

Firefighters attend academy

Blue Mountain Eagle

Eight firefighters from Grant and Harney counties spent three months to improve their skills and fire knowledge at the fire academy.

The firefighters spent one long weekend a month for the last three months attending classes that began on Friday evening and continued during the day on Saturdays and Sundays at the John Day Fire Station. The annual academy is sponsored by the Grant-Harney Training Association.

The firefighters participated in a variety of training classes that taught firefighters safety and survival, fire behavior, personal protective equipment and self-contained breathing apparatus use. Most classes included a classroom segment followed by hands on training. They also trained in search and rescue, salvage and overhaul, communications, ladders, ropes and knots and forcible entry.

For the forcible entry class, the firefighters trained with a new prop that eliminated the need to find doors



Contributed photo

Local firefighters recently attended a fire academy: front row, from left, Shane Johnson, Canyon City; Gerald Russell, Mt. Vernon; and instructor Ron Phillips, John Day; back row, from left, Ryan Coalwell and Trevyn Coalwell, Mt. Vernon; Trent Ireland, Hines; Tim Briggs and Brian Smith, Dayville; Jake Little, John Day; instructor Don Porter and instructor Denise Porter, Long Creek. Instructors not pictured were Hayden Jones from the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, Hines Assistant Chief Dave Reiss, Hines senior firefighter Bjorn Petersen and Joy Brown from the John Day Fire Department.

and windows on which to practice. A year ago the Grant-Harney Training Association received a grant from the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training. The grant money

was used to purchase a forcible entry prop.

Instructors for the academy were Hayden Jones from the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, Hines Assistant Chief

Dave Reiss, Hines firefighter Bjorn Petersen, Chief Don Porter and Denise Porter from the Long Creek Fire Department and Joy Brown and Ron Phillips from the John Day Fire Department.

Oregon relaxes school safety guidelines ... again

Only 3 feet of physical distancing required 'under certain conditions'

By Teresa Carson
Oregon Capital Bureau

In yet another about face, the state announced Monday that it would drastically reduce the amount of spacing required for students going back to school, to align with new guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Oregon schools are now allowed, on a voluntary basis, to provide 3 feet of physical distancing between students "under certain conditions."

Just a week ago, on Monday, March 15, the state announced the safety rules for reopening would be relaxed, but left the 6-foot-spacing requirement unchanged.

School districts have been struggling with planning for returning students to schools amid rapidly changing mandates and guidelines from the state. Some have struck deals with staff unions based on earlier guidelines and would have to reopen union negotiations if the district wants to reduce the spacing requirement.

The 6 feet of distance and 35 square feet per person that had been required

meant that only about half of a student body could fit in a school at once when they reopened. Schools announced arrangements for students to be in buildings in shifts in a model called hybrid education. Students would continue remote learning when they were not in school buildings.

But the Oregon Department of Education said the new distancing guidelines announced Monday are voluntary.

"This new physical distancing allowance is a local decision. Schools may maintain 6 feet and, under certain conditions, must maintain 6 feet — such as when students from different classrooms are passing in hallways between periods, or when students are eating," the announcement reads.

Other pandemic safety precautions such as wearing masks were not changed.

The state's largest district, Portland Public Schools, will maintain 6 feet of distancing as they reopen after spring break, said district spokeswoman Karen Werstein. The district struck a deal with the teacher's union based on that figure and reducing it would require another round of negotiations.

The ODE announcement reads, "These changes may take place over the next several weeks in some of our schools as every school district will

need time to plan and adjust to these new requirements."

Indirectly acknowledging the fast pace of changes districts have been facing, state Education Department Director Colt Gill said, "This shift will take time to digest, partner with staff, and integrate in many schools and districts. I know our educators have spent countless hours over the last year stretching to implement different learning models and safety protocols."

Nonetheless, Gill said some districts may want to rejigger their hybrid plans or even consider going back to completely on-site instruction.

Under the new plans, elementary schools must maintain the 3 feet of distancing and staff and students must be at least 6 feet apart "to the maximum extent possible."

Middle and high schools have to keep the 3 feet of distance unless COVID-19 case rates reach certain levels in the county.

Gov. Kate Brown said in the announcement, "With the new recommendations for physical distancing from the CDC, I know I join students, parents and educators across Oregon in welcoming the news that months of scientific research clearly demonstrates the risk of COVID-19 transmission is low in schools."

Deadlines for individual income tax filing, payment extended to May 17

Blue Mountain Eagle

Both state and federal income tax filing due dates for individuals in the 2020 tax year have been extended from April 15 to May 17.

A press release from the IRS states that individual taxpayers will also be able to postpone their federal income tax payments for the 2020 tax year due on April 15 to May 17 without penalties and interest, regardless of the amount owed.

The IRS announced this change on March 17 to help taxpayers navigate the unusual circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic while working on important tax administration responsibilities

"Even with the new deadline, we urge taxpayers to consider filing as soon as possible, especially those who are owed refunds," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig.

The IRS stated in their press release that individual taxpayers will not have to file any forms or call the IRS to qualify for the automatic federal tax filing and payment relief.

The Oregon Department of Revenue announced in a press release on March 17 that they will join the IRS with the extensions and automatically extend the income tax filing due date for individuals to May 17 without penalties and interest, regardless of the amount owed.

No forms or calls to the Department of Revenue are needed to qualify for the automatic tax filing and payment relief.

Individual taxpayers who need additional time to file their state or federal taxes beyond the May 17 deadline can request a filing extension until Oct. 15.

OBITUARIES

Barbara R. Morgan

April 14, 1935 – Feb. 23, 2021

Barbara Morgan, 85, of Prairie City, Oregon, passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021. Barbara was the only child born to Ray and Genevieve Morgan on April 14, 1935, in Prairie City, Oregon. Graduating from Grant Union High School in 1953, Barbara studied economics at Willamette University and, after obtaining her teaching credentials, taught high school business courses in Roseburg for three years. Additionally, Barbara received a Masters of Education and went on to teach the visually handicapped at Portland State University.

After her father's death in 1969, Barbara returned to Prairie City to assist her mother in the management of the Morgan family cattle ranch and to continue in her father's footsteps. Barbara is best known for her tenacious and independent spirit, courageously continuing to manage her family ranch in the face of prolonged health challenges. Her long-time friends credit her with a great internal strength. She was always a straightforward and direct force of nature that will long be remembered in the valley.

Honoring Barbara's wishes, there will be no public service. She will be laid to rest next to her parents in the Prairie City Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to Hope 4 Paws, P.O. Box 912, John Day, OR 97845.

Mike Hendricks

Mike Hendricks, Gold Hill, passed away Thursday, March 18, in John Day at the age of 69. Services will be held Friday, March 26, in the Medford area. He was born Nov. 23, 1951, in John Day.

He was raised in Seneca and Canyon City, graduating from Grant Union in 1970.

Survivors include his wife, Lisa, of Gold Hill; daughters, Megan (Shawn) Shanahan of Vancouver, Washington, and Sylvia (Sheridan) Pyeatt of Medford; son, John, of Medford; and sister, Karla (Dan) Averett, of John Day.

He was preceded in death by his father, Herman; mother, Joyce; and sister, Colleen.

Arlene Mae Schoorl

The family of Arlene Mae Schoorl, 71, of Unity, who passed away on Dec. 16, 2020, would like to announce a public celebration of life potluck to be held on Saturday, April 24, at the Unity Community Hall from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. To offer online condolences to the family, visit grayswestco.com.

About Obituaries

News obituaries of 300 words or less are a free service of the Blue Mountain Eagle. The paper accepts obituaries from the family or funeral home. Information submitted is subject to editing. Obituaries submitted to the Eagle with incorrect information may be corrected and republished as paid memorials. Obituaries longer than 300 words may be published as paid memorials. Send obituaries by email, office@bmeagle.com; fax, 541-575-1244; or mail, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845. For more information, or to inquire about a paid memorial, call 541-575-0710.

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Doherty, Northway earn degrees


Blue Mountain Eagle

Two John Day residents earned master's degrees from Western Governor's University.

Brittany Doherty of John Day received a Master of Science in special education.

Shanna Northway of John Day received a Master of Science in special education.

WGU has recognized 14,146 undergraduate and 15,640 graduate degree recipients, who have completed their degrees since July 2.



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Last Week's Temps

John Day	HI/LO
Tuesday	44/29
Wednesday	56/28
Thursday	62/42
Friday	48/33
Saturday	49/32
Sunday	49/32
Monday	44/32

24/7 FORECAST



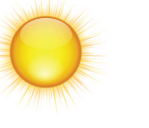
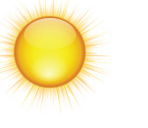
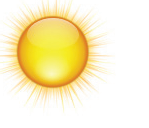


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NOAA WEATHER RADIO FOR JOHN DAY

162.500 MHZ

WEATHER FORECAST FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 24 - 30

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
						
Chance of rain	Mostly cloudy	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly cloudy
47	44	55	63	62	53	64
29	24	31	35	32	22	32