



Contributed photo  
A fire in Mt. Vernon broke out around 10 p.m. Sunday.

## Fire destroys Mt. Vernon home

Separate grass fire Monday morning quickly extinguished

By Steven Mitchell  
Blue Mountain Eagle

While duplex residents in Mt. Vernon got out of their homes safely, they lost everything in a fire that broke out late Sunday evening.

Grant County Sheriff Todd McKinley said the blaze ignited a wildland fire on Harper Creek, but crews were able to put it out before it spread. He said putting out the wildland fire was the priority, as the duplex — which belonged to Toby Parsons — was engulfed in flames when they arrived.

He said crews had to truck water in to put out the blaze.

McKinley said Mt. Vernon Fire Department had two engines and three tenders while John Day Fire

Department provided mutual aid with engines and tenders. He said both fire departments and the Grant County Sheriff's Office were on the scene until 3:30 a.m.

According to McKinley, Parsons' family has a family in the area they are staying with, while the other family was in the hotel last night. He said the Red Cross was called to lend help last night.

While the cause of the fire is still under investigation, McKinley said the likely cause was a propane barbecue cooker.

McKinley said it is essential to be careful when using barbecues.

"Be careful and watch your cooking sources," he said. "Anytime you're cooking or using fire."

In a separate incident Monday morning, McKinley said a grass fire on Widows Creek that was started by a fence builder's welding was put out rapidly.

## Black Butte Fire grows to 20,000 acres, 30% contained

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Black Butte Fire south of Prairie City has grown to 20,750 acres as of Tuesday and is 30% contained.

Monday, fire crews were able to strengthen lines around the entire fire perimeter, according to a press release from Northwest Incident Management Team 6. Crews that were working a swing shift are now working a full night shift to take advantage of lower temperatures and higher relative humidity.

Fire activity on the east side remained low and did not move outside containment lines.

On the northwest side of the perimeter, interior islands of green burned throughout the day creating various plumes of smoke. During night shift, Hotshot crews and engines successfully completed a portion of burnout operations on the northwestern edge. These operations will slow down the forward progression of fire, giving firefighters a tactical advantage.

Tuesday, crews planned to continue to patrol and mop up around the entire perimeter while watching for spotting or slop over. Air



Contributed photo

An aerial view of the Black Butte Fire from Aug. 12.

operations will be available as needed and as weather allows. Night shift will continue burnout operations if conditions permit.

Cooler temperatures were expected Tuesday with a slight increase in humidity. Winds from the northwest will continue to be strong, ranging from 12-17 mph with gusts up to 28 mph in the exposed areas and aligned drainages. Smoke may be visible as interior islands continue to burn.

Closures: Recreation Sites within the closure boundary: North Fork Malheur River Trail-

heads both north and south, North Fork Malheur Campground, Crane Crossing Trailheads both east and west, Short Creek Guard Station, Elk Creek Campground, Sunshine Flat Trailhead and Trail, Horse-shoe Trailhead and Trail, Sheep Creek Trail and Trailhead, Little Crane Campground.

Currently the Trout Farm and Crescent campgrounds are still open to the public.

For updated forest closure information, visit [fs.usda.gov/malheur](https://fs.usda.gov/malheur) or [facebook.com/MalheurNationalForest](https://facebook.com/MalheurNationalForest).

## COPS AND COURTS

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

Reagan S. Sherman, 26, pleaded guilty July 8 to a count of criminal driving while suspended or revoked committed on April 27. Her driving license was revoked for one year. She was sentenced to two days in jail, 25 days of house arrest, two years of supervised probation and 80 hours of community service. A \$500 fine will be suspended upon successful completion of probation.

### Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week ending Aug. 11:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 10
- Average inmates: 11
- Bookings: 5
- Releases: 6
- Arrests: 2
- Citations: 8
- Fingerprints: 2
- Civil papers: 11
- Warrants processed: 3
- Assistance/Welfare check: 1

Search and Rescue: 0  
Aug. 9: Cited Helen Hunt, 55, Mt. Vernon, for a nuisance abatement violation.

Aug. 9: Cited Spencer Leifheit, 45, Mt. Vernon, for a residential use of recreational vehicles violation.

Aug. 9: Cited Matthew Murray, 51, Newport, for speeding, 56/30 zone.

Aug. 9: Cited Patricia Alexander, 67, Oregon City, for speeding, 83/65 zone.

Aug. 9: Cited Hunter Stokes, 27, Bend, for speeding, 49/25 zone.

Aug. 9: Cited Trevor Brown, 26, Bend, for failure to carry registration and speeding, 75/55 zone.

Aug. 9: Cited Chandler Foster, 29, Keizer, for driving while suspended, driving

uninsured and speeding, 34/25 zone.

Aug. 9: Cited Kristy Scheer, 41, Bend, for speeding, 48/30 zone.

### Oregon State Police

Aug. 8: A trooper saw a motorcycle fail to obey a traffic control device at the intersection of Highway 395 and Highway 26 in Mt. Vernon. The operator appeared to be unsteady and had difficulty keeping it upright. The operator's eyes were watery, glassy and bloodshot, and there was an odor of alcohol on the operator's breath. He admitted to having one drink. He consented to field sobriety tests where the trooper saw more indicators of impairment. The trooper obtained a search warrant for breath and urine samples. The breath sample indicated a blood alcohol content of 0.08% nearly three hours after the initial stop. The driver also provided a urine sample pursuant to the search warrant. Troy R. Nicoson, 48, Mt. Vernon, was issued citations for driving under the influence of intoxicants and failure to obey a traffic control device and was lodged at the jail.

Aug. 8: A trooper responded to a report of a large buck that was killed at the end of Canton Street in John Day. Upon arrival, the buck was located, and witnesses reported and described a man dragging the buck from a vacant lot to the creek. A bullet was located in the buck. The investigation is ongoing.

Aug. 11: A trooper inves-

tigated a single commercial motor vehicle crash with injuries on Highway 395B near milepost 66. Wayne Bates, 72, Condon, was transported by ambulance to Dale and flown by air ambulance to Providence St. Mary's Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington. His vehicle was towed. Bates will be issued a citation for careless driving with an accident involved at a later date.

### Grant County Justice Court

Exceeding speed limit: Tammy F. Caldwell, 60, Long Creek, July 21, 56/30 zone, fined \$265; Steven R. Yeager, 48, Eugene, Aug. 4, 42/25 zone, fined \$165; Enrique Munoz Montos, 33, Gainesville, Florida, July 9, 53/30 zone, fined \$225.

Violation of the basic rule: Tiffani R. Blair, 20, John Day, July 18, 76/55 zone, fined \$265; Ryan T. Cook, 22, Prineville, July 12, 86/55 zone, fined \$440; Joseph W. Leo, 43, Canyon City, July 27, 74/55 zone, fined \$165; Nathan E. Kingsford, 30, Prineville, July 23, 75/55 zone, fined \$165; Morgan C. Barnett, 25, Albany, July 23, 80/55 zone, fined \$265.

Driving uninsured: Tiffani R. Blair, 20, John Day, July 18, 76/55 zone, fined \$265; Daniel J. Owens, 37, Prairie City, July 19, fined \$265; Ryan T. Cook, 22, Prineville, July 12, fined \$265.

Driving while suspended: Tiffani R. Blair, 20, John Day, July 18, fined \$440; Daniel J. Owens, 37, Prairie City, July

19, fined \$440; Rylan D. Garinger, 36, La Grande, July 3, fined \$440; David W. Burke, 27, John Day, July 15, fined \$440.

Driving outside restrictions: Ryan T. Cook, 22, Prineville, July 12, fined \$265.

Failure to install ignition interlock device: David W. Burke, 27, John Day, July 15, fined \$440.

Failure to drive within lane: Megan N. Laughlin, 26, Salem, July 18, fined \$265.

Dangerous operation of a snowmobile or ATV: Arthur Day, 47, Portland, July 3, fined \$265.

### Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 205 calls during the week of Aug. 8-15, including:

### John Day Police Department

Aug. 12: Dispatched to East Main Street regarding an animal complaint.

Aug. 13: Responded to Second Avenue and North Canyon Boulevard regarding a report of a dog left in a hot vehicle.

Aug. 13: Responded to the Squeeze-In Restaurant regarding a report of harassment.

Aug. 13: Responded to a harassment call on West Main Street.

Aug. 15: Took a call on a hit and run that occurred the

night before on the corner of Bridge and Third Street.

### Oregon State Police

Aug. 12: Dispatched to Highway 26, near Halls Hill, regarding a driving hazard.

### Grant County Sheriff's Office

Aug. 11: Responded to a fight at Grant County Automotive with Oregon State Police and arrested Brandi Fountain, 37, of Canyon City for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Aug. 11: Report of a dog nuisance on Moon Creek

Aug. 11: Dispatched to a probation violation at the Chevron station.

Aug. 11: Dispatched to the Black Butte Fire regarding a theft.

Aug. 11: Dispatched to North Humbolt Street on a report of suspicious circumstances.

Aug. 13: Received news that Jason Skinner, 43, of Burns turned himself in.

Aug. 13: Arrested Spencer Leifheit, 45, of Mt. Vernon on a warrant on Southwest Council Drive.

Aug. 13: Responded to a dispute on West Front Street.

Aug. 13: Arrested Brad Barnes, 42, of Burns and Kraig McCanna, 29, of Redmond at the Grant County Fairgrounds for disorderly conduct.

Aug. 14: Responded to a report of vandalism on Sixth Street.

Aug. 14: Received a report of someone using a chainsaw on Chukar Canyon during hazardous conditions.

Aug. 15: Dispatched to a motorcycle crash with Seneca and John Day Ambulance on Highway 395 and Izee Highway.

### John Day ambulance

Aug. 12: Responded to a report of an elderly subject lying on the side of Highway 26, near milepost 81.

Aug. 13: Responded with Monument Ambulance for a female, 66, who fell and broke her arm and leg on Lost Hubcap Road.

### Monument ambulance

Aug. 13: Dispatched with John Day Ambulance for a man, 72, feeling weak with difficulty breathing on Highway 402.

Aug. 13: Responded to an elderly man who hit his head at the fairgrounds.

Aug. 14: Dispatched with John Day police for a sexual assault on West Main Street.

Aug. 15: Dispatched on a 911 call for a child with breathing problems on Riverside Street.

### Long Creek ambulance

Aug. 11: Dispatched to a truck crash with injury on Highway 395

### John Day fire

Aug. 11: Dispatched to Apple Road about a report of a chip pile smoking.

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