



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Sheriff Glenn Palmer meets with a citizen Thursday. In a Facebook post, the sheriff said he deputized his brother Sam Palmer, a county commissioner who serves as the public information officer of the emergency operations center, and County Commissioner Jim Hamsher, who serves as the county court's liaison to the sheriff's office.

Virus

Continued from Page A1

the county's emergency operations center is working to fill open positions.

"We have no full-time volunteers at this time," Sam Palmer said. "That could change as our needs change. We get volunteers from time to time, nothing regular."

He said the Grant County Health Department does have volunteers who take phone calls.

Sam Palmer said an email was sent out to county employees asking about their availability to help at the EOC after County Judge Scott Myers suggested county employees who are unable to work from home remotely be used to fill EOC vacancies.

"The EOC needs skilled staff to help with most tasks which require specific and specialized pre-existing training, like finance," Sam Palmer said.

Myers said Economic Development Director Allison Field has helped at the EOC. Some other county employees have not been utilized.

"I have offered to help through the week if they need me, but they have not called," said Fairgrounds Manager Mindy Winegar. "My other employee has a compromised immune system and cannot."

Sam Palmer said the EOC relocated to the Grant County Regional Airport at the beginning of the month to avoid paying \$10,800 per month in rent

to stay at the Forest Service building.

Airport Manager Hailey Walker said the EOC is using most of the terminal and that the EOC is closed to the general public.

Sam Palmer said the EOC plans to continue to hold meetings with economic development, finance and medical groups and coordinate information via phone, email and through their website: gc-or-covid-19.info.

Hamsher said the EOC is working to get more personal protective equipment.

"We only got a small amount last time," he said. "Last week, we only had enough PPE for around eight to 10 tests."

Hamsher said the state assigns the PPE based on population. He also said that the EOC is working on getting COVID-19 antibody tests.

Grant County Health Department Director Kimberly Lindsay said she does not know about the condition of the county's positive COVID-19 case.

"The health department, in its function of conducting investigations, has information on positives and does the contact tracing/investigation," she said. "They are not the treatment provider of these individuals and, as such, do not have information on the status of the condition of the individual."

Sam Palmer said the person did not sign a waiver to have their information shared with law enforcement and first responders.

Schools

Continued from Page A1

who planned to start distance learning on April 8.

While Long Creek is providing online classes for students, those who do not have access to technology are receiving hard-copy packets from the classes.

"We have electronic classes, and (for) those students who do not have access to technology, packets are being created from the lessons in the electronic classes," said Karl Coghill, Long Creek superintendent.

Grant Union Junior-Senior High School Principal Ryan Gerry said the teachers for grades 7-12 would be using Google Classrooms for classes and then using Zoom for meetings and office times. The plan is for students to have access to their educational materials and submit assignments through Google Classrooms.

"We've contacted every single family to see if they have a device and have connectivity, and if they didn't have a device we loaned one of our devices that we have here," Gerry said. "Right now we're down to eight households that don't have connectivity so we're working with various providers on trying to see how we can have that taken care of."

Schools and staff have also been heavily focused on students' well-being. Schools are working hard to have weekly contact with students, whether it be via



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

Workers in a bus delivering school work packets April 1 wore face masks and gloves while handing out materials.

phone call, Google Classroom or visiting a household if needed.

"We want to provide education to students but understand the circumstances right now. We're not here to give them a full load and try to overwhelm them," Hallgarth said. "That's not our goal here (at Prairie City). Our goal is to provide them some sort of stability through learning. Our main thing is to make contact with the parents and

kids and make sure they're doing well."

Gerry said, "This is new for everybody, and we want our students to know we care about them, we're thinking about them and we're going to make it through this."

As schools progress through the pandemic, leaders have expressed their gratitude for the help from the community and the chance to work through this together.

"The entire commu-

nity of Monument School has been nothing less than amazing — students, parents, and staff! Everyone is helping out where needed and working to ensure the best outcomes for the students in this less than ideal situation," Thomas said.

"We are supporting our community. We are small and we rely on each other as a community. I think, even with social distancing, we are becoming a tighter community," Coghill said.

Resources

Continued from Page A1

COVID-19 in Grant County and provide information and links to help guide people through the programs and resources from the SBA. Click on "help" and then "businesses" to access business resources.

A misconception that

Field has heard is that there are only loans available to help small businesses, but she said there are also forgivable loans and grants. She said more grants may be available in the near future.

For example, the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan advance for up to \$10,000 does not need to be repaid if the money is spent on paid leave, maintaining payroll, increased costs due to supply chain disruption, mortgage or lease payments or repaying obligations that cannot be met due to revenue losses, according to Greg Smith, director of the Eastern Oregon University Small Business Development Center.

"Funds will be made

available within three days of a successful application, and this loan advance will not have to be repaid," according to the SBA's website.

Another recent change is that business owners who have had to lay themselves off can now file for unemployment, which was not possible before Congress passed the CARES act March 27, Field said.

"Right now, there is a lot of information coming out from state senators and representatives that updates us almost daily, and we are trying to put that information out to the businesses," Field said.

Along with the EOC and Economic Development, Oregon RAIN has provided

help by sharing emergency funding opportunities with entrepreneurs, launching virtual workshops through Zoom, collecting stories of impacted entrepreneurs, providing weekly support groups and remote one-on-one consultations.

"As we navigate these unprecedented times, it is more important than ever to support each other and continue moving forward in every way we can. Oregon RAIN is here to help," said Stephanie LeQuieu, Grant County's Oregon RAIN rural venture catalyst.

Field said, although the future may be uncertain, help is available for businesses by contacting these organizations.

In the worst of times, newspapers rise to the occasion.

While everyone struggles to understand "flattening the curve" and social distancing, who will provide you with the information about what is happening in your community?

Blue Mountain EAGLE

**Serving Grant County Since 1898
 MyEagleNews.com**

**195 N. Canyon Blvd.
 John Day Oregon 97845**

S181243-1

APRIL IS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

YES

MEANS

YES

NSVRC
National Sexual Violence Resource Center

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

www.nsvrc.org/saam #SAAM #IAsk

© 2020 National Sexual Violence Resource Center. All rights reserved.

Heart of Grant County, 541-620-1342 • Grant County Victim Assistance Program, 541-575-4026. This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WR-AX-0008 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/ program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. Designed by the Blue Mountain Eagle. Remember: sex without consent = sexual assault