

New dispatcher on the line in Grant County

Maynard: ‘This job is truly a blessing’

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Christmas morning, kids wake up as excitement fills the air at the chance to open gifts with family — a feeling comparable to when Darian Maynard returned to the Grant County dispatch center to begin her work as the new dispatcher.

Maynard recently graduated after three weeks at the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training where she learned techniques for stress management, civil liability, ethics, criminal law, overview of fire-rescue and law enforcement operations and more.

She also participated in a three-day emergency medical dispatcher course.

“This job is truly a blessing,” Maynard said. “It’s like a lot of days I can’t wait to be here. Whenever I got back from academy I couldn’t even barely nap for the night shift the other night because it felt like Christmas and I get to go back to work.”

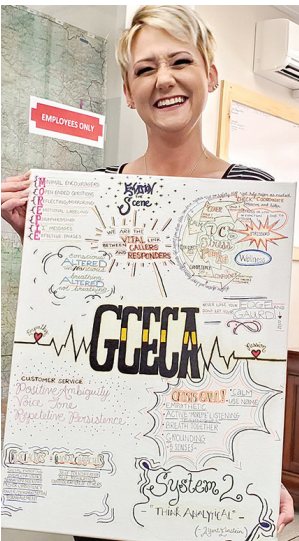
The academy taught Maynard the agency she works for is very forward thinking in regard to debriefings, mental health care and more. No matter the call, there is a sense of camaraderie and unity as every agency works together to help people calling 9-1-1.

Maynard said, even when she first started training, she knew she could stay calm in emergency situations because of the support and common goal that everybody has.

“Everybody’s common goal is to help people, and that’s really cool,” she said.

Maynard said the Grant County Emergency Communications Agency did well in preparing her for the three-week endeavor. She said she is grateful the many things she learned from the academy.

“Academy was awesome,” she said. “It was funny, though, because they did such a great job training here (in Grant County) that,



Contributed photo/Andrew Martin
New Grant County Emergency Communications Agency dispatcher Darian Maynard shows a project that highlights the different aspects of ethics training she learned from the academy.

especially the first week, it felt like a lot of eight-hour review days,” Maynard said. “But later on we had interactive scenarios, and you’re still pretending to dispatch during a traffic stop, which could go bad.”

Maynard especially appreciated the academy’s ethics training, which covered risk factors for first-responders, overconfidence, preference for consistency and more.

“There’s always a call for help, but you never know and you really have to put your brain in gear, dissect the situation and ask the right questions,” Maynard said. “You have to check on them, coordinate, cover, calm them, connect them and stuff like that.”

Maynard said people should know that, when calling 9-1-1, they should always give the address of the emergency first so dispatchers know where to send help. She said, if someone is unsure whether to call 9-1-1, dispatchers can verify whether the situation is an emergency.

Maynard said she is happy for the opportunity to help the community she is happy to be a part of. Along with dispatch, Maynard is also planning to be a reserve officer for the John Day Police Department. Now that she is back, she can begin her reserve training.



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz
Darian Maynard is excited to help the community as a Grant County dispatcher.



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

One of the main reasons Travis Piercy joined the John Day Police Department was to serve the community.

Officer Travis Piercy is glad to serve the community

By Rudy Diaz
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Officer Travis Piercy is excited to work in the John Day Police Department and begin serving the community.

Piercy has been on the force for over a month and already enjoys the time and opportunity to work with the other members of the JDPD.

Before, Piercy worked at the Grant County Jail for three years.

“I always had an interest in law enforcement, but never thought I would end up there,” Piercy said. “The position at the jail came open, and I took it. I enjoyed it, and I ran with it.”

Piercy said the jail experience was helpful, allowing him to become acquainted with frequent offenders.

Piercy now has the opportunity to see another side of law enforcement, dealing with crime scenes instead of only seeing what follows an investigation.

Piercy decided to transition to JDPD to serve the community.

“The whole reason why I stepped on this side was because we got a good community with good people out there,” Piercy said.

He wants to be a good officer for the community and somebody that they can trust, he said.

One of Piercy’s favorite parts of the job has been the excitement that comes with each day. Piercy said every day is different, and he never knows if he will work with a dog complaint, a traffic violation or serve a warrant.

“As soon as that radio goes off, you

don’t know if you’re going east or west, and it’s pretty exciting,” Piercy said.

Piercy said the other officers have been supportive.

“I’m very lucky to work with the individuals that work here,” Piercy said. “They’re a great group of guys, and they welcomed me with open arms, and I’m getting great training.”

Piercy has gone to the academy for corrections, but now he has to go to the academy to become a police officer. COVID-19 has shifted the timeline for that. He does not have an exact date to the academy, but in the meantime, he will receive more training on situational awareness, case law and traffic violations to prepare him for the academy.

Piercy said the community is a big reason why he is in the JDPD.

Free summer lunches for kids return

Blue Mountain Eagle

The free Summer Food Service Program for kids of all ages started once again July 13.

John Day-Canyon City Parks and Recreation District will be serving lunches in John Day, Canyon City and Prairie City, July 13 to Aug. 21, Mondays through Fridays, according to a Facebook post from the group.

Parks and Rec. will be serving at the Humbolt Elementary par-

ent pick-up line from 11:30 a.m. to noon, the Gleason Pool parking lot from 11:30 a.m. to noon and Prairie City City Park from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Unlike past years, though, all lunches and snacks must be picked up and taken off site, according to the Facebook post.

“I imagine it will look different than it has in years past just because of the restrictions around COVID,” board member Lisa Weigum said.



Eagle file photo

Children enjoy lunch at the John Day city park near Gleason Pool last year.

Blue Mountain Hospital expands speech therapy program

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Blue Mountain Hospital Rehabilitation Services Department has expanded hours for speech therapy.

Speech Language Pathologist Charissa Moulton is now seeing patients three days per week in John Day, according to a press release.

A speech language pathologist is an expert in communication. SLPs work with individuals across the lifespan. They treat a variety of communication and swallowing problems. These include problems with speech, language, communication, cognition (thinking), feeding and swallowing skills.

Speech is how sounds are produced and put together to form words. Problems may include articulation or phono-



Charissa Moulton

logical disorders, apraxia of speech or dysarthria. Saying “tup” for “cup” is an example of an articulation or phonological disorder. Difficulty producing sounds or slow, slurred speech is dysarthria, and difficulty imitating words or saying the same word multiple different ways, saying “pup, dup, fup, tup” to mean “cup,” is apraxia of speech.

Speech problems can also include a voice or fluency disorder affecting the pitch or quality of one’s voice, such as being hoarse or rhythm problems such as stuttering. Many children will go through a developmental stage of stuttering around 3 years of age,

but they should outgrow that stage within six to nine months. Continued stuttering beyond that time may indicate a need for speech therapy.

A problem with language may affect what is said to others (expressive language) or what one understands others to be saying (receptive language). For children, this may be an expressive language disorder, a receptive language disorder, a literacy (reading) disorder or a social-communication disorder. In an adult, a problem with language is usually called aphasia.

Speech therapists also look at how cognitive skills affect communication function. This includes problems with memory, attention, problem solving, organization and other thinking skills. Examples include forgetting to take medications or frequently missing appointments.

Problems with sucking, chewing and swallow-

ing foods and liquids are called dysphagia. Choking or coughing when eating or drinking, frequent drooling, refusing to eat or drink certain things, being labeled a picky eater or difficulty transitioning to solid foods as an infant are examples. This often leads to other issues such as poor nutrition or weight loss.

Feeding and swallowing problems can begin at birth when an infant is first learning to breastfeed or bottle-feed and can affect individuals throughout their lifespan. Moulton is also a certified lactation counselor and pediatric feeding specialist trained through Feed the Peds. She firmly believes that every individual deserves the right to communicate effectively in whatever way possible and that functional feeding and swallowing skills play a key role in overall health.

For more information, call 541-575-4157.



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