



NEWS RELEASE

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GRANT COUNTY TO HOST U.S. HONOR FLAG JUNE 22 IN MEMORY OF DEPUTY JOHN BERNARD

EPHRATA — The U.S. Honor Flag will be flown over the Grant County Courthouse in Ephrata as part of its Washington state tour. The event will be at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday June 22 in front of the Grant County Courthouse, 35 C St NW, Ephrata.

Grant County is only one of six police agencies in the state to host the U.S. Honor Flag. The ceremony will honor the memory of fallen Grant County Sheriff's Deputy John Bernard who died earlier this year on January 3 while in the line of duty. The flag also pays tribute to fallen military, firefighters and others killed in the line of duty.

Prior to arriving in Ephrata, the flag will have traveled from several similar ceremonies in Seattle, Federal Way, Lakewood, Pierce County, Lewis County and in honor of those communities' fallen law enforcement officers. Because of the tight schedule which the flag must follow, the ceremony will last about 35 minutes and include local dignitary speakers. Since this will be the only stop in Eastern Washington, it is expected this event will attract the attendance from officials from across the Inland Empire.

After the Ephrata ceremony, the flag will travel to the Washington State Capitol for a ceremony there. The flag will then travel to the Washington-Oregon border where it will be handed to a contingent of Oregon law enforcement officers and delivered to their ceremonies. The flag will be received at each location by a full Honor Guard of Law Enforcement and other public safety agencies, and travel in an official motorcade to each ceremony venue. This is a full-dress uniform occasion.

All current and retired military, law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical service and all citizens are invited to attend.

For more information, citizens and public safety agencies may call Sgt. Ron Renken, Grant Co. Sheriff's Office, 509-750-7308. Media should contact Kyle Foreman, Grant County Emergency Management, 509-760-3173.

Backgrounder on the U.S. Honor Flag

The U.S. Honor Flag was originally gifted to now-Ret. U.S. Army Lt. Chris Heisler by the Texas House of Representatives shortly after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. While in the military, he carried this particular flag with him to Kuwait, Qatar and Iraq to fly with American soldiers in combat zones.

Heisler felt compelled to take action after 9/11, and with this flag in tow, he set out for Ground Zero. Along the way, he helped to organize and be part of one of the longest police motorcades in the history of the United States bound for Ground Zero, bringing many tokens of support to our nation's heroes.

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This is the flag that flew over Ground Zero and a suggestion was made that this flag continue to fly in support of our heroes. The Honor Network was born. For more information on the flag and the Honor Network, visit www.USHonorFlag.org.

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Logistical Information

Street closure: C St-NW between Division Ave W and First Ave-NW in front of the Courthouse will be closed from 7:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the 22nd.

Parking: Parking is limited to on-street parking around the courthouse. There is no designated or reserved parking areas.

Public Safety Agency/Citizen Contact: Sgt. Ron Renken, Grant Co. Sheriff's Office, 509-750-7308.

Media Contact: Kyle Foreman, Grant Co. Emergency Management's Public information Officer, at mobile 509-760-3173. Cell phone is primary contact method. If you plan on attending, please notify me at least 24 hours in advance. I will be available for comments at the ceremony. I will be at the Incident Command Post at the corner of C St-NW and First Ave-NW. Look for the large white box truck with NAVY HEARING TEST STATION on the side: this is the Sheriff's Incident Command Unit (we just haven't yet painted over the graphics from its previous life).