

Patterson-Ferry Interchange proposed

By Joyce Hensley

The dramatic growth in population of Irrigon and Boardman and the rapid rise of business and farm development in Morrow County along Interstate 84 in the last twenty years have prompted Morrow County Commissioners to request legs be placed on the Patterson-Ferry overpass to develop it into a full diamond interchange connecting Frontage Road with I-84.

The \$1.4 million dollar project is being considered by the Oregon Transportation Commission as part of their \$65 million dollar six-year Highway Improvement Program for Oregon.

The original need for the overpass when it was built in 1967, was to simply connect Frontage Road with the farms in the area located north of I-84, has expanded greatly to include a need for traffic to have access to I-84.

The population of the farming and industrial community of Boardman has risen from 400 residents in 1967 to 1,560 residents in 1987, a 290% rise; and the "bedroom" community of Irrigon has grown 188%, from 300 to 865 residents in the last twenty years, according to a Portland State University (PSU) study.

Morrow County has an estimated projected growth rate of 165%, tripling the area population by the year 2000, according to the same PSU study.

A large portion of the sage brush covered sand surrounding the Patterson Ferry interchange along the stretch of freeway between Boardman and Hermiston, approximated 100,000 acres, has been developed into irrigated, producing farm land in the last ten years, causing Frontage Road to become a major route for the trucking of the local crops and processed products to market and for services coming into these developed agriculturally related businesses.

Tonnage of some 3,169,000 yearly is hauled on Frontage Road and over Patterson Ferry overpass, exceeding the amount they are designed for, according to a study by East Central Oregon Association of Counties (ECOAC), an intergovernmental relations department for Morrow, Wheeler, Grant, Gilliam and Umatilla Counties.

The Umatilla Fish Hatchery, the Morrow County Grain Growers grain loading facility, and the Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge located along Patterson Ferry Road also add to the traffic load of the highway.

In addition to the trucking of goods and services and tourist traffic, some 440 workers use the overpass going to and from their place of employment in the peak season.

The Umatilla Fish Hatchery soon to be under construction adjoining the Irrigon Fish Hatchery, plus the tentative new developments of a fresh-pack storage facility and a winery, would put an increased burden on the existing overpass, and connecting roads.

The proposed interchange would provide an alternate route for evacuation of Umatilla Army Depot employees and an added inroad for ongoing emergency services such as ambulance and fire fighting vehicles, according to Boardman City Manager, Larry Dalrymple. "We are stressing the safety end of it... we want to be prepared."

A decision on the updated status of the Patterson Ferry interchange will be made in July of '88 by the Oregon Transportation Commission, a five man commission appointed by Governor Neil Goldschmidt.

The project would be funded primarily by the Federal Highway Administration with a small percentage funded by the state. There are also several thousand dollars earmarked for this project locally both from private and public funding, according to Dalrymple.

Boardman • Irrigon News

Call 676-9228 or 481-3533 with news items

Boardman couple open farm and hearts to children

By Joyce Hensley

Children, piglets, calves, and bunnies romp happily together on a Boardman farm tended with love and patience by a couple who are foster parents for the Oregon Children's Services Division (OCS).

Dale and Doris Hooker have given shelter to thirty-eight children in their large farm house over the last seven years. Some of the children, ages ranging from one year to sixteen years old, have stayed a short time and others have stayed as long as a year.

"The first Christmas when all of our three children were out on their own, we thought it would be nice to have a little child to share our Christmas with," said Doris. "Boy, were we surprised when they called and asked if we would take seven."

"Yes," laughed Dale, "I started building beds and my wife went out shopping for beds."

"We were going out to shop for little Christmas gifts for each of them, but CSD drove up with a station wagon full of donated gifts and even a turkey," said Doris.

"Most of the kids we've had been really good," she said.

Dale added, "some keep you in stitches."

The bus driver never knows for sure how many children will be waiting for the school bus in front of the Hooker's front gate. "We have had as many as eight kids at one time," said Doris.

Foster parents are an organized though flexible breed. That trait is especially important with a large group at meal time. "The kids enjoy our family meals," said Doris.

"Though, sometimes," she smiled, "we get complaints at first because I don't cook like mom."

Dale doesn't always make it in to dinner on time. "I'm milking five cows right now," he explained.

With fifty doe rabbits, fifteen sows, fifty piglets, fourteen calves, five milk cows, and an assorted mixture of bulls and boars to take care of on his forty-acre farm, his day starts at 5:30 a.m.

"Everybody is going pretty strong by 6:30 a.m.," said Doris.

Homemaker's day to be held in Irrigon

By Delpha Jones

The Homemaker's Advisory Council of Morrow County met at the office for their regular meeting last week. The meeting was presided over by the president Isabelle Jones, of Irrigon. Plans were completed for the Homemaker's Day to be held March 30 at Stoke's (Senior Citizen) building in Irrigon. The theme is "Best Foot Forward". There will be a registration fee of \$1 and lunch for \$4. The Cooks Tour of Oregon was also discussed, and the meeting will be in Hermiston at the Fair Grounds April 9. Topics for the lessons for next year were discussed at this time. It is hoped that a large crowd will be present at the meeting the 30th and the meeting the 9th of April.

Museum commission to meet

The Morrow County Museum Commission will meet at the Museum at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 15.

Kids raise \$1224 for Jump Rope for Heart



Photo by Joyce Hensley

(L to R) Betsy Hernandez, 11; Debonias Trudeau, 12; and Maria Mesina, 14, sixth graders at Sam Boardman Elementary, jumped rope for the American Heart Association's jump rope for heart fundraiser at the school last week.

By Joyce Hensley

Sam Boardman Elementary students raised a whopping \$1,224 in the American Heart Association's annual Jump Rope for Heart fund raiser last week.

Forty-eight fifth and sixth graders, working in teams of eight, took turns jumping rope for three hours. Supporters pledged so much money for each minute the students jumped during that time.

Any student collecting pledges amounting to ten dollars or more won prizes such as jump ropes, shoe laces, sunshades, pencil pouches and athletic bags. "All of them won prizes," said Theresa Proctor, fifth grade teacher and organizer of the event. "Three kids have won 35 mm camera's."

Boardman-Irrigon has advisory vacancies

Two vacancies exist on the Boardman-Irrigon Advisory Committee as a result of the recent resignations of John Wenzel of Irrigon and John Jensen of Boardman. These vacancies will be filled by appointments by the Morrow County School Board upon the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

Special problems are new topic in Boardman Library

The Boardman Public Library has received several new books dealing with "special" problems, thanks in part to the United Way. The topics deal with problems that could arise in anyone's life and are for young people and adults: teen pregnancy, teen suicide, understand-

ing aids, feeling safe, feeling strong (How to avoid sexual abuse and what to do if it happens to you), eating disorders (question and answer book about anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa) and a video tape "Drug Free Kids, a Parents Guide".

Applications for these positions may be picked up at A.C. Houghton School in Irrigon and Riverside High School in Boardman.

Irrigon to form new Chamber of Commerce

All interested parties in the area are asked to please attend a formation meeting of the New Irrigon Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday March 16, at 7 p.m. at the Irrigon City Hall. Our area people have decided that this is of vital importance to us and this meeting will be for all to voice their opinion as to why, what, when, etc. If you are interested at all in the future economy of our area please be there.

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County Agent's Corner
By Morrow County Ag Agent
Fred Lundin

A successful home garden always has one characteristic in its favor-location.

One of the prime needs of vegetable gardens is plenty of sunshine. None of the vegetable plants most gardeners prefer will grow successfully with less than six hours of sunlight.

And most all warm vegetables demand locations where they can receive ten or more hours of sun through the summer.

Once you find the part of your yard where a maximum sunlight is available, look at the soil. It is well drained, fertile enough to grow weeds, and dark colored to absorb heat in early spring? These are all important factors that will help the garden do a better job of growing.

To check drainage, dig a hole a foot or so deep, fill it with water and see how long it takes to drain away. If the hole empties in two or three hours the drainage is adequate, but if the water is still there tomorrow, better do some drainage work or plant on raised beds or in containers.

Soil fertility will vary, but if the ground will grow a good crop of weeds it will also grow vegetables and flowers. Nearly all soil in Oregon will respond favorably to additions of organic matter, such as manure. If in doubt about the quality of your soil, have it analyzed before garden planting time. Contact your local Extension office for soil testing information.

Finally, when selecting the site for your garden, consider convenience to water facilities and to your garden tools.

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Photo by Joyce Hensley

Dale Hooker (L) and his wife, Doris, show their grandson, Denny Denney, 3, some of the animals on the farm which they have opened up to thirty-eight foster children during the last seven years.

Just because the Hookers love children and have opened their farm and hearts to them, it doesn't mean they are infallible. "I love naps for kids," smiled Doris. "I need them."

The role of the foster parent is to give the child a safe home where his needs will be met while CSD works toward the goal of reuniting him with the natural parent.

Usually the Hookers are happy when parents and child are reunited, but their hearts can't help but be extra tender toward a child now and then. "There was one little guy we especially missed," said Dale. "He didn't want to go. He wanted to stay and help me catch little pigs."

Pictures are proudly displayed in their living room, among the photos of their five grandchildren, of the foster children they have taken care of. "This one was a kick... this one had a little harder time adjusting... and this one..." as they talked about the past times they have had with the different ones.

Maybe once in awhile a child will take a little longer to adjust to their new home, but that is the exception rather than the rule. "I can't believe how quickly the children adjust at the Hooker's," said Sue Warren, Foster Home Certifier for Morrow.

Wheeler and Gilliam Counties. "They feel safe."

Foster homes are carefully monitored by CSD. The caseworker is usually as close as the phone if the foster parent needs assistance or advice in the care of the child.

Also serving as a twenty-four hour, seven day a week shelter home for CSD, the Hooker's both agreed, "the caseworkers (in this county) are the best... they are neat people."

There is a need in the area, "we really are low on foster homes," said Warren. "We do have more children who need homes."

To qualify for certification as foster parents, the Hookers had to have a criminal record clearance and be professionally responsible. Their home, also had to meet certain physical requirements to ensure the comfort, privacy and safety of each child.

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LAST CHANCE TO DONATE

First of all, we would like to thank all of you who have come forward with items for the St. Patrick's Day Auction. They are very much appreciated. However, we still need lots more to make the auction a success. If you have items you can donate, PLEASE CALL US NOW!!! St. Patrick's Day is fast approaching and we are running out of time.

We would like to have all items by March 14 so we can prepare an auction list for distribution. Please contact one of the following people and we will gladly see that your donated item is picked up. Thanks for your support.

Pat Sweeney 676-9226 Mark Pointer 989-8572
Charlie Anderson 676-5182 Jerry Healy 676-5240
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February 27 & 28	Dr. Williams
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Mar. 12 & 13	Dr. Thiessen
Mar. 19 & 20	Dr. Thiessen
Mar. 26 & 27	Dr. Diehl
April 2 & 3	Dr. Williams

Appointments to see the doctor on weekends may be arranged in advance by calling 676-9133
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