or endangered were salvaged from the creek with a mortality rate of about 1 percent, he said.

Fire impacts

Last year's Canyon Creek Flood Mitigation Project was in response to concerns about erosion and flooding following the 2015 Canyon Creek Complex fire.

Highway 395 was closed during the fire because of smoke, trees falling on the roadway, emergency vehicles and damage to guardrails, signs and asphalt, Kennington said.

Following the fire, the Forest Service's

Burned Area Emergency Response team recommended increasing the capacity of the Vance Creek and Sheep Gulch culverts, protecting a bridge at mile marker 7.25 and removing hazard trees.

In addition to being undersized, the Vance Creek structure near the hairpin turn on Highway 395 was damaged by the Canyon Creek Complex fire and fish passage was compromised, Kennington said.

Fish passage was also compromised at the Sheep Gulch structure about 4 miles south of Canyon City. The culvert was undersized and required ongoing maintenance, Kennington said.

Both structures were replaced in 2015. A giant metal culvert was used at Vance Creek, and a concrete structure was used at Sheep Gulch. Trash racks were installed at both sites.

Projects in 2018

ODOT addressed two more problems in the burned area last summer — roadway flooding and a berm in the clear zone at mile marker 4.5 and scouring at the bridge footings and upstream from the bridge at mile marker 7.25.

The bridge project was more straightforward, Kennington said. Boulders were placed upstream and around the bridge footings and partially grouted to riprap the banks and protect the bridge.

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Contributed photos/Oregon Department of Transportation

ABOVE: State personnel removed fish, crayfish and mussels from a section of Canyon Creek before it was de-watered and lined with riprap in summer 2018.

TOP PHOTO: A large plastic pipe was used to contain Canyon Creek streamflow while a section of the creek bed was de-watered and lined with riprap in summer 2018.

Oregon lawmakers unveil carbon cap and trade bill

By Aubrey Wieber
and Claire Withycombe
Oregon Capital Bureau

After nearly a year of work by a legislative committee, a bill released Thursday afternoon outlines how Oregon would drastically cut its greenhouse gas emissions and become the second state to implement a cap and trade system.

The anticipated legislation — criticized before it even appeared — instantly became the talk of the Capitol, though many legislators weren't exactly certain what had emerged. At 98 pages, the legislation is more something to devour after dinner with a bottle of wine than something to skim through between committee hearings.

Lawmakers, lobbyists and nonpartisan legislative analysts alike scrambled to read the proposal, called the Oregon Climate Action Program, branded as



Gov. Kate Brown

Legislative Concept 894.

Brad Reed, spokesman for Renew Oregon, an organization that has heavily pushed cap and trade, said the bill is a landmark environmental move that will improve the lives of Oregonians and energize the economy. If passed, the policy would start in 2021.

Reaction to the new bill was swift — and partisan. Gov. Kate Brown issued a statement soon after the legislation became public, putting her political muscle behind it.

"It is encouraging to have reached this important milestone with a bill that reflects significant work on the part of legislators, advocates, and businesses across Oregon," Brown said in a statement. "I look forward to further refine-



Sen. Michael Dembrow

ments through the legislative process to ensure the program achieves our climate goals while growing our economy."

Republicans and some business organizations criticized the legislation soon after it became publicly available, though their critiques were general.

The bill is similar to legislation introduced in 2018, in that the overarching goal is to reduce the state's carbon emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The cap is also still set at 25,000 metric tons of carbon emissions per year.

Like last year, this proposal would regulate oil companies immediately. Utilities would be given special allowances to freely exceed the limits for nine years, then start to pay — something

Reed said was too generous. In a divergence from last year's legislation, manufacturers would get 100 percent free allowances in the first year, then have fewer free allowances each year after.

"That creates the incentive to start investing in more energy-efficient operations," said state Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland. "If they don't, they're going to have to purchase on their own more and more of those allowances. This is a market-based system, so if they're able to become more efficient more quickly, they're actually going to have a valuable asset in their permits (and) will be able to sell them to other businesses that need them."

The money polluters would pay for permission to put more emissions into the air than allowed would be spent by the state on projects to help Oregon's environment.

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