

# Upcoming National Rappel Recertification Training in John Day modified over virus concerns

Blue Mountain Eagle

Because of the current coronavirus situation within the county and state, the National Rappel Recertification Training in John Day has been updated to provide for augmented smaller training groups and greater physical distancing. The plans for this nationally recognized, mission critical training have changed to reduce the impact on the local community.

The John Day Airbase will host a one week long annual refresher session, beginning April 21, for returning rappellers. Concurrently, refresher sessions will be occurring in Salmon, Idaho, and Missoula, Montana, which allows for smaller gatherings at the individual training sites.

"We have been in contact with Grant County commissioners and others to gather thoughts and provide information, and we have a good plan in place to get our firefighters and aviation experts trained in accordance with Forest Service Policy and guidance while still being sensitive to current events and possible impacts," said Anthony Hernandez, John Day Airbase manager. "While we see this as an important part of the national fire-



Eagle file photo

Two rappellers descend from a training platform at the Grant County Airport in 2017.

fighting and wildland suppression effort, we also understand the negative impact this training could have on the community at a time like this. Our current plan has crews from within the state of Oregon having little to no interaction with the local community."

Approximately 20 rappellers at a time (about 80 in total) from Oregon will utilize the 50-foot-high rappel tower, two

rappel simulators and two helicopters to accomplish their annual refresher. The training sessions are also refreshers for helicopter rappel spotters and pilots. They will be training in small groups, a crew at a time, to assist in maintaining social and physical distancing. The crews will have the capability to be self-sufficient as to not unnecessarily impact the community.

The National Rappel Recertification Training is a performance-based training setting, which requires all veteran rappellers to demonstrate full proficiency at each stage of the training. The objective is to ensure that all veteran rappellers, rappel spotters and rappel pilots receive the highest quality training experience possible.

Returning rappeller sessions are held for United States Department of Agriculture recertification purposes. The sessions involve safety review, tower training, helicopter mock ups and live rappels. Live rappels are conducted at heights up to 300 feet above the ground.

Rappelling provides for rapid deployment of personnel nationwide in locations with limited landing areas. U.S. Forest Service rappellers may respond to wildland fire, medical or all-risk incidents.

# Baker Technical Institute designs and produces face shields for health care providers to battle COVID-19

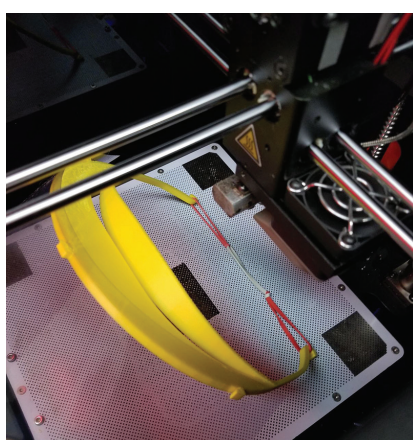
Blue Mountain Eagle

Baker Technical Institute is working to make face shields using 3D printers in their engineering lab to help Baker County health care providers and emergency first responders meet the rising need for personal protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CDC guidelines recommend that health care professionals use face shields to protect themselves when in close proximity with patients showing COVID-19 symptoms, according to a press release. The demand for this type of safety equipment has outpaced the supply across the globe, leaving hospitals and clinics without enough of what they need on a daily basis.

BTI started working initially with Saint Alphonsus Hospital in Baker City on their design needs for face shields.

"When the hospital reached out and asked if BTI could produce these, I was excited to have an opportunity to contribute to the cause," said Chris Wittich, BTI engineering instructor. "We immediately went to work on the design and began



Contributed photo

Baker Technical Institute is making face shields using 3D printers in its engineering lab.

prototype production with the use of 3D printers in our lab."

BTI completed the first models, then worked with the various health care providers to gain approval, before moving on to the production phase.

"We worked with Boise State University on the final design knowing that they

had already worked through the medical approval process," said Wittich.

The masks are made by first printing the visor, then cutting and attaching the thin plastic shield, followed by an elastic headband. The shields then are replaceable as needed. Currently, multiple printers are creating about three shields every three hours.

"Manufacturing these face shields for our health care providers is an incredible gesture from BTI. It will allow us to further protect our colleagues on the front line fighting this pandemic. This effort demonstrates BTI's innovative organizational cooperation, which is one of the many community strengths found in Baker City. We are truly grateful," said Dr. Leslie Jackson, vice president of medical affairs, Saint Alphonsus Baker City.

BTI is currently producing fully assembled face shields for Saint Alphonsus Hospital, Saint Lukes Clinic and Baker County Emergency Management.

If other communities or health care providers are in need of this product, contact BTI at bakerti.org or call 541-524-2651.

# GRANT UNION STUDENTS OF THE MONTH — FEBRUARY



7th grade  
Morgan Walker  
Parents: Kevin and Haley Walker



8th grade  
Alex Finley  
Parents: Aaron and Janita Finley



9th grade  
Shyanne Smarr  
Parents: James and Corinna Smarr



10th grade  
Lauryn Pettyjohn  
Parents: Ryan and Melissa Pettyjohn



11th grade  
Abby Lusco  
Parents: Andy and Angie Lusco



12th grade  
Donovan Smith  
Parents: Kerry John Smith and Robin Herburger

# Emerson named to TVCC president's list

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Kyla Emerson of Monument was named to the Treasure Valley Community College winter quarter president's list. Emerson achieved a 4.0 grade point average.

# Painted Sky Center for the Arts suspends in-person classes

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Painted Sky Center for the Arts is aligning with Gov. Kate Brown's stay-at-home order and suspending all in-person programming and meetings until the order has been lifted. This will affect all April classes, workshops and Painted Sky Book Club meetings. It may also impact the May watercolor workshop, which may be rescheduled.

For now, Painted Sky Summer Day Camps (June, July and August) are still scheduled to go ahead. Register if interested. If cancellation occurs at

a future date, payments will be refunded.

Virtual classes, including the Virtual Story Telling Group, and the Young Writers Club will continue as scheduled.

The Virtual Story Telling Group will "meet" using the Zoom app every Friday from 7-8:30 p.m. There will be a bit of orientation to the art of storytelling, and a very short and easy homework assignment. To register, email kind.coach.kati@gmail.com.

People with ideas for virtual classes they could host can email ideas to paintedskycenter@gmail.com.

## OBITUARIES

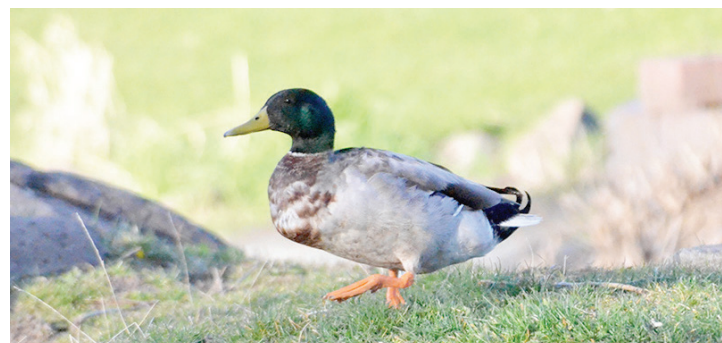
### Fawn Warrington

Fawn Warrington, 38, of John Day passed away at her residence on April 8. No services will be held at this time. Arrangements have been entrusted to Driskill Memorial Chapel. To leave an online condolence for the family, visit driskillmemorialchapel.com.

### Harold R. Dean

Harold R. Dean, 81, of John Day passed away on April 6 at Blue Mountain Hospital. No services are planned at this time. Arrangements are being handled through Driskill Memorial Chapel.

## Social distancing on the pond



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

A duck waddles to the pond at Seventh Street Complex April 7. A majority of Seventh Street Complex's facilities — including the pond — are closed due to COVID-19.

### William "Bill" M. Choate

December 19, 1931 - April 5, 2020

William "Bill" M. Choate, age 88, passed away on April 5, 2020 in Newberg, Oregon with his daughter, Susan Howard, by his side. A private interment will take place this week. A public memorial service will be announced at a later date.

Bill was born on December 19, 1939 in Ringling, Oklahoma to Ernest Choate and Annie (Martin) Choate. He grew up and worked on the family farm with his 5 other siblings. At the age of 17, he moved to Oregon with his sister Lorene and her husband. He became a ranch hand in Ize, Oregon, and had a hand in rebuilding the Canyon City courthouse after it burned down before being drafted in 1952 to the Korean War. Bill became a tank driver and mechanic stationed in Germany.

Returning home, he was briefly married to Leona, they had one son, John. He then went on to marry Mona (Hancock) Choate on December 10, 1954, living in Ize and working for the local lumber company. Over the next decade they had two daughters, Letha and Cynthia, settling in John Day while he worked at various lumber mills in the area. In 1963, after the untimely passing of their daughters, they adopted their daughter Susan.

William retired from Prairie Wood Products after 27 years as the head saw filer. Throughout his retirement he enjoyed many hobbies. He enjoyed fishing with his wife and their friends, Jack and Betty, and hunting elk. His goal was to bring home 30, but only managed 27 before his doctor told him to slow down, which didn't come easy even after suffering 2 heart attacks. He and Mona were well known for their garden they raised every year. He could build anything out of wood and there wasn't a carbureted engine that could best him. He enjoyed having his granddaughters staying with him in the summers and then his two great grandsons.

He will be remembered for being a kind and generous man. If you met Bill, you were a friend for life. He follows in death his parents, Ernest and Annie; his wife, Mona; daughters, Letha and Cynthia; son, John; and sisters, Joy, Ruth, and Lorene. He is survived by his daughter, Susan Howard; sister, Betty Pemberton; brother, Bob Choate; granddaughters, Lee Ann and Melanie Howard; two great grandsons, Marshall and Colin Allen; and many friends and extended family.

Memorial contributions in memory of Bill can be made to a VA organization of your choice in your local area. To leave an online condolence for the family, visit: www.driskillmemorialchapel.com. Paid for by the family of William Choate.



A MAN WAKES UP in the morning after sleeping on... an advertised bed, in advertised pajamas.

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## Last Week's Temps

John Day	HI/LO
Tuesday .....	60/32
Wednesday .....	67/32
Thursday.....	71/34
Friday.....	70/37
Saturday.....	59/36
Sunday.....	52/30
Monday.....	52/25

24/7 FORECAST

AUTOMATED: 541-575-1122

ROAD CONDITIONS: 511; TRIPCHECK.COM

NOAA WEATHER RADIO FOR JOHN DAY

162.500 MHZ

## WEATHER FORECAST FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 15 - 21

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Slight chance of showers	Sunny	Sunny	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Partly sunny	Mostly cloudy
55	58	67	66	69	66	65
32	31	37	39	41	35	37