



Schools, BMCC and City of Heppner get nod from County voters

Morrow County voters were apparently in a generous mood this past week, passing levy requests for the county school system, Blue Mountain Community College, and the City of Heppner.

The county schools levy—24 per cent higher than the levy approved by voters last year—

was approved by a 539-390 margin, according to unofficial results. Support for the levy was strongest in the county's north end, where much of the increase will be spent to staff a new Boardman elementary school and an Irrigon junior high.

Boardman voters approved

the levy by a whopping 170-48 margin, and in Irrigon, the levy passed 104-66. It was a different story in southern Morrow County, where in Heppner, the levy was defeated 164-144. In Lexington, the vote was 43-27 against the levy, while Lone voters cast 94-69 in favor of the budget.

A count had not been completed on the vote that would change the structure of school board representation, but with three precincts tabulated, it was passing by a substantial margin. The measure would give the Irrigon, Boardman, Lone and Heppner areas one school board representative each, in addition to two at-large board members. Heppner currently has three representatives on the board.

The county schools levy—up nearly \$850,000 from last year—will cost taxpayers an estimated \$8.40 per \$1,000 of property, down from the current rate of \$9.59. The reason for the decrease in the millage rate is the fact that Morrow County's taxable value has risen to an estimated \$450 million—up sharply from last year's total of \$326 million. Construction at the Carty coal-fired power plant performed during the current fiscal year alone is expected to account for nearly \$140 million of the county's increase in value.

Of the \$850,000 increase approved by voters on Tuesday, approximately \$360,000 will go towards staffing and equipping the two new north end schools.

County Schools Superintendent Matt Doherty said the vote on the school levy was "encouraging. We have a definite need for more funding next year for new students and new schools. The results of the election show that the people are aware of that need."

In the only contested race for a position on the school system's advisory committee, Judy Wright defeated incumbent Dean Wright for the seat from the Hardman-Ruggs area. The vote was 185 to 177.

Voters in both Morrow and Umatilla counties approved Blue Mountain Community College's 10 per cent budget increase. More than half of that increase will go to pay for a nine per cent wage increase for the college's teaching staff.

All but two Morrow County precincts approved the BMCC levy. In Heppner, the levy was defeated by a 159-147 margin, and in Lexington, the levy went down 48-24. Support was strongest in Boardman, where the vote was 155-65 in favor. Unofficial totals for Morrow County showed the vote passing by a 508-424 margin, while in Umatilla County, the vote was 3,532 yes to 2,772 no.

John Hansell of Hermiston retained his four-year, at-large seat on BMCC's board of directors.

Last Wednesday, Heppner voters approved by a 197-123 margin the city's request for an additional \$95,000 in property tax money for the coming fiscal year. The city actually trimmed some \$12,000 from its operating budget, but a substantial decrease in cash carryover resulted in the need for more funding.

In another election Tuesday, all four incumbent Port of Morrow commissioners were re-elected to new terms. The lone challenger was Boardman businessman Mark Docken, who polled the least amount of votes.

Charles Kyd, one of the four commissioners re-elected, suffered a massive heart attack on election day. He was rushed to Kadlec Hospital in

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Morrow County voters smiled on levy election requests from the City of Heppner, School District R-1 and Blue Mt. Community College this past week. Election board members Garnet Huddleston, Margaret Evans and Claudine Warren were all busy at Heppner City Hall although the vote in the April 3 election was lighter than usual. Heppner voters also cast their ballots in favor of construction of the Willow Creek Dam and city and county officials will relay their support of the project to Oregon's congressional delegation.

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BUSINESS WEEK

New manager at Lone Chevron

Bill Johnson feels right at home in his new role as manager of Lone Chevron.

For one reason, he has been involved with the service station business for some 24 years, starting out pumping gas for his father. For another, he is a former resident of the area, having graduated from Lone High School in 1966.

For the past eight years, Johnson had lived in the Salem area, involved in the automotive business there. When he heard the Lone Chevron station was up for grabs, he had little difficulty

in making up his mind to return.

"It's the people that brought me back," said Johnson. "It



seems like they're friendlier here. And I like the area...it seems like there are more opportunities here."

Prior to moving to the Willamette Valley, Johnson worked for George Sherman at the Lexington Chevron station, and found time to take photos for the Gazette-Times.

Johnson specializes in imported car maintenance and repair—a field he's had a lot of experience with during his stint in the Valley. "I try to offer a service that's not found in the other gas stations in the area," he said.

Under Johnson's management, Lone Chevron is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Willow Creek Dam favored by majority of Heppner voters

Heppner voters indicated by a 188-135 margin last Wednesday that they favored construction of the proposed Willow Creek Dam.

The dam has been the subject of an ongoing local controversy since it was first proposed more than a quarter century ago.

While the first phase of the project has been authorized by

Congress, an uphill battle may still have to be fought in order to see the dam through its construction, according to representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers. The dam must meet a cost-to-benefit ratio, in which property that could be saved by a potential flood would at least equal the cost of the dam. Last month, Corps officials said the ratio fell below the necessary one-to-one level.

During public hearings earlier this year, Corps officials stated that local support

for the project was mandatory in order for Congress to back further funding. City councilmen were reluctant to reaffirm Heppner's official support for the structure without some indication of the public's sentiments on the matter. Therefore, they scheduled the vote.

During Monday's council meeting, city attorney Bill Kuhn was directed to send the Corps a letter detailing the outcome of the vote on the dam, and affirming the council's support for the project.

Sheriff probes arson

Morrow County Sheriff's deputies are investigating what is suspected to be an attempted arson of the Lexington home of Frank Robinson last Thursday.

When returning from a walk, Robinson heard the sound of breaking glass as he approached his double-wide trailer. Suspecting a possible burglar, he went to a neighbor's home to contact the sheriff's department.

When deputies arrived at the scene, they found furniture piled up in the front room. The furniture had been heavily doused with gasoline, and windows had been broken out, apparently to speed combustion of a fire.

Sheriff's department investigators suspect that the person or persons intending to torch the home were surprised by Robinson's return, and fled the scene.

No arrests had been made by Tuesday.

District Court proposal now in hopper at Salem

Hermiston's justice of the peace won't automatically become the new district court judge if the Legislature approves a measure for a new district court for Umatilla and Morrow Counties including

the amendments proposed by the bill's sponsors.

The first hearing on Senate Bill 387 was held this week before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

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Boerger loan officer at First National Bank



First National Bank of Oregon has assigned Richard Boerger to the Heppner branch as a loan officer to replace David Dollarhide, who was promoted to assistant manager of the Baker branch after four years at Heppner.

Boerger joined First National as a management trainee last November, and recently completed his training. He is a 1976 graduate of the University of Idaho with a degree in agricultural economics.

Nancy Bruch is new County Fair Secretary



Nancy Bruch of Heppner has been named secretary for the Morrow County Fair. She will handle all fair correspondence.

If you have an item for Business Week, call the Gazette-Times at 676-9228.

Heppner banker helps at OSU career day program

Bradley Christensen, Bank of Eastern Oregon, recently assisted at Oregon State University's "Project: Career." Along with other Oregon State graduates now active in finance and banking, he talked with groups of students interested in this field, answering questions and

presenting practical advice. Christensen, formerly a Roseburg resident, has been in Heppner since early 1978. He is active in the Lions Club, attends the Chamber of Commerce, and is beginning to spend pleasant hours golfing at the Willow Creek Country Club.

Sorority sponsors Ruggs to Lone Bike-A-Thon

Plans are underway for the annual Ruggs to Lone Bike-A-Thon, to raise funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

The 22-mile bike route will provide youthful cyclists to convert peddle power into cash for the internationally known medical facility, thanks to pledges from area residents and businesses.

During the past two years, the Heppner and Lone communities have raised nearly \$3,000 to aid in the research of catastrophic childhood diseases.

The Bike-A-Thon is sponsored by Epsilon Sigma Alpha international sorority, through its local chapters, Beta Omega in Lone, and Alpha Theta in Heppner.

Epsilon Sigma Alpha has donated more than \$1 million to St. Jude's during recent years, and hopes to contribute another \$1 million this year, in honor of the sorority's 50th anniversary.

Beta Omega and Alpha Theta members will be giving presentations on the Bike-A-Thon and St. Jude's to students in area schools prior

to the April 28 running of the bike ride.

Much of the research on cancer and other catastrophic diseases to children being performed at St. Jude's—the largest children's research facility in the world. Since opening in 1962, St. Jude's has treated more than 3,000 child-

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At the sound of the starter's gun Heppner's Mike Jones gets off the blocks in fine form in the first leg of the 440 relay. The Mustang team of Jones, Mary Kincaid, Bryan Marlin and Maureen Healy tied for fourth place. Spring sports are underway at all Morrow County schools with more pictures and stories on pages four and five.