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Contributed photo
Young Marvin stands in front of plants. The tiny kitten was taken in by Hope 4 Paws and eventually adopted out to a loving home.

Hope 4 Paws

Helping four-legged friends around Grant County

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Whether it be a cat alone at a barn or a lost dog reunited with owners after months away from home, Hope 4 Paws continues to help the furry friends in Grant County.

Susan Church, a volunteer at Hope 4 Paws that focuses on the feline efforts, said someone last year found an orange and white kitten in their barn and looked for its mother to no avail. The little orange kitten named Marvin was alone and hungry.

"When a kitten is starving, their face becomes a narrow, little pointed face, which is what he had," Church said.

The people who found the cat brought him to the vet clinic where they called him Starvin' Marvin due to his malnourished state.

The vet called Hope 4 Paws, and Church fostered the tiny kitten. She soon began bottle feeding Marvin until he was ready to eat wet food mixed with KMR, a milk replacement powder.

"Marvin was a very fussy eater, and he wouldn't eat that," Church said. "I had to continue bottle feeding him a little longer."

Marvin had an upper respiratory infection as well, which Church said is a common affliction in feral cats. She said it's a virus that affects a cat's eyes, breathing, ears and nose. Fortu-

nately, Marvin liked the supplements he took to overcome the virus, according to Church.

Church said when she first got Marvin, he was a tiny, needy kitten, but he started interacting with her other pets and became a normal house cat as he got older.

"He was never feral-feral because he was tiny when I got him, and he didn't know being wild," Church said.

After several months, Marvin was adopted in March 2020 by a friend of Church, Kati Dunn.

"He's got a really cute personality, and he's really playful," Dunn said. "Once he's tired from playing, because he doesn't want to bother with affection when he's playing, he's very affectionate and sweet."

Dunn said, when it was time to get Marvin, Church recommended she get a friend for him when she is away at work. Dunn walked away with two cats that day: Marvin and his best friend Bithers, a grey tabby.

"Starvin Marvin was kind of depressing name, so I felt I should call him Marvin after Marvin Gaye and keep the other cat Bithers after Bill Withers," Dunn said.

When Dunn gets home from work, she is greeted by an abundance of affection from both cats. She said they have a great bond and provide lots of laughs.

"Hope 4 Paws does incredible work," Dunn said. "I've heard of a lot of stories of kittens with rough begin-

nings, but Marvin was so lucky to be found and loved."

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Contributed photo
Cats Bithers and Marvin, who were adopted through Hope 4 Paws, enjoy time with their adoptive owner Kati Dunn.



HIGH AND DRY

WHAT IS A DROUGHT?

There is no specific definition of a drought. The consensus is that it is a period of dry weather that occurs long enough to impact water supplies, farming, livestock operations, energy production and other activities.

The U.S. Department of the Interior points out that drought has different meanings depending on a person's perspective.

For a farmer, a drought is a period of low precipitation that affects the crops. For example, a two-week dry spell can stress many crops during specific growing periods.

On the other hand, a meteorologist would define drought as a prolonged period when precipitation is less than average.

From a water manager's perspective, Eric Julsrud, Grant County's watermaster, said that drought is when the region's water supply is deficient and impacts water availability.

The U.S. Drought Monitor system, a five-category system, begins at abnormally dry conditions, a precursor to drought conditions, moving upwards to moderate (D1), severe (D2), extreme (D3) and then exceptional (D4) drought conditions.

According to the NIDS website, the categories show experts' assessments of conditions related to dryness and drought. The analysis includes their observations of how much water is available in streams, lakes and soils in a specific region compared to the average for the same time of year.

Under extreme drought conditions, reservoirs and lakes are shallow compared to an average year in normal conditions. Additionally, wildfire risk is high, and there is an inadequate level of plant growth.

Grant County experiencing historic drought conditions

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County is in the grip of a severe drought of historic proportions.

Gov. Kate Brown's July 1 emergency drought declaration for Grant County comes amid the driest year the county has seen in over a century.

It's the driest it's been in 127 years with 2-2.5 fewer inches of rain on average this year, according to the National Integrated Drought Information System.

The multi-agency drought monitoring system reports that over half of the county, roughly 65%, is currently under extreme drought conditions.

How bad are the drought conditions in Grant County?

Most of Grant County is in extreme drought — the second to worst category in the U.S. Drought Monitor system. In these regions, pastures are brown and barren, hay yields are low, prices are increasing and producers are selling cattle to avoid

expensive supplemental feed and pasture.

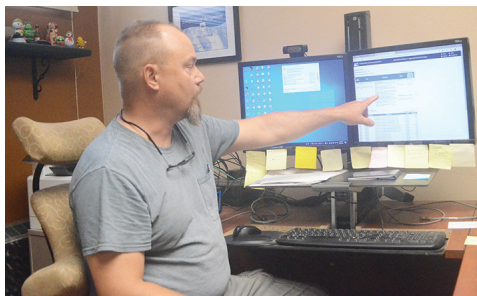
Local producer and biologist Shaun Robertson, who is president of the Grant County Farm Bureau, said every rancher he has talked to told him that this is the worst they've ever seen.

"Most are saying this is also the shortest water year that they can remember (including testimony from an 87-year old rancher from Fox)," he said.

Robertson said he could remember at least one year being this bad within the last 20 years ago, which began as bad as this year. However, he said, the county was "bailed out" by late rain, but he does not anticipate that happening this year.

Eric Julsrud, Grant County's watermaster, said the worst year on record in his experience was 2001. He said this year may be worse.

According to the national drought system's historical data, at the start of July of 2001, 100% of the county was in severe drought but never went into extreme levels



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Grant County Watermaster Eric Julsrud in his office Tuesday at the Grant County Courthouse.

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Families celebrate the Fourth



Contributed photo/Kalli Wilson
Everleigh Schmadeka, left, gets an escort from Tiffnie Schmadeka Sunday during Dayville's Fourth of July parade. Evie and her horse Cocoa Puff rode away with a first-place ribbon in the kids category and another for Best of Parade.



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Pam Woodworth, left, Prairie City's Independence Day parade grand marshal, waves at the crowd Sunday. See more Fourth of July coverage in next week's edition.



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
Levi Brown, an Iraq War veteran and member of Prairie City American Legion Post 106, and his two children, Rev, 5, and Ranger, 7, get ready for Prairie City's Fourth of July parade Sunday. The American Legion had two floats in the parade.



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