

# Eagle adds new reporter

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The Blue Mountain Eagle has a new reporter.

Justin Davis joined the paper on Wednesday, March 2, filling the position vacated by the departure of Rudy Diaz in June.

Davis, 38, was born and raised in Ontario and has lived in John Day since 2019. He and his wife, Lisa, have two children, son Kalem, 8, and daughter Elly, who will turn 5 next week.

He served in the Army from 2001 to 2005, working in the intelligence branch, with deployments in South Korea, Germany and Iraq. He also did a stint as a freelance sportswriter for the Ontario Argus Observer from 2010-



Bennett Hall/Blue Mountain Eagle  
Justin Davis has joined the Blue Mountain Eagle staff as a reporter.

12, and is returning to the work force for the first time after eight years as a stay-at-home dad.

He will cover sports, schools and other beats for the Eagle.

“I’m excited to get back into journalism,” Davis said. “I’m super-excited to cover sports again, yeah, but also to branch out and have other journalistic duties besides sports.”

Davis joins reporter Steven Mitchell in the Eagle newsroom.

Mitchell, 44, is originally from Concord, California, in the San Francisco Bay area, and has lived in John Day since 2018. He is engaged to Randa Webb of John Day.

Mitchell joined the Eagle staff in January of 2020 and has covered a wide range of assignments, including sports, county government and natural resources.

He has been the paper’s sole full-time reporter for the past nine months.



Mitchell

## LOCAL BRIEFING

### Wyden slates Grant County town hall



Wyden

JOHN DAY — U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, will hold a virtual town hall for Grant County constituents at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 12.

Wyden, who is running for his fifth full term in the Senate, will discuss current issues and take questions from the audience.

The town hall will be streamed live over Facebook. To view the town hall, or to sign up to submit a question, either online or on live video, go to <https://tinyurl.com/447y83t8>.

### Farm Bureau seeks FFA video entries

SALEM — The Oregon Farm Bureau is putting out a call for entries for its second annual #GrowingOregon video contest.

FFA students are invited to submit short videos — up to one minute long — that feature the #GrowingOregon hashtag and highlight something interesting about Oregon agriculture. The topic could be an FFA project or program, what’s happening on the farm or the ranch, or a look at an Oregon agricultural product.

Students have until April 30 to submit their videos via email to [annemarie@oregonfb.org](mailto:annemarie@oregonfb.org).

The winner of this year’s contest will be determined by which video gets the most likes and views on the Farm Bureau’s social media platforms by May 31. The winner will receive a cash prize of at least \$400 to be donated to their FFA chapter.

For more information, visit [www.oregonfb.org/growingoregon](http://www.oregonfb.org/growingoregon).

### OTEC opens kids safety art contest

BAKER CITY — Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative is taking submissions for its annual Kids Electrical Safety Art Contest.

The aim of the contest is to allow youngsters to be creative while learning about electrical safety.

Children of OTEC members from kindergarten through eighth grade can participate by downloading coloring sheets from OTEC’s website to create an original poster with an electrical safety theme.

First-place winners in three categories will each receive a \$50 gift card, and there are also prizes for second and third place.

The deadline for submissions is April 22. Last year OTEC received more than 70 submissions from kids across its service territory, which encompasses Grant, Baker, Union and Harney counties.

For more information or to download a coloring sheet, go to <https://tinyurl.com/3mmkt2p9>.

## Teen charged following Prairie City shooting

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

PRAIRIE CITY — A 16-year-old male has been charged in the Friday, March 4, shooting of a Prairie City teen at a residence in the 400 block of North Washington Street, according to the Grant County Sheriff’s Office.

In a Saturday, March 5, press release, Sheriff Todd McKinley said that the suspect — who is not the victim’s boyfriend, as had been stated in early reports of the incident — is charged with recklessly

endangering another person and unlawful use of a firearm.

McKinley said the shooter, who knew the victim and her boyfriend, was at the house on Washington Street before a caller reported the shooting a little after 4 p.m. Friday.

According to emergency dispatchers on Friday, the person who called 911 stated the girl’s boyfriend accidentally shot the girl and then fled the scene; McKinley has since confirmed that was not the case.

According to McKinley, Grant

County Juvenile Department transported the suspect to a juvenile facility in Bend.

The victim, a 16-year-old girl, suffered significant trauma to the head and was flown to another medical facility after initially being transported to Blue Mountain Hospital in John Day.

The names of the suspect and the victim have not been released.

The Grant County Sheriff’s Office was assisted by the Oregon State Police and John Day Ambulance.

## County in line for big funding boost

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain

SALEM — As the 2022 Oregon Legislature wound down last week, Grant County received word it was in line for a nearly \$5 million boost in funding for a slate of infrastructure projects.

In a Thursday, March 3, text message, Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane, told the Eagle the county’s fairgrounds would be receiving \$2 million to improve the grounds.

That project is one of many around the state that will get a cash infusion from House Bill 5202, a budget reconciliation package that includes \$100 million for capital projects in rural districts.

Fairgrounds, schools, seniors and community health were the main priorities for that funding, Owens said.

“I think we did really well,” Owens said.

The bill’s text shows \$12 million for fairs in Grant, Malheur, Crook, Harney, Baker and Lake counties.

According to Owens, each county fairground will receive \$2 million.



Steven Mitchell/Blue Mountain Eagle, File  
Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane, addresses constituents during a 2020 session of Grant County Court. Owens said the county is on track to get a huge infusion of state funds.

In a Monday phone interview, Mindy Winegar, the Grant County Fairgrounds manager, said she had not received any specifics on the money.

However, Winegar said when she does, the fairgrounds staff and board plan

to meet with the public to talk about potential projects and gather feedback from the community.

Winegar said remodeling Keerins Hall and repaving the parking lot are the two high-priority projects for the fairgrounds. But, she said, the fair always has projects on the to-do list and always looks at others.

“We’re so excited and feel very fortunate to be blessed with this funding from our state representatives,” Winegar said.

Winegar said county fairs across the state are a

big draw for tourism in their communities.

County fairgrounds are essential to economic growth, and during emergencies, communities lean on them — be it vaccine clinics during the pandemic or a shelter during the Canyon Creek Fire.

Meanwhile, the Grant School District got a total of \$2.25 million for Grant Union High School’s roof and Humbolt Elementary’s HVAC system.

The Prairie City School District received \$430,000 to renovate the Bates Building and \$113,870 to renovate the city’s senior center. In addition, the John Day Senior Center received \$36,129 for its floor and air purification system.

Owens said the bill was fueled by \$1.5 billion in money the state did not expect to have, partly due to an unprecedented amount of funds available from the federal government and higher-than-expected state tax revenue.

“We were very successful in securing funding for Grant County,” Owens said. “Our priorities were schools, seniors, the fairgrounds and community health. I think we did really well.”

The bill has an emergency clause, meaning it goes into effect immediately. Once Gov. Kate Brown signs it, the state can start distributing the funds.



Contributed Photo  
Weston Suchorski, center, stands with Rick Shiple, Oregon State Elks Association President, left, and Steve May, OSEA State Hoop Shoot chairman, after winning his age group in the state free throw competition in Silverton on Feb. 26, 2022.

## Local youth wins state free throw competition

Blue Mountain Eagle

SILVERTON — A Grant County youth will represent Oregon in the regional round of the Elks Hoop Shoot contest.

Weston Suchorski won his age group at the state competition at Silverton Middle School on Feb. 26, making 23 of 25 free throws to advance.

He was one of three Grant County youths, along with Wyatt Lieuallen and Gracee Hueckman, who competed

in the state contest after winning their age groups at the district tournament in Prineville on Jan. 29.

Weston and the other Oregon winners will travel to Pasco, Washington, on March 26 to compete against youths from Alaska, Idaho and Washington.

The regional champions will advance to the national competition in Chicago on April 30.

The Elks Hoop Shoot is open to boys and girls between the ages of 8 and 13.

### Wilma Kathryn Griggs

July 13, 1943 ~ March 3, 2022

Wilma Kathryn Griggs, age 78, of Canyon City passed away March 3, 2022, at her residence. Services will be announced at a later date.

Wilma was born July 13, 1943, in Manhattan, Kansas to Betty J. Van Pelt. She went to school in Fort Laramie, Wyoming and later she studied Nursing Training.

She enjoyed reading, puzzles, fishing, crocheting, playing games and camping.

Survivors include her loving husband, Doyle Griggs of Canyon City; daughter, Katrina (Greg) Frey; grandchildren, Devon, Peyton and Maxon; son, Mitchell Hauke; grandchildren, Miranda, Morgan, Megan and Max; daughter, Sherrie Ann (Brenden) Croser; grandchildren, Makenna and Thane; son, Robert W. (Shanley) Cobb Jr; grandchildren, Robert W. Cobb III, Garrett, Noah, and Cooper.

Memorial contributions can be made to Blue Mountain Hospice through, Driskill Memorial Chapel, 241 S. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845.

Paid for by the family of Wilma Griggs.

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### Last Week's Temps

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| John Day        | HI/LO |
| Wednesday ..... | 56/39 |
| Thursday.....   | 44/32 |
| Friday .....    | 40/32 |
| Saturday .....  | 39/28 |
| Sunday.....     | 41/22 |
| Monday.....     | 51/31 |
| Tuesday .....   | 38/25 |

24/7 FORECAST

AUTOMATED: 541-575-1122

ROAD CONDITIONS: 511; TRIPCHECK.COM

NOAA WEATHER RADIO FOR JOHN DAY

162.500 MHZ

### WEATHER FORECAST FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 9-15

| Wednesday     | Thursday      | Friday        | Saturday      | Sunday        | Monday        | Tuesday   |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
|               |               |               |               |               |               |           |
| Partly cloudy | Mostly cloudy | Partly cloudy | Partly cloudy | Mostly cloudy | Mostly cloudy | Showers   |
| <b>30</b>     | <b>41</b>     | <b>53</b>     | <b>59</b>     | <b>50</b>     | <b>57</b>     | <b>50</b> |
| <b>10</b>     | <b>21</b>     | <b>29</b>     | <b>38</b>     | <b>32</b>     | <b>40</b>     | <b>32</b> |