



Contributed Photo/Shyla Marciel
The fire at Harper Creek south of Mt. Vernon burned 9.4 acres before being contained on July 26.

Weekend fire near Mt. Vernon contained

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Firefighters worked together over the weekend to contain the Harper Creek Fire, south of Mt. Vernon.

Mt. Vernon Deputy Chief Todd McKinley said the fire was caused by an illegal burn barrel on July 25.

He said that the fire burned 9.4 acres of land and was heavily fueled by juniper and pine trees along with grass and brush.

A structure near the fire was initially in danger, but the fire moved away from it.

"There were other structures that the fire could have eventually gotten to if it had not been contained as quickly," McKinley said.

Mt. Vernon rural fire department sent four engines, a water tender and a command vehicle on the initial day, and John Day rural fire sent a brush engine, command structure and a water tender. McKinley said ODF sent four engines, a helicopter and command structure.

A neighboring landowner provided a bulldozer and erected a line around the fire.

The fire was contained at 1:25 p.m. July 26. The area will be monitored for several days for any hot spots or flareups, according to McKinley.

There were no injuries and no loss of livestock reported, he said.

McKinley said people should know the restrictions before burning. He said there is currently an active burn ban.

"It takes many volunteers out of the community to make things like this have a good outcome, and I appreciate everybody's involvement," McKinley said.

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

Grant County Circuit Court

Takoda L. Propeck violated his probation conditions on a count of failure to complete community service work. On July 22, he was sentenced to 10 additional hours of community service and to pay \$25 in probation violation fees.

James W. Cook, 30, pleaded guilty Oct. 10 to a count of driving under the influence of intoxicants committed on Aug. 29. According to information filed in circuit court by District Attorney Jim Carpenter, Cook failed to obey all laws. The diversion agreement was revoked July 22, and the DUII conviction was entered on the record. Cook's license was suspended for a year, and he was sentenced to 48 hours in jail, 12 months of bench probation and ordered to pay \$1,250 in fines and restitution.

Justin R. Briney, 36, pleaded guilty on July 22 to a count of menacing constituting domestic violence committed on March 12 and pleaded guilty on July 16 to two counts of strangulation constituting domestic violence committed on March 12. He was sentenced to 20 days in jail, 36 months of probation, 50 hours of community service and to pay \$450 in court fees. Two counts of fourth-degree assault and a count of menacing were dismissed.

Andrew S. Ballou, 26, pleaded guilty on July 22 for a count of felon in possession of a firearm committed on April 28. He was sentenced to 264 days of probation, 40 hours of community service and to pay \$350 in court fees.

Lindsey M. Lewis, 35, pleaded guilty on July 22 for a count of criminal trespassing in the second degree committed on Aug. 4. She was sentenced to 11 months of bench probation. A count of menacing was dismissed.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of July 22:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 7
- Average inmates: 11
- Bookings: 10
- Releases: 9
- Arrests: 0
- Citations: 1
- Fingerprints: 5
- Civil papers: 15
- Warrants processed: 4
- Assistance/Welfare check: 1

Search and Rescue: 0
Travis Frieniere, 34, of John Day was cited for driving while suspended and no insurance.

Grant County Justice Court

Violation of the basic rule: Thomas N. Rigney, 40, Mt. Vernon, May 24, 73/55 zone, fined \$165; Kimberly J. Rufener, 30, Madras, May 20, 69/55 zone, fined \$165; Eric J. Johnson, 40, Baker City, May 21, 73/55 zone, fined \$165; Melissa M. Adams, 40, Pendleton, Feb. 26, 75/55 zone, fined \$165; Walter B. Cziške, 71, Shoreline, Washington, May 28, 75/55 zone, fined \$165; Carl A. Kalteich, 75, Dayville, July 7, 74/55 zone, fined \$100; Emily E. Christensen, Prineville, May 23, 79/55 zone, fined \$265.

Exceeding speed limit: Emily Vahsholte, 24, Klamath Falls, June 13, 80/65 zone, fined \$265.

Driving while suspended: Steven M. Warrington, 30, John Day, July 3, fined \$440, July 6, fined \$440, July 12, fined \$440, July 12, fined \$440, July 13, fined \$440, July 15, fined \$440.

Driving uninsured: Steven M. Warrington, 30, John Day, July 3, fined \$265, July 6, fined \$265, July 12, fined \$265, July 12, fined \$265, July 13, fined \$265.

Improper left turn: Steven M. Warrington, 30, John Day, July 3, fined \$265.

No seat belt: Chance J. Fleetwood, 21, Mt. Vernon, May 16, fined \$115.

Endangering all-terrain vehicle: Michael L. Gienger, 49, Prineville, May 23, fined \$115.

Oregon State Police

July 19: OSP stopped a vehicle on Highway 26 near milepost 155 for speeding, 46/30 zone, and failure to drive within lane. On contact with the driver, Dustin M. Wright, 22, of Drewsey, OSP saw he had glassy eyes. There was a moderate odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the vehicle. Wright admitted to drinking two beers. Wright consented to field sobriety tests where he displayed further indicators of impairment. OSP arrested Wright for driving under the influence of intoxicants. OSP transported Wright to the Grant County Jail. Wright submitted to a breath test that indicated a blood alcohol concentration result of 0.09%. OSP issued Wright citations for driv-

COPS & COURTS

ing under the influence of alcohol and speeding, 46/30 zone.

July 19: OSP responded to a single-occupant, single motor vehicle crash near milepost 3.5 on Highway 395C. The driver fell asleep at the wheel, and the vehicle drifted off the west side of the highway. The vehicle came to a rest in an orchard. The vehicle was towed by Frontier Towing, and the driver was taken to the hospital by ambulance with complaints of pain.

July 19: OSP stopped a Ford Focus for driving in the oncoming lane multiple times on Highway 395C near milepost 6. Indicators of drug use were observed, and OSP responded to assist with the DUII and drug investigation. The adult male driver performed field sobriety tests for OSP and was found not to be impaired to the point of arrest. A consent search resulted in seizure of a user quantity of methamphetamine. Jay J. Moore was cited and released for possession of controlled substances. A friend picked Moore up from the scene.

July 20: OSP responded to a reported single motor vehicle injury crash, partially blocking the Highway 26 and State Route 19 junction. OSP later located the driver, Russell L. Hall, 60, of Portland, in Dayville who was then issued a citation for a careless driving and driving uninsured. During the investigation, OSP contacted his 42-year-old nephew, Randy A. Hall, and found he had a misdemeanor arrest warrant. Due to COVID-19, Randy Hall was cited and released to appear before Lincoln County Circuit Court. OSP later contacted Russell's passenger, Deanna Townsend, 51, of Portland, who had been transported to Blue Mountain Hospital complaining of chest pain. She was taken into custody and transported to the Grant County Jail and lodged on a felony arrest warrant.

July 23: OSP responded to the area of milepost 24 on Highway 395C on a reported rollover crash with an ejection. When OSP arrived on scene, the driver, a 31-year-old woman, was being transported to the hospital by ambulance. Investigation including witness interviews and roadway evidence revealed the driver was southbound at a high rate of speed when her vehicle drifted across the northbound lane

of travel and onto the shoulder. The driver over-corrected and crossed back over both the north and southbound lanes of travel. The vehicle left the road off the southbound shoulder, crashing through a fence and rolling to its point of uncontrolled rest, approximately 600 feet from where the vehicle initially left the road. There were multiple empty alcohol containers on the ground around the car as well as at least one empty alcohol container in the car. The driver was seen by a witness in Seneca prior to the crash and was reported to be stumbling and unsteady on her feet. The driver admitted to emergency medical responders that she had consumed alcohol. The driver gave a blood sample at the hospital under implied consent. Hospital staff advised OSP a blood sample taken by the hospital revealed a BAC of 0.11%. OSP cited and released the driver, Rebecca T. Born, 31, at the hospital for DUII-alcohol and reckless driving.

July 24: A two-vehicle motor vehicle crash occurred on Highway 395C near milepost 11.5. The crash occurred when a 2012 Ford Focus that was northbound failed to negotiate a curve, traveling into the oncoming lane, striking a 2000 Ford pickup pulling an aluminum boat on a trailer. Both vehicles came to a rest on the southbound shoulder. The driver of the Focus was injured in the crash and taken by a private party into Canyon City where they met an ambulance and were transported to the hospital. The driver and passenger of the Ford pickup were not injured. During an interview with officers at the hospital, the driver of the Focus stated he had fallen asleep. The Ford Focus driver, Jay J. Moore, 23, was issued citations for careless driving and failure to maintain lane. A driving uninsured citation is pending.

July 25: OSP stopped Stephen P. Hancock, 44, of Canyon City near milepost 162 on Highway 26, knowing he had a misdemeanor warrant for his arrest. The Grant County Jail would not lodge Hancock, per COVID-19 policy. OSP cited and released Hancock from the scene.

July 25: OSP stopped a vehicle near milepost 162 on Highway 26 for a speeding violation. OSP contacted the driver, Michael S. Griffin, 44, of John

Day. Griffin did not have identification and verbally identified himself. According to DMV records, Griffin's driving status was felony suspended. OSP arrested Griffin, secured his vehicle at the scene and transported him to the Grant County Jail. OSP issued Griffin a citation for felony driving while suspended. After leaving the jail, OSP received credible information the suspension was likely a DMV error. OSP located Griffin and gave him a courtesy ride to his residence.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 138 calls during the week of July 20-26, including:

• John Day Police Department

July 20: Arrested Nicole C. Schaffer, 24, of Mt. Vernon for criminal trespass at a business on West Main Street.

July 20: Cited Gregory A. Wells, 61, of Moses Lake, Washington, for speeding on South Canyon Boulevard and Second Street.

July 22: Travis J. Frieniere, 34, of John Day was arrested for fourth-degree assault and disorderly conduct on Southwest Brent Street.

July 24: Arrested Austin J. Catron, 18, of John Day for assault on Southwest Fourth Street.

July 25: Arrested Gerald Roe, 58, of Canyon City for driving while revoked on Highway 26.

July 25: Responded to a report of harassment on Highway 26. Cassidy Williams, 19, of John Day was cited for reckless driving and driving without a license.

• Grant County Sheriff's Office

July 26: Responded to a report of trespass by a person with warrants on West Bench Road.

• John Day ambulance
July 20: Responded for an 84-year-old man with a suspected heat stroke on Overholt Street.

July 20: Responded for a 79-year-old woman who was not responsive at Blue Mountain Care Center.

July 23: Along with Seneca ambulance, Seneca fire and OSP, dispatched for a single-vehicle rollover crash with ejections on Highway 395S near milepost 23.5.

July 26: Responded for an 83-year-old man having heat stroke on Dogpatch Lane.

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