

## SMALL TOWN VALUES

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He admitted there is a big difference between his job in 2004 and his work as the battalion's personnel officer now.

"Last time, obviously, the threat level when you left the [Forward Operating Base] was much higher," he said.

Now Qualls, who is entering his 14<sup>th</sup> year of military service, sits at a desk at battalion headquarters. Yet the two jobs, platoon leader and personnel officer, are not mutually exclusive in terms of importance.

If a 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. soldier goes on leave, he can thank Qualls and his personnel staff. If a soldier is injured, Qualls knows about it. And, if a soldier encounters pay problems, it is Qualls and his team in the personnel shop who fix it.

"I'm responsible for all the personnel; awards, injuries, leave, all the pay, anything you'd associate in the civilian world to a human resources job," he said.

Like his first tour, though, Qualls said he faces stress. The tension, though, is different from what is normally associated with command of a platoon.

"I worry about everyone getting leave," he said.

In the civilian world, Qualls works at the Bank of Eastern Oregon. He manages a group of loan officers as well as his own portfolio.

"[My employers] have been great all through this," said Qualls, who graduated from Heppner High School in 1995; he

said those small town connections followed him to Iraq.

Not long ago, he received a letter from one of his former customers. The letter talked about the customer's grandson who hit a home run in the high school baseball quarterfinals.

"They're thinking of me, even while I'm over here," Qualls said.

Qualls said his reasons for joining the Army National Guard 14 years ago were simple ones.

"I wanted to do something for the country. Something bigger than myself. I knew I had to give back something," he said. "We're proud of the heritage we have in Eastern Oregon and of the battalion's hard work and dedication."

One thing Qualls said he could never get used to is leaving his family for a year. While he said soldiers sacrifice when they deploy, families pay a high price, too.

"I'd say families sacrifice more than we do," he said. "They don't have us there to help with the kids. For children it is hard as well. The lack of having a parent there is probably the biggest sacrifice of the war."

Qualls said this deployment demonstrated strength not only in his ability to lead but also his capacity to overcome challenges.

"[The deployment] has made me more resilient as far as spending time away from my family," he said. "I think we all have a greater appreciation for family to the point we won't take them for granted."

## County Court news

The Morrow County Court met June 15 in Boardman with Judge Tallman and Commissioners Grieb and Rea in attendance.

The court reviewed and approved the minutes of the June 8 meetings and the account payables, voids and Retirement Taxes in the net amount of \$106,312.13.

### Road Report:

**Blake Ranch Road:** There were seven places where water crossed the road and caused minor washes. There was one place where water washed out three foot into the road. Rip rap and base rock was brought in to make the repairs. **Willow Creek Road:** There were seven mud slides which caused the water to run across the road and wash onto both sides of the road. These were cleaned up and ditch lines were re-established. There are still some small areas that need cleaned up and one large slide near Black Mountain Lane that is next to the pavement and will need to be addressed soon.

**Balm Fork Road:** There were three washouts on Balm Fork Road. There was one small washout around a culvert and two large washouts. The two large washouts took six days and five trucks hauling rip rap to repair. The gravel section of Balm Fork Road had to be re-graded due to numerous small washouts.

**Little Butter Creek Road:** There was water crossing over the bridge at the Hughes residence on Little Butter Creek which washed out the outlet end. This was back-filled with rip rap once the water receded. **Upper Little Butter Creek:** Water crossed the road in several places and caused scouring in the road. The road was graded and gravel was added. Water also filled the culvert at Hisler's residence and washed out the shoulder,

it took several days for the water to go down, the culvert was then cleaned and base rock and gravel was added.

**Hannah Arbuckle Road:** Water crossed the road for about 400 feet at Bennett's residence just off of Highway 74, causing the road to be closed for four days. This left two large holes alongside the asphalt and flooding at Bennett's house and barn. For the next five miles there were several places that were scoured out due to all of the water crossing the road. These areas were re-graded and ditches re-established.

Approximately five miles up the road, water washed out a four-foot flat bottom culvert which ended up about a hundred feet downstream. This was retrieved and reinstalled. The road was then reopened. **East Baseline Road/Myers Lane:** Water crossed in several places causing mud to stay on the pavement; it was graded off. However, there is still some residue. Several places ditch lines were washed out which left extremely deep ditches along the asphalt. The crew has started filling in the ditches with shot rock and will continue to repair as time allows. **Sand Hollow Road:** There are several places along the road that washed out ditch lines causing extremely deep ditches that will need to be addressed with base rock. **Upper Rhea Creek Road:** There were two places where water eroded the inlets and outlets of culverts, as well as one place where approx. a third of the road was washed out for about 100 feet. These areas were repaired with rip-rap and base rock. There were also several sections of this road that had small washouts that just needed to be graded and have some gravel added. **Lunceford**

**Canyon Road:** There was some minor scouring of gravel in a few places that needed to be graded to repair. **Road Canyon:** This road is still closed due to major washouts from an earlier event.

**Misc:** The chip-sealing project on Willow Creek Road has been finished. All that is left is a little shoulder work and a final sweeping just before the lines are painted. Due to the weather the project was started a week late and then there were three times during the project that weather events caused temporary delays. ODOT helped the county on this project with three to four trucks per day hauling chip rock to our chip spreader. The crew is currently helping ODOT with paving patch work on the Heppner/Spray Highway. The county is providing paving equipment, two men, and one truck and pup hauling hot mix from Hermiston. The graders are fixing roads that have minor washouts. There are two graders working on Wyland Grade and Deadman Loop Roads. The crusher crew has tore down the crusher and moved all the units to the Halvorsen pit and are currently getting set up to start crushing.

**Public Hearing:** Community Development Block Grant Application: The hearing was attended by Patty Good (USDA) and Karen Kendall (GEODC). They answered questions the court had regarding the work load this project may create for county staff as well as other questions regarding who is eligible and what types of projects would qualify for the funding. The court decided to process with the project.

**2011-2012 Morrow County Budget Hearing:** Finance Director, Fred Carlson provided the court with a spreadsheet for the

General Funds and Road Fund Budgets. Carlson re-stated that the Budget Committee had decided to reduce the road funds historically paid to the cities by \$177,500 leaving the Road Fund ending balance at \$1,073,283 and the General Fund ending balance at \$922,913. After a lengthy discussion the court decided to provide an addition \$50,000 to the cities for their road funds.

**Contracts:** The court reviewed and approved an amendment to an IGA between the State of Oregon for fuel purchases and motor pool shop services for an additional two years with the agreement effective from July 1, 2011 thru June 30, 2013. The court reviewed and approved the engagement letter with Barnett and Moro, P.C. for the June 30, 2011 audit for the county. The court reviewed and approved the lease agreement between Satellite Tracking of People LLC for electronic monitoring equipment for the Juvenile Dept.

The court conducted the following business: The court reviewed and approved the new fee schedule for the county with questions regarding one fee from the District Attorney's office. The court reviewed a request from the Oregon Trail Rodeo Committee for an expansion of the beer garden. The court had questions regarding the structure being in the floodway and who would be providing the labor for the construction. The court agreed to forward the request to the Planning Dept.

Reviewed misc. correspondences and discussed upcoming meetings.

If you would like to be placed on the list to receive County minutes, please contact Karen Wolff at (541)676-5620.

## Fire season declared on private lands

Declaration of fire season is in effect for forest and range lands protected by Oregon Department of Forestry - Central Oregon District in the John Day Unit beginning at 6 a.m. on Monday, June 27. This includes private, state, county, municipal, and tribal lands in counties Grant, Wheeler and portions of Gilliam, Morrow, Harney and Umatilla.

During this declared fire season:  
-Open burning is not allowed. Burn permits are required for burn barrels on all private forest and range lands. Contact your local ODF office in John Day, Fossil or Monument for a permit.

-Contact your local rural or city fire department to find out more about any additional restrictions related to burn barrels.

-Landowners who conducted burning of slash piles last fall and this past spring are encouraged to check these piles and ensure that they are completely out.

-Logging and other industrial operations must meet requirements for fire prevention, such as fire tools, water supply and watchman service when those operations are occurring on private lands protected by ODF.

-Campfires must be out. Do not leave unattended. Get permission from the landowner before starting a campfire.

Temperatures are expected to increase through the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, drying out vegetation.

"It is important to practice fire safety when using fireworks," cautions Angie Johnson, unit forester. She reminds the public that Oregon law prohibits illegal fireworks and that fireworks are forbidden on federal lands, in parks and in campgrounds.

## New program pays Columbia Basin landowners for allowing public hunting access

Columbia Basin landowners with good upland bird habitat on their properties can earn additional income by providing public hunting access, thanks to ODFW's new Oregon Open Fields program.

Funded by a federal grant, the program seeks to open 95,000 acres of private land in the Columbia Basin to upland bird hunting.

Landowners that participate will receive payment based on criteria like the size of the access area and type of access permitted (advance reservation required or walk-in hunting access). Payment will range from 78 cents to \$3 per acre. Payments for hunting access for similar programs average about \$2 an acre. ODFW staff help

landowners who participate in the program by posting signs, installing permit boxes, patrolling properties, coordinating hunter reservations, and managing all other aspects of the hunting access program. The state's Recreational Use Statute also provides liability protection for participating landowners.

The Oregon Open Fields program is administered through the ODFW Access and Habitat Program and is funded by a grant from the US Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency.

For more information about participating in the Oregon Open Fields program, contact ODFW at 503-947-6317 or visit the Oregon Open Fields website.

## Loretta Lynn to perform at Wildhorse on August 13

Country music legend Loretta Lynn will appear in an outdoor concert at Wildhorse Resort and Casino on Saturday, August 13 at 3:00 p.m. Tickets go on sale June 27 and can be purchased at the Wildhorse Resort and Casino Gift Shop or at [www.wildhorseresort.com](http://www.wildhorseresort.com).

## Biologists to survey Lahontan trout populations in Willow Creek basin

The desert rangelands of southeast Oregon may seem like an unlikely place to survey fish populations. But in the Willow creek basin, a population of native Lahontan cutthroat trout has defied the extreme conditions and has survived of floods, droughts and silty, alkaline water.

To better quantify just how well these fish populations are doing, ODFW biologists will walk the length of Willow creek in July and August, counting fish. They will use electro-fishing devices to send an electrical charge through the water to temporarily stun the fish, allowing them to be counted and measured before being released unharmed.

"Currently, [the Whitehorse and Willow basin] is the only pure native Lahontan trout population in Oregon, and we're excited to see how it's enduring," said Shannon Hurn, ODFW district fish biologist in Hines.

Lahontan trout can grow to be the largest of all cutthroat trout and were once found throughout desert basins in parts of California, Nevada and southeast Oregon. In recent decades, many popu-

lations have disappeared due to dam construction, habitat destruction and the introduction of non-native brown, brook and rainbow trout.

"Hatchery programs still provide for popular Lahontan trout fisheries in several states, but there are very few self-sustaining, naturally reproducing populations," Hurn said.

So few populations, in fact, that the species has been protected since 1973 and is currently listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. In 2006, it was identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy as a species in need of conservation.

In 1989 biologists counted only 8,000 Lahontan trout in the Whitehorse basin. During the most recent population survey in 2005, the number had increased to 13,500.

Populations have improved enough that a catch-and-release fishing season was opened on Whitehorse and Willow creeks in 2001.

Biologists will use data from this year's survey to better define the trend in the population.

**If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, help is available and that help is FREE of charge.**

If YOU have a family member who suffers from gambling addiction, YOU can also receive FREE treatment even if the gambler is not receiving treatment.

If you are a resident of Morrow County and you wish to take advantage of the services above or desire more information, Please call any of the following numbers to set up a LOCAL appointment or just to talk:

Bobby Harris @ 541-676-9925 or 541-256-0175  
Community Counseling Solutions (CCS) @ 541-678-9161  
OR 1-877-695-4648 (1-888-MYLIMIT)

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The Heppner Jr/Sr high school wrestling team is collecting batteries for an ongoing team fundraiser. Auto, tractor, RV, and four wheeler batteries will be accepted. Please bring your batteries to the South end Transfer station free of charge located at 57185 Hwy 74, Lexington, OR. For further information or if you need batteries picked up, call Mark Lemmon at (541)215-9248.