

Motorcycle riders honor veterans

By JUSTIN DAVIS
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — A pair of motorcycle convoys came through Grant County to honor veterans this summer. The convoys came through the county on June 26 and July 10.

The June 26 convoy was the third annual Memorial Run to the Wall, put on by the High Desert Eagles chapter of the Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association. The purpose of the run is to bring attention to the memory of veterans who were held as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action and their families.

Grant County designated Highway 26 as a POW/MIA Memorial Highway from the start of the run. The John Day Elks Lodge No. 1824, Grant County Chamber of Commerce, American Legion posts in John Day and Prairie City and the Veterans of Foreign Wars worked together to make the visit something the riders will remember.

The riders took a lunch break at the John Day Elks Lodge and were provided a meal that was cooked by lodge members. The riders were escorted through the county by the Grant County Sheriff's Department, and the citizens of Dayville welcomed the riders as they passed through their town.

The effort honors several families of POWs, including the families of Whitey Lent and Melvin Rookstool.

The July 10 ride was the 13th Trib-



Riders surround the towed torch during the 13th Tribute to Fallen Soldiers Torch ride on July 10, 2022, in John Day.

Contributed Photo

ute to Fallen Soldiers Memorial Torch Ride. The riders were escorted through the county by the Grant County Sheriff's Department as well as the John Day Fire Department while in John Day.

The mission of the riders is to honor Gold Star families and let them know that their sacrifice hasn't been forgotten and that their loved one will be remembered. A Gold Star family is one that has lost a loved one who was serving on active duty in the armed forces.

The ride begins in Eugene, where the torch is lit, and travels across the United States, honoring families along the way to Arlington National Cemetery for the closing ceremony. The flame is towed by a motor home and escorted by volunteer riders from across the country.

During a typical ceremony, the flame will arrive at the honored family's home or some other designated location. The riders dismount from their bikes, and

"Amazing Grace" is played. Warren Williamson, the director of tribute to fallen soldiers, will read the soldier's eulogy, prepared with the help of the fallen soldier's family.

The family is then presented with a plaque that contains an engraving of the soldier as well as the soldier's military record. The family also receives an oil painting of the soldier created from a collection of photos the family provided.

The riders are usually hosted by Elks Lodges, VFW posts and American Legion posts along the route, with the host organizations providing meals and, for overnight stops, a floor or a cot for the riders to sleep on.

Dr. Charlie Caughlin of the John Day Elks Lodge, who has been on a number of tribute rides, said the response from the many families he's been a part of honoring is, "Thank you for remembering our soldier!"

Grant County's Firewise coordinator honored for work

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Grant County's longtime Firewise coordinator was awarded the highest honor a civilian can receive from the state for fire prevention on Wednesday, July 21, at the John Day Fire Hall.

In front of roughly 25 people, Oregon Fire Marshal Mariana Ruiz-Temple presented Irene Jerome, Grant County's Firewise coordinator, with the 2022 Silver Sparky Award.

Every year, the Office of the Oregon State Fire Marshal awards the Golden Sparky Award to a fire service member and the Silver Sparky to a member of the public for their contributions to fire prevention and fire safety, Ruiz-Temple said.

Firewise, a national program that is implemented through the Oregon Department of Forestry, helps communities in fire-prone areas make themselves defensible against wildfires.

During Jerome's tenure as coordinator, Ruiz-Temple said, seven Firewise communities have been established in Grant County.

Jerome said the first to become a designated Firewise community was Pine Creek in 2014. Jerome noted

that the Pine Creek community was not only the first in the county but the first in Eastern Oregon to receive the designation. Residences there, she added, survived the Canyon Creek Complex Fire the following year. Ritter, Middlefork, Upper Laycock Creek Road, Canyon Creek Lane, Corral Gulch and Top Road in Monument followed.

Jerome, a forester who stepped into the Firewise coordinator role in 2010, said that she was "deeply honored and really humbled" to be recognized. However, she said the program's accomplishments are a byproduct of the community-driven ethos of the Firewise program and it has been a collective effort.

"There is more power in groups than in individual voices," she said.

The community drives the Firewise program, Jerome said. With that, she encourages Grant County residents who are concerned about fire prevention to get in touch with her. She said she could set up a time for a meeting to talk about the program.

"We'll come out and visit and see how we can help you (prevent a wildfire)," she said. "That's how we will make a difference."

Additional information and materials are available at firewise.org.



Jerome

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.

Oregon State Police

July 19
2:35 p.m.: Trooper responded to South Washington Street, canyon City. Jeremiah Obadiah Gwalhney, 44, of Canyon City was arrested on a Grant County warrant and booked into the Grant County Jail.

3:42 p.m.: Trooper responded to Adam Road near Canyon City for a dog bite complaint. A 75-year-old woman reported being bitten by a German shepherd while walking up the road. She asked that the dog's owner not be cited. Trooper verified the dog's rabies shots were up to date and warned the owner not to let the dog run loose.

9:09 p.m.: Trooper responded to Highland terrace in Mt. Vernon. Melinda Jo Moss, 43, was arrested on a felony warrant and booked into the Grant County Jail.

July 23
1:38 a.m.: Trooper responded to Highway 395 North near milepost 77B for a single-vehicle crash. The driver was not on scene. The driver was contacted. Investigation ongoing. Vehicle tagged for tow.

July 24
2:11 p.m.: Trooper responded to the Elkhorn Motel in John Day for a reported stabbing. The Grant County Sheriff's Office developed probable cause to arrest James Edward Stehcon, 57, of John Day, who was booked into the Grant County Jail on charges of fourth-degree assault and second-degree trespass. According to information from the sheriff's office, Stehcon had gotten into a confrontation with a resident of a nearby apartment and stabbed him in the chest with a pair of hand-held pruning shears. The victim was not taken to the hospital.

Grant County Sheriff

The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week ending July 27:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 8
- Average inmates: 15
- Bookings: 9
- Releases: 15
- Arrests: 1
- Citations: 2
- Fingerprints: 1
- Civil papers: 27
- Warrants processed: 1
- Assist/welfare check: 1
- Search and rescue: 1

Justice Court

The Grant County Justice Court reported the following activity for the week ending July 27:

- Traffic citations filed: 17
- Violations filed: 0
- Misdemeanors filed: 2
- Hearings held: 7
- Driver's license suspensions: 6
- Cases on probation: 34
- Civil cases filed: 2
- Warrants issued: 0

Violation of the basic rule: Thomas Lee Knepper, 77, Yuma, Arizona, July 7, 73/55 zone, fined \$165; Ian Da Stark, 28, Portland, July 2, 77/55 zone, fined \$265; Efrain M. Salazar, 25, Bend, July 4, 81/55 zone, fined \$265; Daniel Fisher Ostermann, 44, Petaluma, California, July 2, 75/55 zone, fined \$165; Kelly R. Flanagan, 51, Mt. Vernon, June 27, 81/55 zone, fined \$265; Garrette James Smith, 35, Baker City, June 24, 74/55 zone, fined \$165; Bill Joe Meadows, 39, la Center, Washington, June 24, 81/55 zone, fined \$265; Kalli Marie Maddox, 20, Dallas, Oregon, July 4, 75/55 zone, fined \$165.

Exceeding the speed limit: Shane Dee Wall, 57, Sun Valley, Idaho, June 22, 81/55 zone, fined \$265; Travis James Evans, 35, Redmond, June 22, 74/65 zone, fined \$165; Robert Lewis Van Voorhis, 74, John Day, July 22, 35/25, fined \$115; Kelly Wayne Koch, 60, Hillsboro, June 22, 37/25 zone, fined \$165; Levi Robert McClellan, 26, John Day, June 26, 44/30 zone, fined \$165; Katie Louise Miller, 39, Eugene, July 24, 80/65 zone, \$265.

Driving while suspended or revoked: Kelly Rene Baker, 47, Prairie City, July 3, fined \$440; Thomas Harry Stephens, 60, Canyon City, June 26, \$440.

Driving uninsured: Kelly Rene Baker, 47, Prairie City, July 3, fined \$265.

Failure to carry proof of insurance: Jesus Rey Conejo Rodriguez, 28, Phoenix, June 29, fined \$265.

No operator's license: Efrain M. Salazar, 25, Bend, July 4, fined \$265.

Failure to register vehicle: Keenan Rand McPhetridge, 27, Mt. Vernon, June 7, fined \$115.

Open container of alcohol: Curtis Martin, 32, Enterprise, July 16, fined \$265; Rachel C. McNeal, 27, Prairie City, July 1, fined \$265.

Minor in possession of alcohol: Xander McCreery, 19, Pueblo, Colorado, July 1, fined \$225.

No valid hunting or angling tag: Robert Lee Warrington Jr., 38, John Day, June 22, fined \$115.

Driving while using a cellphone: Rachel C. McNeal, 27, Prairie City, July 1, fined \$265.

Dispatch

Grant County dispatch worked 151 calls during the week ending July 27, including:

• **Oregon State Police**
July 24
12:43 p.m.: Trooper responded to Highway 26 near Mill Corner, John Day, for a roadstruck deer. Trooper dispatched the injured animal.

July 25
7:17 a.m.: Advised of cows in Highway 26 near milepost 173.
6:15 p.m.: Advised of a driving complaint on Highway 26 near Mt. Vernon.

• **Grant County Sheriff**
July 20
7:58 p.m.: Advised of a possible impaired driver on Highway 26 near milepost 158.

July 21
1:08 p.m.: Received a report of suspicious circumstances at Old West Federal Credit Union, John Day.
4:01 p.m.: Responded to Russell's Meat Market, Canyon City, for a civil issue.

4:17 p.m.: Received a theft report from North Washington Street, Canyon City.

5:26 p.m.: Received a report of harassment from Dog patch lane, John Day.

July 22
7:29 a.m.: Responded to Meadowbrook Apartments, John Day, for a criminal mischief complaint.

1:22 p.m.: Responded to Len's Pharmacy, John Day, for a driving complaint.

1:41 p.m.: Search and Rescue responded with John Day Ambulance to Forest Service Road 36 for a male who was bucked off a horse.

5:23 p.m.: Responded to Highway 26 near Apple Road to dispatch a roadstruck deer.

July 23
7:49 a.m.: Responded with Oregon State Police to Cottonwood Street in Mt. Vernon for a person with mental health issues.

7:53 a.m.: Responded to Happy Valley Road for a civil issue.

12:04 p.m.: Traffic stop, Highway 26 near milepost 172. Jill Janicek, 55, of Meridian, Idaho, cited for violation of the basic rule (80/65 zone).

9:02 p.m.: Responded to Olive Lake to assist an outside agency.

July 24
5:52 a.m.: Advised of a report of shots fired in the vicinity of Cottonwood Street, Mt. Vernon.

7:53 a.m.: Advised of a male subject jumping into traffic on Highway 395 South near Grant Union Junior/Senior High School.

11 a.m.: Traffic stop, Highway 26

at Cottonwood Street, Mt. Vernon. Driver warned for speeding.

1:04 p.m.: Responded with John Day Ambulance to Dixie Creek Road near milepost 4 for a rollover crash. No injuries reported.

2:04 p.m.: Responded to Southwest Brent Drive, John Day, for a reported stabbing. James E. Stehcon, 57, of John Day was arrested on charges of fourth-degree assault and second-degree trespass and booked into the Grant County Jail.

3:46 p.m.: Responded to Southwest Brent Drive, John Day, for a complaint of speeding and loud engine noise.

4:35 p.m.: Responded to East Fifth Street, Prairie City, for a parking complaint.

11:02 p.m.: Advised of a cougar sighting near the Snaffle Bit Dinner House, John Day.

July 25
2:43 a.m.: Advised of a crash detection on Camp Creek Road near Seneca.

11:30 a.m.: Traffic stop, Highway 395 North near milepost 87B. Avery Louis Chiklak, 26, of Carrollton, Georgia, was cited for violation of the basic rule (83/55 zone).

2:46 p.m.: Responded to Highway 26 near milepost 160 to assist a motorist.

July 26
7:32 a.m.: Responded to Cottonwood Street, Mt. Vernon, for a missing person report. Unfounded.

10:18 a.m.: Grant County medical examiner requested to assist Crook County at Driskill Memorial Chapel, John Day.

1:22 p.m.: Responded to Mt. Vernon Fire Hall for a suspicious vehicle.

3:56 p.m.: Responded with Long Creek Ambulance, John Day Ambulance and Life Flight to Highway 402 near Long Creek for a motorcycle crash.

6:03 p.m.: Grant County Jail deputy served a Crook County warrant on Frankie Gene Rippy, 73, of Bend.

July 27
4:19 p.m.: Took a report from a resident of Charolais Heights Drive, John Day, about an excessive rattlesnake problem.

• **John Day Ambulance**
July 21
8:30 a.m.: Dispatched to Ingle Street, Mt. Vernon, for a 47-year-old male with a broken leg.

4:54 p.m.: Dispatched to Dog Patch Lane for a 96-year-old male who fell.

8:04 p.m.: Responded to Chester's Market for an unresponsive female. Patient refused transport.

July 22
8:02 a.m.: Dispatched to Trafton Lane for a 63-year-old female with chest pains.

8:52 p.m.: Dispatched to Patterson Bridge Road for a 39-year-old male with a seizure. Grant County Sheriff's Office also responded.

July 23
6:42 a.m.: Dispatched to Valley View Assisted Living for a 90-year-old female with a migraine.

7:06 a.m.: Dispatched to Valley View Assisted Living for a female who fell.

July 24
11:05 a.m.: Dispatched to Cottonwood Street, Mt. Vernon, for a 24-year-old male who overdosed. Grant County Sheriff's Office also responded.

4:59 p.m.: Dispatched to Forest Service Road 73, Granite, for a motorcycle crash. Grant County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue, Forest Service law enforcement and Life Flight also dispatched. All units asked to stand down after rider declined medical attention.

July 25
12:13 p.m.: Dispatched to Riverside Mobile Home Park for an 87-year-old female who was vomiting and lost consciousness.

12:50 p.m.: Patient transfer at the airport.

4:27 p.m.: Patient transfer at the airport.

4:50 p.m.: Dispatched to Grant County Regional Airport for an 18-year-old female with a medication issue.

8:59 p.m.: Patient transfer at the airport.

July 26
9:46 a.m.: Dispatched to South Main Street, Prairie City, for an 89-year-old male with a bleeding issue.

10:17 a.m.: Dispatched to Cottonwood Street, Mt. Vernon, for a 27-year-old female who overdosed on pills.

3:59 p.m.: Caller requested an ambulance for a child who had fallen into a swimming pool but was breathing normally and was otherwise unharmed. caller was advised to take the child to Blue Mountain Hospital.

9:24 p.m.: Dispatched to Clarks Creek Road, Mt. Vernon, for a female with sciatic nerve pain., Patient transported to Blue Mountain Hospital.

July 27
12:46 p.m.: Patient transfer at the airport.

• **Prairie City Ambulance**
July 22
2:27 a.m.: Dispatched to South Main Street for an unknown medical issue. Patient refused transport.

11:44 a.m.: Dispatched to Second Street for a 20-something male with an unknown medical issue. John Day Ambulance also responded.

July 26
7:36 a.m.: Dispatched to South Main Street for an 89-year-old male with a bleeding head wound. John Day Ambulance also responded.

• **John Day Fire**
July 20
8:10 p.m.: Dispatched to Highway 26 near milepost 156 for a grass fire. Oregon Trail Electric Co-op also advised.

July 23
8:51 p.m.: Dispatched to 755 SW Brent Drive for a grass and brush fire.

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Grant County Democrats

would like to welcome you to the 113th Grant County Fair.

Good luck to all Fair participants.

We are proud of our youth in 4-H and FFA. Thank you to all the sponsors, leaders and hard-working staff that make the Fair possible.