



Justin Davis/Blue Mountain Eagle

A Tidewater Construction crew begins demolishing Gleason Pool in John Day on Monday, May 23, 2022.

Public dig set at Kam Wah Chung

By JUSTIN DAVIS
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Archaeologists excavating the grounds at the former Gleason Pool site are hosting a public dig on Saturday, July 16.

The excavation is part of the effort to prepare the space for an expansion of the Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site. The public will not be invited to do any digging themselves, but will be allowed to observe and ask questions of the archaeologists on site performing the excavations.

Chelsea Rose, Southern Oregon University historical archaeologist and director of the SOU Laboratory of Anthropology, said her team will be starting the excavation on Monday, July 11. She said the public is welcome to observe excavation efforts before the public dig, but the best chance for the public to ask questions of the archaeologists on site will be on Saturday the 16th.

The public dig will start at 9 a.m. and go till 3 p.m. There will also be exhibits by Southern Oregon University, Oregon State Parks, Malheur National Forest and John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

“They will all be having exhibits and hands-on things and that kind of stuff so people can come and learn about local history and the archaeology as well,” Rose said.

The dig will be followed by a public lecture from artist and poet Sam Roxas-Chua Yao from 4 to 6 p.m. in the theater room at the Canyon City Community Center. The lecture by Rox-

as-Chua Yao is free to attend.

Rose said she expects she and the other archaeologists are going to find “great stuff” during the excavation.

“For archaeologists, we can get insanely excited about a broken bottle because if it tells us a little bit more about that community, then that’s all really exciting, important stuff,” she said.

Expectations are to find evidence of what other buildings, businesses and residences were in that neighborhood, what the community was like and how long people lived there.

“We’re doing that not only to get more information about Oregon’s Chinese residents but also to see how the park can incorporate those stories into their new interpretive center and as they update the infrastructure of the park itself, so that is kind of the goal,” Rose said.

Rose said the purpose of the public dig is for people to feel like they get to participate in something that is important to the community of John Day.

“We’re doing the hard work, we’ll dig in the compacted gravel for them. They get to see the exciting stuff that comes out,” she said.

“I think the main thing is just to know how lucky people are to be living near such an important archaeological and historic site.”

Rose also added that she hopes people will get excited and participate in the public day and the free talk and build on the outreach that has been ongoing for the past several years encouraging folks to get to know the larger history of the region.

Dayville reopens historic hall

By JUSTIN DAVIS
Blue Mountain Eagle

DAYVILLE — The Dayville Community Hall has hosted all manner of events during its 100-plus-year history, from weddings and dances to basketball games and plays.

On Friday, July 1, the hall itself was the main attraction as Dayville celebrated the building’s grand reopening.

The hall, described as the heart of the community, has reopened following major renovations and closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic that left the building’s doors closed for almost two years.

Crowds gathered outside the iconic hall on Friday for a ribbon-cutting ceremony before making their way inside or the first time since the start of the pandemic in 2020.

Reopening celebrations included a tour of the updated facility, a pulled pork meal and music by the James Gang. City officials thanked all those involved in seeing the plans for the hall to fruition.

A field agent for U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley was in attendance as well. Jessica Keys read a letter from Merkley that congratulated the residents of Dayville for renovating and reopening their historic community hall.

The renovations to the hall were made possible by a pair of grants totaling just over \$2 million. The first was a Community Development Block Grant from Business Oregon in the amount of \$1.5 million. The second, from the USDA’s Rural Development Program, totaled \$642,000. Along with the grants were smaller donations, such as the Bank of Eastern Oregon’s \$10,000 contribution to the project.

Dayville City Recorder Ruthie Moore said the renovations took a little over a year to complete.

“Kirby Nagelhout Construction Company were our contractors, and they went above and beyond to make sure everything was done historically correct. They got period hardware. They found



The Dayville Community Hall prior to the ribbon cutting ceremony that officially reopened the building to the public on Friday, July 1, 2022.



Justin Davis/Blue Mountain Eagle

A small crowd tours the renovated Dayville Community Hall on Friday, July 1, 2022.

wood that replicated what was on here before,” Moore said.

Dayville City Council member Valli Hettinga said the community hall being closed changed Dayville somewhat due to the number of events the community would have in the facility that were no longer happening.

“It cut down on our Fourth of July festivities, and we would have quarterly potlucks,” she said. “The closure from COVID really cut into our sense of community, and not being able to gather in one spot.”

Hettinga said having the hall open again is good for the community in many ways.

“I think it’s hugely beneficial in both realms, that we are opened back up free of the COVID restrictions in addition to having a nice kitchen and a meeting space and all new bathrooms,” she said. “This is going to be a

huge benefit for our community to have this nice building to gather in again.”

Hettinga also believes the renovation will allow more things to take place at the hall than there were before the closure of the facility.

“With the addition of the nice kitchen, we’ve been talking with a senior group and they’re going to come in and do lunches like they do in John Day and Monument,” Hettinga said.

At the end of the day, the hall is a place for the people of Dayville to come together in fellowship.

“It is our gathering spot,” Moore said. “We’re used to having community potlucks twice a year. It’s the place where we go. It really is the heart of the community.”

“We are extremely proud of our community, and we have a lot of pride in this building and we want to see it go for many more generations,” Hettinga said.

WHAT’S HAPPENING

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 desert auction to benefit the family of Adrian Wheeler, who has a rare form of colon cancer. The event will also feature live music and a no-host 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.

SATURDAY, JULY 9

Grant County Farmers Market

• 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., South Washington Street, Canyon City

Locally-grown produce and other items for sale in an open-air setting every Saturday from mid-June through mid-October.

Family Movie Night

• Dusk, Grant Union



Junior/Senior High School, 911 S. Canyon Blvd., John Day

A free series of family-friendly movies screened outdoors on the football field at Grant Union. Tonight’s selection: “Boss Baby: Family Business.”

SATURDAY, JULY 16

Grant County Farmers Market

• 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., South Washington Street, Canyon City

Locally-grown produce and other items for sale in an open-air setting every Saturday from mid-June through mid-October.

Public Archaeology Day

• 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site, Northwest Canton Street, John Day

Archaeologists from the Southern Oregon Univer-

sity Laboratory of Anthropology will be on hand to answer questions from the public as they dig for artifacts at the site of the former Gleason Pool, home of the soon-to-be-expanded Kam Wah Chung State Heritage Site. There will also be informational exhibits and hands-on activities. Sponsored by SOU Laboratory of Anthropology, Oregon State parks, Malheur National Forest, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument and local museums.

Lecture

• 4-6 p.m., Canyon City Community Center

Sam Roxas-Chua Yao, a poet, writer, sound recordist and artist in residence at the Portland Chinatown Museum, will give a free public lecture as part of Public Archaeology Day.

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.

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Oregon Department of Transportation
NOTICE OF ROAD WORK

GRANT COUNTY AREA CHIP SEALS
(U.S. 26 / U.S. 395)

Beginning July 11, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) maintenance forces will be chip sealing three highway sections in the Grant County area. A fourth highway section will be chip sealed under a separate contract. This work includes two sections of U.S. 26 (John Day Hwy.) between the junction of OR 19 and John Day, a section of U.S. 395-C (John Day - Burns Hwy.) between Canyon City and Star Ridge and the portion of U.S. 395-B (Pendleton-John Day Hwy.) between Long Creek and Mt. Vernon.

- U.S. 26 between the junction of OR 19 (milepost 124.15) and Old Highway Road on the east end of Dayville (milepost 131.43). This work is expected to begin July 11 and take about three days.
- U.S. 26 between the junction of U.S. 395 in Mt. Vernon (milepost 154.03) and Napa Auto Parts at the west end of John Day (milepost 161.55). This work is expected to begin July 13 and take about four days.
- U.S. 395-C between the south end of Canyon City near Adam Road (milepost 2.32) and Starr Ridge at USFS road 4920 (milepost 15.56). This work will begin around July 18 and take about a week.
- U.S. 395-B starting about a half-mile south of Long Creek (milepost 90.77) and continuing to the junction of U.S. 26 in Mt. Vernon (milepost 120.51). This work will be constructed under separate contract and has not yet been scheduled, but is expected to take place in July or August, and take about two weeks to complete.

NOTE: All dates are dependent on weather conditions and other factors that may impact the project start and end times.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS: No parking in downtown area work zones (Dayville, Mt. Vernon, John Day and Canyon City) during chip seal activities.

TRAVEL IMPACTS: Expect up to 20-minute delays, reduced speeds, loose rock on the roadway, flaggers, and pilot cars directing single lane traffic through the work zones. Minor delays during nighttime/early morning hours for road sweeping. Please reduce speed and watch for construction activities in the area. Plan extra travel time and slow down to prevent loose rock from flying onto other vehicles. Crews will sweep roadway, but expect some loose rock to be present for several days after chip seal.

Bicycle riders should be prepared for traveling on rock chip covered highway sections behind a pilot car with no usable shoulders. Use alternate routes or delay travel if possible to avoid chip seal work zone. Pedestrians, including those with disabilities, will be provided access through or around the work zone.

RANCHERS, FARMERS, PROPERTY OWNERS: Please keep farm equipment off the impacted highway sections during and up to two days after the chip sealing. Also, adjust irrigation pivots and lawn sprinklers to keep water off the roadway. If you have plans for moving livestock on these highway sections, please advise ODOT Transportation Coordinator Forrest Overcash at (541) 709-1570, or by email at forrest.j.overcash@odot.oregon.gov.

We greatly appreciate your support and cooperation during this paving operation.

For more info on these projects, see contact information listed for each location on map.

For information on other eastern Oregon highway construction projects contact Vicki Moles at 541-620-4527 Vicki.L.Moles@odot.oregon.gov. For updated road conditions check TripCheck.com or call 511, or (800) 977-6368.

ODOT SUMMER 2022 CHIP SEAL PROJECTS GRANT COUNTY AREA

- Constructed by ODOT Maintenance staff. For more information on these locations, contact Forrest Overcash 541-709-1570, email: forrest.j.overcash@odot.oregon.gov, or Shane Giffin 541-575-0749 ext. 221, email: shane.a.giffin@odot.oregon.gov.
- Constructed via separate contract. For more information on this location, contact Teresa Bock 541-709-8660, email: teresa.m.rock@odot.oregon.gov.