



Construction on new county schools continues

The two new schools in Morrow County in Boardman and Irrigon are about 60 percent completed with the opening for the schools planned for sometime in March around Spring Vacation, according to Matt Doherty, school superintendent.

Columbia Junior High is being built in Irrigon for seventh and eighth graders while the Sam Boardman Elementary School is being built in Boardman for kindergarten children through sixth graders.

The Morrow County school board chose the names for the schools from a list of between 20-30 that were submitted.

Columbia Jr. High is being built to hold 300 students. Most of the teachers for the school have already been hired and are working in the overcrowded old school building next to the A.C. Houghton Grade School.

Doherty said the Boardman school has space for at least 450 grade school students.

He said some of the staff at A.C. Houghton will move to the new Columbia Jr. High.

Up to six new teachers, four at the grade school, may have to be hired next year for the two schools.

A.C. Houghton presently is the only grade school in both cities and it has about 600 students.

The Sam Boardman Elementary School is costing the tax payers \$1,946,303 while Columbia Junior High is costing \$1,974,406. The two buildings have almost the same square footage. The Jr. High has 43,000 square feet and the grade school has 42,000. Both facilities are costing \$41 a square foot.

Doherty said the reason the Jr. High is more expensive, even though it will have fewer students, is because the gymnasium is expensive.

When the schools open in March, Doherty said about 170 students will go to the junior high in Irrigon and 300 students will go to the elementary school in Boardman. When school opens next September, 350 students will be at the elementary school and 200 at the junior high.

The Jr. High will have 11 classrooms and 12 teachers and the elementary school will have 20 classrooms with 21 teaching stations.

Both of the schools will have a principal but no vice-principal.

Vic Marcheck, a teacher at Riverside Jr. High, will be the principal at the new junior high in Irrigon and Susan Black, a sixth grade teacher at A.C. Houghton, will be the new principal at the Sam Boardman Elementary School.

The Boardman Timber Co. from Hermiston and the R.A. Chambers and Sons Co. from Eugene are doing the construction on the two schools.

Doherty said a study is currently being made to determine what grounds improvements will be made at the schools.

"There will be some grounds improvements depending on what the budget will allow," Doherty said. "Hopefully the lawn and playground will be finished this year."

He added that the leveling of the land and seeding should begin soon.

Doherty said the school board will set up a committee of citizens to decide what to do with the old school building next to the A.C. Houghton grade school in Irrigon once the students are moved to the new junior high.

