

# No pot in greenhouse, for now

By JUSTIN DAVIS  
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — CYA Holdings head Shawn McKay is relocating his family to Grant County and looking to immerse himself in the community.

McKay is the former owner of Burnt River Farms in Ontario but has sold the company in an effort to put some distance between himself and the cannabis industry.

John Day City Manager Nick Green said the City Council was aware of McKay's past association with the cannabis industry and that is the reason why the subject didn't get brought up in the May 10 council meeting, when an agreement for McKay to lease and possibly purchase the city-owned greenhouse was approved. "He's moving his family to John Day and really doesn't want to be known as the pot guy," Green said.

Green stated that CYA Holdings

will not be growing cannabis in the greenhouse for now but stressed that he couldn't say that would never happen because the greenhouse isn't run by the city anymore, and private operation of the facility allows the operator to run the business as they would like. McKay said that there are "no plans in the immediate future" to grow cannabis in the greenhouse.

McKay said he has various other projects in the works but wasn't ready to provide details, adding that other investors and stakeholders are involved. He said those plans will come out in future press releases.

A longtime Eastern Oregon resident, McKay said he loves living in the area and enjoys the small-town feel. The success of his business model in Eastern Oregon has left him wanting to reinvest in communities in the region.

Green said entrepreneurs like McKay are exactly the type of business owners the city is looking to attract in

its attempts to promote business and population growth. "He's local to Eastern Oregon and he's been very successful as a business owner," Green said.

In addition to his business experience with Burnt River farms, McKay has degrees from Treasure Valley Community College, Eastern Oregon University and Oregon State University.

McKay says he and his wife, Robyn, are planning to become involved in their new community. "We're really looking forward to being a part of the community. We have two young children, a 4-year-old and a 7-year-old. We're actively involved in volunteer work and community service and all of those things."

McKay, who currently lives in Huntington, said he plans on maintaining a sort of dual residency between John Day and Huntington. "We're really partial to that town as well. We plan on living in Eastern Oregon for life."

# Meeting violated state law

By STEVEN MITCHELL  
Blue Mountain Eagle

SALEM — Five members of the Grant School Board will be given letters of education by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, which determined that the school board held an improper closed-door session last summer.

The letters are part of a negotiated settlement, approved by the ethics panel on Friday, May 20, that ends a state investigation into the matter.

The issue was whether the five school board members who participated in the executive session may have violated the state law that governs how meetings of public bodies should be conducted.

The ethics commission's ruling, which came in response to a complaint filed by the Blue Mountain Eagle, found that the school board members had broken the law by exceeding the legal scope of a legitimate executive session on Aug. 19.

State law allows public bodies such as the school board to go into executive session — where the public is barred and reporters are instructed not to report on the proceedings — only in certain narrowly defined circumstances.

The board had initially scheduled a public meeting for that day to discuss requirements for returning to in-person schooling, including Gov. Kate Brown's order that all educators, school staff and volunteers be vaccinated against COVID-19. That meeting was canceled seven hours before its

scheduled start time and replaced with an executive session "to discuss confidential information."

Based on a reporter's observation of the proceedings, the Eagle believed the school board's discussion during the executive session far exceeded the legal basis it cited for the closed-door meeting. When the newspaper informed Grant School Superintendent Bret Uptmor and School Board Chair Haley Walker of this view, Uptmor defended the board's actions and demanded that the Eagle not print any information from the executive session.

The ethics commission found that during the Grant School Board's executive session, the five members present discussed some matters that were exempt from public disclosure. However, the discussion also included policy matters that were not exempt.

The board members agreed to written final orders that stipulated they had violated the open meetings law by holding an improper executive session. Grant School Board Chair Haley Walker declined to comment on the settlement, saying she had not had a chance to review the final stipulated order.

In addition to Walker, the school board members covered by the agreement are Aaron Lieualen, Colleen Robertson, Chris Labhart and Jake Taylor. All five will receive letters of education from the state. Board member Kelly Stokes was not present at the executive session and was not disciplined by the state.

# Wynonna cancels local concert

Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Wynonna Judd won't be playing the Grant County Fair after all.

The country music superstar had been scheduled to headline a double bill with Eddie Gentry of Montgomery Gentry at the fair on Aug. 12 but decided to cancel the date after her mother, Naomi Judd, died on April 30.

"We are putting out offers for

another headliner," said Mindy Winegar, manager of the Grant County Fairgrounds. "We are working with an agency to find another outstanding performer to join Eddie Gentry."

In a statement released by the Grant County Fairgrounds, Wynonna Judd apologized to her fans for canceling the local appearance:

"To the fans attending the Grant County Fair Concert on August 12: I am writing to you to share that I am so sad to withdraw from the fair.

I am taking the time I need to process the recent loss of my mother. I appreciate your outpouring of love and support, and we WILL celebrate the music again soon. I promise."

Winegar said she hoped to be able to announce a new headliner by Wednesday, June 1. People who have already purchased tickets can hold onto them and use them to get into the Aug. 12 concert or can turn them in for a refund after June 1.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 25 "Understanding Loved Ones with Dementia"

• 10 a.m., first floor conference room, Blue Mountain Hospital, 170 Ford Road, John Day

Dr. Robyn Jennings, a family physician at Strawberry Wilderness Community Clinic, and Rod Harwood, older adult behavioral health coordinator at Greater Oregon Behavioral Health Inc., will lead this free 90-minute class. They will present information about dementia, provide training for family caregivers, and discuss resources for Grant County families affected by dementia.

### FRIDAY, MAY 27

#### John Day Street Fair

• 4 p.m. till dark, Grant County Fairgrounds, 411 NW Bridge St., John Day

Up to 20 local vendors will be selling wares ranging from handmade jewelry to wild mushrooms and CBD salves at this event sponsored by Oregon RAIN. There is no admission charge and no charge for vendors. To participate as a vendor or volunteer, text or email Zach Denney at 541.589.5565 or zach@oregonrain.org.

#### '62 Days planning meeting

• 7 p.m., Sel's Brewery, 113 Washington St., Canyon City



Regular weekly meeting of the Whiskey Gulch Gang to plan this year's '62 Days festivities. Anyone who wants to help is welcome.

For more information, call Colby Farrell at 541-620-0874.

### FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, MAY 27 & 28

**John Day Bull Bash**  
• 6 p.m., Grant County Fairgrounds, 411 NW Bridge St., John Day  
Bull riding, bull fighting,

kids' steer riding and calf riding are all on tap at this event. There will be live country music both nights after the bull riding, starting around 8 p.m. Beer and barbecue will be available for purchase from the Ugly Truth Bar & Grill and Curbside Cravings. Tickets are \$15 general admission or \$50 for VIP seating, which includes arena-side seats and a barbecue dinner. Tickets are available at Pioneer Feed & Farm Supply in John Day, Bar WB in Prairie City or at the gate.

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1 Grant County Senior Citizens Advisory Council meeting

• 11 a.m., Prairie City Senior Center, 204 N. McHaley St.

Eric Bush, Grant County emergency management coordinator, will speak. The public is invited.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 3 '62 Days planning meeting

• 7 p.m., Sel's Brewery, 113 Washington St., Canyon City

Regular weekly meeting of the Whiskey Gulch Gang to plan this year's '62 Days festivities. Anyone who wants to help is welcome.

For more information, call Colby Farrell at 541-620-0874.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 24 "Uncovering the History of Chinese Mining in Eastern Oregon"

• 7 p.m., Canyon City Community Hall, 129 S. Washington St.

Free presentation by Donn Hann, William F. Willingham and Katee Withee on the history of Chinese mining companies in Eastern Oregon. Sponsored by the Oregon Historical Society.

### FRIDAY, JULY 8

**Wheeler family benefit**  
• 5 p.m., Trowbridge Pavilion, Grant County Fairgrounds, 411 NW Bridge St., John Day

A pulled pork dinner, live and silent auction, and dessert auction to benefit the family of Adrian Wheeler, who has a rare form of colon cancer. The event will also feature live music and an

open bar. Auction donations will be accepted through June 25. Contact Winnie Browning at 541-620-0748 about donating items for the live or silent auction, and contact Teri Bowden at 541-575-2112 about making a donation for the dessert auction.

*Do you have a community event you'd like to publicize? Email information to editor@bmeagle.com. The deadline is noon Friday for publication the following Wednesday.*

## Congratulations, Marcus!

So proud of all your accomplishments!  
Love-Kris, Lydia, and Tamara

## Proud of you Masyn!

Can't wait to see where your creative mind takes you.  
Love you tons  
Mom & Dad

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★ MAY 27-JUNE 2 ★

<b>TOP GUN MAVERICK</b> (PG-13)	
Friday	4:00, 7:00
Sat & Sun	1:00, 4:00, 7:00
Monday	4:00, 7:00
Tues-Thurs	7:00

<b>DOWNTON ABBEY</b>	
<b>A NEW ERA</b> (PG)	
Friday	4:10, 7:10
Sat & Sun	1:10, 4:10, 7:10
Monday	4:10, 7:10
Tues-Thurs	7:10

<b>DR. STRANGE</b>	
<b>MULTIVERSE OF MADNESS</b> (PG-13)	
Friday	4:15, 7:15
Sat & Sun	1:15, 4:15, 7:15
Monday	4:15, 7:15
Tues-Thurs	7:15

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*We owe this freedom of choice and action to those men and women in uniform who have served this nation and its interests in time of need. In particular, we are forever indebted to those who have given their lives that we might be free.*

- Ronald Reagan

**Grant County Veterans Services**  
530 E Main St., Suite 5  
John Day, Oregon 97845  
541-620-8057