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MMA fighter victorious

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NANCE BESTON/COLUMBIA BASIN HERALD

The Moses Lake School District is hosting a town hall to educate the community, parents and students about gangs and prevention. The district has partnered with local law enforcement and the North Central Educational Service District to outline trends, indicators and strategies for navigating gangs and affiliated behavior.

'This is one way we come together for our kids'

MLSD to host gang town hall tonight at Vanguard Academy

By NANCE BESTON
Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Moses Lake School District is convening a broad coalition of educators, law enforcement officers and regional safety specialists tonight for a gang awareness and prevention town hall, an event district leaders say is aimed at equipping families with practical tools to recognize early warning signs and keep youth connected to positive supports.

The event runs 5:30-7 p.m. at Vanguard Academy, where presenters will outline current trends in gang activity, indicators families should watch for, and strategies for starting early, proactive conversations with children and teens. The district is offering food and childcare to encourage attendance, and organizers say the evening is designed to be supportive rather than fear-based.

"This event is about getting ahead of concerns before they become problems," said Scott West, the district's

Gang Awareness & Prevention Night
May 12
5:30-7 p.m.
Vanguard Academy
740 E. Yonezawa Blvd., Moses Lake

executive director of safety and well-being. "When families understand what to look for and how to respond, we create stronger support systems around our students and a safer community overall."

A timely conversation
West said the district intentionally scheduled the event in spring, noting that summer brings long stretches of unstructured time for students. "It's important to do it right now," he said. "Summertime is typically a little less structured, and we didn't want to go an entire year without offering this education."

Last year's event drew about 15 to 20 attendees, held in a smaller district room. West, who attended while still working in the Warden School District, said the district wanted to expand the format this year with a larger venue, food service and childcare to make the event more accessible.

"We're just trying to provide it to our community," he said. "We looked at how we could do it differently,

See GANGS, A3

Energy and energy alternatives discussed at Newhouse summit

By CHERYL SCHWEIZER
Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Representatives of industry, government and power generation spent Monday discussing the present and future of power production at an Energy Summit hosted by Fourth District Congressman Dan Newhouse.

Newhouse said the goal was to talk about solutions as well as challenges.

"(The summit) focused on — well, a lot of different aspects of energy," Newhouse said. "Tremendous need, that's probably the best word for it. A shortage, which is not allowing our potential to be realized here in Central Washington. How do we address that? How do we increase the amount of energy production in a timeline that makes sense? We can't wait years and years; we need to get things done as quickly as possible.

How do we do that at a cost we can afford?"

The federal and state governments have a large presence in the Pacific Northwest hydropower system, and Newhouse that's part of the discussion too.

"What are some of the obstacles, challenges, and whether things have to be policy decisions that are made to be made in Olympia or DC, or (do) minds have to be changed, hearts and minds of people?" he said.

Participants got together at Big Bend Community College to discuss the possibilities of nuclear power and what the Columbia River means to the Fourth District. Grant County PUD Commissioner Larry Schaapman was one of the panelists for that discussion and said he thinks there's a disconnect between the policies surrounding hydropower and the public.

See ENERGY, A2

Port of ML power generation project moving forward

By CHERYL SCHWEIZER
Staff Writer

MOSES LAKE — Some existing Port of Moses Lake customers are considering expansion, and potential customers are looking at Moses Lake as an option. But, said Shannon Souza of Sol Coast Consulting, there are some roadblocks.

"The rates of growth from the (businesses) you have successfully attracted to Moses Lake far exceed the rates of delivery from the Grant County PUD," Souza told port commissioners during a presentation Monday. "We can all agree this is a dilemma."

Port officials announced in

December they are exploring construction of their own electrical generating capacity and commissioned a "pre-feasibility" study from Sol Coast Consulting to see what's possible. What the study found was a range of options. Determining which options are practical and which are affordable will be among the subjects addressed in the follow-up study.

Souza said the just-completed study, and the follow-up studies, have both short-range and long-range goals.

"Do we need new transmission and transmission rebuilds? Yes. Do we need more gas service and

potentially gas line extensions? Probably. Those are going to take a long time," she said. "While we're working on those, what can we do in the next two to five years to relieve some of this pressure and keep your employees here and possibly attract even more employees?"

One of the potential solutions to the energy challenge is agriculture, she said.

"We have a lot of agricultural waste or residual products in Grant County. Those can be turned into energy revenues," she said.

Souza cited an example from a trip she took to Denmark.

See PORT, A2



FILE PHOTO

There are a range of options available to the Port of Moses Lake as it looks at providing supplemental power generation.

Fire burns around 2,200 acres along SR 24

By CALEB PEREZ
Staff Writer

MATTAWA — A nearly 2,200-acre fire briefly closed state Route 24 Sunday evening. Grant County Fire District 8 Chief Matt Hyndman said firefighters were informed of the fire at about 8:16 p.m. with local fire departments working

together to get the flames under control.

"It was a couple of hundred acres, heavy fuels, high winds and so I knew we had something big," said Hyndman.

Traffic was halted in the area for four to five hours while fire departments worked to put out the fire. By midnight, Hyndman said,

the fire was knocked down and in mop-up and authorities began allowing traffic through the area again.

The cause of the fire is undetermined as of Monday evening, he said.

The chief said a large portion of the fire occurred on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service land, so they were contacted and

arrived at the scene soon after it started. Monday morning FWS contacted GCFD 8 to inform them of a few spots that reignited.

It was decided that it would be best to treat these areas as controlled burns and allow the fire to burn up to the road.

See FIRE, A3



A fire near Mattawa that started Sunday night burned about 2,200 acres. The fire spread through the area due to high fuels and heavy winds.

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