



Top prize winners in the book-a-thon were (from left) back row: Laurel Webber-Gray, Kristin Tharp, April Rollis, and Randi Fowler.

Front row: Peter Pearson, Tony Becket, and Phillip Spicer Kuhn. Not pictured-Jenny Krein.

### Easter Seal Readers

Easter Seals Book-a-Thon raises money to help physically handicapped youths and adults in Oregon.

Children who choose to participate contact a sponsor who agree to pay an amount per book read. Children have three weeks to read as many books as possible at their reading level.

Each child who turns in pledge money receives prizes ranging from a bookmark to book bags, books, desk lamps and a personal head-phone radio.

Children participating were: Melissa Wisdom, Krystal Troxell, Sherry Bingham, Shawn Cutsforth, Josh Clark, Dani Hill, Robyn Struthers and Clay Van Meter.

Tony Becket turned in the most pledge money and presented the school's donation on the Easter Seal Telethon in March.

Total contribution raised this year was \$615.92.



### Living Memorial

Wilbur Jackson, Martha Doherty and five-year-old Anita Richards planted a Colorado Blue Spruce Friday, April 17 at Hager Park.

Heppner Garden club members also planted a white oak at the park, both in memory of Jerry Doherty.

## Financial problems plague North Morrow Medical Clinic

This month's financial report paints a bleak picture for the North Morrow Medical Clinic, says the Morrow County Court. But others say the picture looks more bleak than bleak.

About 17 people attended an April 16 medical board meeting to discuss the future of the Boardman medical facility. Don Eppenbach, chairman of the board, explained to the group that the clinic is in financially dire straits and may have to close its doors for four to six weeks. Cash flow and overexpenditures in hospital fees are decimating this fiscal year's budget which expires June 30, he said. Kathy Cash, the clinic's office manager, said hospital fees are overexpended for the year because the clinic is not collecting as much revenue as was anticipated.

The county bills patients for physician services during hospitalization and pays Dr. Zielinski 85 percent of those billings as opposed to 85 percent of the actual amount collected from patients, but the clinic only receives 15 percent of the receipts actually collected, creating part of the cash flow imbalance and financially squeezing the clinic's operation. Eppenbach said county accountants predict the clinic will run out of operating funds by mid-May.

The alternative, he said, would be to "buy out" Dr. Zielinski's contract and close the clinic for about one month and then lease the clinic to St. Anthony Hospital July 1 when the new fiscal year begins.

Dr. Zielinski said he warned the board that paying 85 percent of the billings instead of 85 percent of the amount actually collected would hurt the financial status of the clinic but the county auditor insisted on follow-

ing his contract verbatim which states the doctor is to receive 85 percent of the billings. He reported that hospital billings have increased because he is attending additional patients as a result of his work at Good Shepherd Hospital's emergency room.

Some members of the audience said they could not see a financial crisis while reviewing the March report. "I just don't see the financial crisis you're talking about," said Ed Glenn, "maybe a shortfall, but not a crisis."

The board adopted a budget of \$129,595 to meet that budget through taxes, intergovernmental revenue, patient fees, investment earnings, etc.

The report says the clinic has spent \$87,394 to date and has received \$99,715 in income to date leaving a balance of \$12,321 available to spend. On the average the clinic is spending \$8,739.45 per month and receiving a \$9,971.51 income. Actual income for the month of March was recorded in the report as \$5,424.82 while actual expenditures soared to \$12,235.11 for a loss of \$4,683.28.

Eppenbach told the board the clinic is losing approximately \$4,000 per month and these losses are "rapidly eating into the contingency fund."

Recurrent losses, he continued, prompted the county to ask St. Anthony Hospital to follow up on a proposal made by the hospital last October to operate the clinic under a one dollar per year lease agreement. He said Morrow County Judge Louis Carlson and County Commissioner Jerry Peck had met with representatives from the hospital to begin outlining a lease.

Board member Cliff Peck said he thought leasing the clinic to St. Anthony might be a premature decision. He said the board should first decide whether or not to struggle through the rest of the year and possibly work out an agreement with Dr. Zielinski (to defer payment of hospital billings until July when the recently voted budget takes effect to lower expenditures) before negotiating with representatives of St. Anthony.

"I don't think I can make a decision tonight, this is the first time I've seen this report and I think we need to have some questions answered so we can make an informed decision," Peck said.

The board was asked if Dr. Zielinski, Good Shepherd Community Hospital or others had been approached with an offer to lease the clinic. Eppenbach responded that Judge Carlson had indicated that contact with Good Shepherd had been made but no interest was shown by the Hermiston hospital. He continued that Zielinski had turned down an offer to operate the clinic last year and had not been offered a proposal and there were indications from the court of an unwillingness to negotiate with Zielinski.

Board member Tim McCreary told the board it should consider offering the clinic to Dr. Zielinski on the same basis as the offer to St. Anthony.

In a separate interview, Judge Carlson said, "we recognize he's (Zielinski) a good doctor and has a following in that area (Boardman)." Continued page 4

### Local bird lover offers tips for Hummingbird care

By Justine Weatherford

Loyd Burkenbine, Heppner is a true friend of hummingbirds. He hopes many will be seen in this area again very soon. Loyd says these brilliant, lively creatures return to the same nests as often as 11 years.

"It is very important that no honey is used in feeders because honey kills the birds. Folks must carefully wash the feeders using vinegar, or soak them in purex, as mold can develop in them which can also kill the birds," he said.

He recommends putting one part of sugar to four parts of water and using a few drops of red food coloring in the feeders.

There are about 400 different kinds of hummingbirds but only 19 kinds live in the U.S. They are named for the whirring or humming sound made by their wings which move about 60 to 70 times a second in the smallest species some of which, without their feathers, are no larger than bumblebees. Very few hummingbirds are more than five or six inches long.

Their long slender bills are especially suited for sucking nectar from flowers, even deep throated or trumpet-shaped flowers such as honeysuckle or the blooms of the trumpet vine.

The females prefer that their tiny nests are high in trees. During the nesting season, males become bold and will fight off enemies much larger than themselves. The mother bird usually lays two white eggs about the size of navy beans. The young hatch in about two weeks. They are featherless and blind. However, within three weeks they are fully feathered and strong enough to leave the nest.

Loyd Burkenbine says further information about hummingbirds is available at the Heppner Public Library.




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