

Sammy Johnston honored by Kinzua Corp. after 32 years

Sammy Johnston was presented a gold watch from Kinzua Corporation at a retirement dinner in his honor on Thursday Jan. 19. Johnston had worked in the lumber division for more than 32 years, and was forced to retire last July after a heart attack.

Bob Lankford, lumber division superintendent, said before making the presentation that Johnston was one of the men he depended on most when he first came to Kinzua three years ago.

"I've never found anyone in my life more sincere or dedicated to his work than Sammy", Lankford commented.

"I'm kind of glad I worked

for the out... Johnston remarked as he accepted the watch.

A Morrow County native, Johnston became an employee of Heppner Lumber Co., which later became Kinzua, 32 years ago, working for 16 years in the planer mill and 16 years in

the sawmill.

Family members present at his retirement dinner included wife Lois; sons and spouses Richard and Susan Johnston and Greg and Debbie Johnston; daughter Pam and her husband Jim Partlow; and daughter Jennifer.



Sammy Johnston accepts congratulations from Bob Lankford at his retirement dinner recently. Johnston's wife, Lois, looks on.

Ila Albert plans trip abroad

Ila Albert, retired teacher and long time Heppner resident, is making plans for a trip to Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Mrs. Albert

has been spending the winter in Mesa, Arizona. She will be leaving for abroad next month and plans to return in mid March.

Thirsty farmers study new reservoir project

Butter Creek farmers, hard put to find water for their crops, are studying the possibility of tunneling the precious liquid in from the John Day River watershed to the south.

Lowell Saylor said Tuesday that a feasibility report completed last November indicated the project looked "very favorable."

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Columbia-Blue Mountain Resource Conservation & Development Project, Saylor outlined the efforts being made by Butter Creek farmers to enhance their water resources, including the development of the oft discussed Snipe Creek project (formerly called the Teel Project).

He was part of a four-member panel that featured Milo Prindle, Kinzua Corporation, Heppner; Darrell Learn, state Department of Water Resources; and Herb Huddleston, Oregon State University Soils Department. Moderator was Stafford Hansell, former director of the state Executive Department.

Key points included:

- A new soil survey has been completed in Morrow County and one is currently underway in Umatilla County;

- Kinzua Corporation is in the process of constructing a new, \$4 1/2 million sawmill that will allow the wood products firm to get back to commercial thinning;

- Studies are presently underway to determine Oregon's need for Columbia River water.

But it was Saylor, a second generation Butter Creek farmer, who drew the most interest as he explained steps being taken to improve the water outlook in the county's principal hay growing area.

Farmers have had to rely on the dwindling flows from Butter Creek, an "extremely erratic" stream, according to Saylor, to irrigate their crops in the winter and early spring. By summer, when other areas of the county are irrigating, Butter Creek has gone dry.

Saylor said land leveling operations are being used by farmers to conserve and make better use of the scarce water. Sprinkling is also catching on but is expected to take several years to fully adapt to the area. Deep wells, in an area already considered a critical ground water source by the state Water Resources Department, are out, as far as Saylor is concerned.

He said the water table in the area was unstable and has been declining for the past several years.

Last year, the beleaguered farmers employed an unique method for recycling water called "lateral pit wells." Water from Butter Creek and flood irrigation is trapped 25-30 feet below the surface and moved through pipes laid in gravel-lined trenches up to distances of 2,000 feet.

The pumping costs are about a fourth that of deep wells, Saylor said.

Timing was a problem last summer. It was too dry to produce good flows but the "prospects look good," the past president of the Oregon Hay Growers Association said. Farmers are hoping to use the innovative system during the hot, summer months to enhance their crop prospects.

Still on the drawing boards is a long-range solution to the growers' problems—the Snipe Creek project.

Donkey Basketball

Saturday

7:30

Heppner High Gym

...Budget committee deliberates

Continued from page 1... known by the next budget session.

Approved staffing requests for 3 1/2 teaching positions at Riverside and A.C. Houghton schools, a special education aide at Ione, a bus driver in Irrigon and 1/2 custodian positions at Heppner Elementary and A.C. Houghton.

The budget committee is now studying the capital outlay portion of the budget.

...Willow Creek Dam aired

Continued from page 1...

He added that if residents of the area were in favor of resurrecting the project the county would "probably go along."

Heppner Mayor Jerry Sweeney said he would take the issue to the people.

"If our elected officials come forth with a solid proposal that could benefit the area I think we should take a look at it," said Sweeney.

"We'll get some of the Senator's people out here to explain the proposal in a public meeting and based on the response from the citizenry we'll know which way to go," said the Mayor.

One area in which the dam would benefit Heppner, Ione and Lexington would be the elimination of a flood plain that currently exists through those towns and down Willow Creek. Under new flood insurance regulations cities and towns located in flood plains are being required to adopt ordinances that prohibit further building.

In the case of Heppner that ordinance would mean that no further building or reconstruction could take place in the commercial district and much of the residential area. For instance, if a downtown busi-

EMTs to meet Jan. 28

At the Jan. 17 meeting of the Heppner Chapter of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) it was decided that future meetings will be held on the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings will take place at Pioneer Memorial Hospital.

Jan. 28, the EMTs will conduct a special session to familiarize members with ambulance procedure and learn where supplies are kept. Members will be notified to the time and place of the session.

At the last meeting, Sandi Hanna, RN at PMH, gave inservice training on emergency child birth and transferring babies in distress or expectant mothers in distress.

The next regular meeting of the EMTs will be Feb. 14 at Pioneer Memorial Hospital beginning at 7:30 p.m.

ness was damaged extensively by fire or other disaster, nothing could be rebuilt in its place.

In addition to flood protection, the dam would also insure water to irrigated farms downstream that went without water because of drought conditions last year. Irrigators that currently have

water rights from Willow Creek would not be faced with paying for water taken under those rights, but a charge would be levied for additional waters used.

A date for the public meeting will be set in the near future and will probably be a joint session for all residents of the county.

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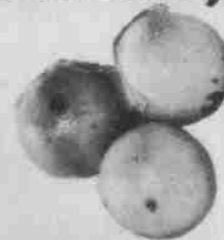
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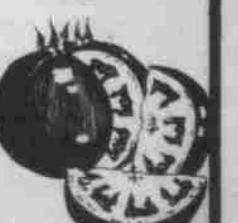
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