



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Youth show their lambs at the Grant County Fairgrounds Sunday during a youth livestock show. Shows continue through Friday and can be viewed online. Public Grant County Fair events kick off Friday.

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OSAA moves fall high school sports to spring 2021

Football, volleyball and cross country on hold

EO Media Group

The Oregon School Activities Association executive board voted Wednesday, Aug. 5, to move high school football and other fall sports to the spring of 2021.

This decision affects

cross-country, soccer and volleyball as well.

"Today's decisions by the executive board provide a framework to maximize the potential opportunity for students in Oregon to participate in three seasons during the 2020-21 school year," OSAA Executive Director Peter Weber said in a press release. "The board recognized that a one size fits all approach isn't what's best for stu-

dents across the state. By waiving policy to allow regional participation this fall, local school districts will have the discretion for participation in those areas that are able to do so safely per state directives."

Practices for those sports can start on Feb. 22, 2021, according to the schedule the OSAA executive board approved.

The OSAA's new calendar provides for three distinct sea-

sons from late December to late June with limited overlap between seasons.

Traditional winter activities will take place in January and February, followed by fall activities in March and April, with spring activities occurring in May and June.

Each season will feature an equitable seven-week regular season, with adjusted contest limitations.



Eagle file photo

Prairie City/Burnt River Panther Jayden Winegar (5) deflects a ball intended for Triangle Lake receiver Ben Wyse (87).

Aasness named grand marshal of 111th Grant County Fair

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County Fair grand marshal John Aasness, who moved to the area in 1957, said it was an honor to be named grand marshal for the 111th Grant County Fair Parade.

The longtime Grant County resident and veteran of ranching and logging industry said, over the years, the fair was always the place to be toward the end of August and beginning of September.

"All of the ranchers would be there with their families for the rodeo after they were done with their haying," he said. "It was always a big family affair."

Aasness, a former deputy sheriff, has been involved with the fairgrounds over the years, overseeing a community service work crew with "local felons," which raked leaves and took care of the grounds.

He said two of the people on those crews were certified carpenters and built nearly 50 picnic tables.

"I spent 10 years as a deputy under four sheriffs," he said. "I knew the legal limitations and what I could do with them."

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John Aasness

"WE WILL NOT BE RUNNING (THE EOC) THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE."

—Paul Gray, Grant County emergency management coordinator



Eagle photos/Steven Mitchell

An airplane prepares to take off from the Grant County Regional Airport Thursday to respond a fire.

New emergency coordinator recommends EOC move out of airport

Paul Gray, who started Aug. 3, says center will have one paid staffer and, if needed, a volunteer

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

The county's newly hired emergency management coordinator said Aug. 5 that he plans to move the county's COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center out of the Grant County Regional Airport and into the Office of Emergency Management at the L building on Main Street.

Paul Gray, who took over the department Aug. 3, said the coronavirus is a "public health issue" and that he is looking to develop a "unified command" between the health department and the county.

"We will not be running (the EOC) the way it was before," Gray said.

In addition to moving the EOC to the L building, Gray said the staff would consist of himself and a yet-to-be-named EOC manager, and volunteers if he sees a need.

Gray said, as Harney County's

A helicopter takes off from the Grant County Regional Airport Thursday to respond to one of several fires reported after a lightning storm.

emergency management coordinator, a post he held for three years, the department spent less than \$10,000 on its COVID-19 response.

He said Harney's EOC operated with a skeleton crew that consisted

of him, a 911 dispatcher who came in on her days off and a volunteer who came and helped distribute personal protective equipment to the community.

"I'm not looking at having a mass amount of people working under me unless we have a major disaster," Gray said. "This (COVID-19) is still a disaster, but it's not to the point where I need more people there than I need. I'm not just going to throw people in just to have people there."

Grant County's EOC had as many as 12 full-time and part-time employees, with some working overtime, costing the county more than \$100,000 in personnel costs alone in 12 weeks, from March through May.

The county's EOC faced community-wide scrutiny in June for overspending its \$125,000 budget by almost \$75,000.

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MEET PAUL GRAY

Grant County has hired Paul Gray as emergency management coordinator. Gray, an Army veteran, has 20 years of FEMA experience and is a state-certified incident command instructor.

The Ohio native said he eats, sleeps and breathes emergency management. He said he found himself in the office on his last vacation and has always, as far back as he can remember, been drawn to emergency response and preparedness. Gray spent three years as Harney County's emergency manager.



A helicopter prepares to take off Thursday from the Grant County Regional Airport. Airport manager Haley Walker says the Emergency Operations Center, which has been at the airport since April to respond to the coronavirus, would make aviation at the airport "difficult." New Emergency Management Coordinator Paul Gray plans to move the EOC from the airport to the Emergency Management office.