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RIDING

FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T

Highway 26 dedicated to **prisoners of war** and **servicemembers missing in action**

The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Grant County Sheriff's Office escorts riders through John Day to the Elk's Lodge for a sign dedication and luncheon Sunday as the Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association dedicated Highway 26 a POW/MIA memorial highway.

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Roughly 80 motorcycle riders from the Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association passed through John Day Sunday to dedicate Highway 26 to prisoners of war and servicemembers missing in action as community members lined the streets with flags to honor them.

With a sheriff's escort, the riders stopped at the John Day Elk's Lodge for lunch and a sign dedication.

Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer, a veteran, said it was an honor to escort the caravan of motorcyclists through the county.

"I have always believed that it is our duty as public servants to be giving of our time and resources to those who have and most likely with the MIA's and POW's, gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation and it's citizens," he said. "I don't believe that we should turn our backs on

these folks, which also goes to show for those who have served and are no longer living and those currently serving or those who may serve in the future — gives a sense of understanding to those that we will never forget what they gave and where they have been and what they have done and for some what they have been through."

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The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Cliff Brumels, left, and Larry Moyer, organizers with the Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association, dedicate the POW/MIA sign in front of the John Day Elks Lodge Sunday.

County department heads criticize court over lack of leadership and communication

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County department heads last week criticized county court members for lack of leadership and transparency regarding operations of the county amid the global pandemic.

Eric Julsrud, Grant County watermaster, said he participated in a session of county court May 27 and asked many of the same questions and they were not answered then.

Julsrud said Grant County Commissioner Jim Hamsher emailed the department heads a "draft" of policies and procedures pertaining to operations of county departments.

"I'm confused why draft documents would be sent out to department heads," he said. "That is not direction, direction would be, 'We are gonna do this, folks.'" Hamsher said the reason why depart-



Eric Julsrud **Kathy Stinnett** **Sam Palmer** **Jim Hamsher** **Hailey Boethin**

ment heads received the document was so they could give feedback before the draft was turned into a policy. Hamsher said all departments operate differently, and he did not want the county to turn out a finalized, "one-size-fits-all" policy.

Julsrud said Hamsher's email did not ask for feedback.

Hamsher said the county's insurance company still has not come out with guidance for the county.

Myers said he was on a call with the fairgrounds, the extension office and the county's insurance carrier, and the insur-

ance company said, at least on that call, that as long as the county follows the governor's COVID-19 guidelines they would be covered on a claim.

Myers said, despite not wiping down surfaces as well as they should as the guidelines dictate, the county is not in violation of any of Gov. Kate Brown's guidelines.

"As long as we can assure social distancing, I think we are doing a pretty good job of it," he said. "Except for the

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Masks now required in indoor public spaces statewide

Brown: Modeling shows hospitals could be overwhelmed within weeks without action

By Gary A. Warner
For the Oregon Capital Bureau

All Oregon residents will be required to wear masks or face coverings in indoor public spaces starting Wednesday to help curb the spread of COVID-19, Gov. Kate Brown announced Monday.

"Over the last month, we have seen the disease spread at an alarming rate in both urban and rural counties," Brown said in a statement announcing the mask order.

While state officials expected to see an increase in positive cases following the lifting of restrictions "reopening" the state, the rate of increase comes as the state heads into the July 4th holiday weekend, which Brown called "a critical point" in the pandemic.

The mandate is already required in eight counties including Multnomah, Marion, Polk and Washington counties. The move aligns Oregon with neighboring California, which has ordered masks be worn indoors.

Oregon Occupational Safety and Health will take the lead in enforcing face covering requirements, along with other state and local agencies, Brown said. The governor has repeatedly said she did not want to use a heavy hand in enforcement, hoping that Oregonians would voluntarily follow the face-covering edicts.

"Modeling from the Oregon



Pamplin Media Group photo
Governor Kate Brown wears a mask May 7.

Health Authority shows that, if we don't take further action to reduce the spread of the disease, our hospitals could be overwhelmed by new COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations within weeks," Brown said in the release. "The choices every single one of us make in the coming days matter."

Even top national health experts are unsure that Americans will heed the advice. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top U.S. infectious-disease expert, said earlier this week that he was concerned at attitudes in the country that have made wearing masks into a political issue.

"One of the problems we face in the United States is that, unfortunately, there is a combination of an anti-science bias that people are — for reasons that sometimes are, you know, inconceivable and not understandable — they just don't believe science and they don't believe authority," Fauci said on a podcast from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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Grant money available for local small businesses July 6

Application window is July 6-12

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Small businesses in Grant County will be able to apply for grant money July 6.

Stephanie LeQuieu, Grant County rural venture catalyst with Oregon RAIN, said the state of Oregon's COVID-19 Emergency Grant is for small businesses that were adversely impacted by economic conditions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic that have not received federal emergency assistance under the federal CARES Act or other federal programs to date, which include the Payroll Protection



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Stephanie LeQuieu, Grant County rural venture catalyst with Oregon RAIN, during Wednesday's County Court session.

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