

Gazette times

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County's valuation drops 10%, Sweek says

Morrow County's assessed value dropped almost 10 percent from the 1990 value of \$804,238,840, according to Morrow County Assessor Greg Sweek. The new 1991 value of the county is \$727,452,640, approximately \$77 million less than 1990. This decline in value is due to the \$75 million reduction in the utility values, says Sweek. The utility properties are appraised by the Oregon Department of Revenue. The DOR informed the assessor's office the lower value for utilities was due to an additional 18 months depreciation given to physical assets, which the DOR felt was required by the passage of Measure 5. Portland General Electric's coal fired plant, outside of Boardman, accounted for the majority of this reduction. Mor-

row County has filed an appeal with the DOR contesting the value reduction of utilities, but there has been no response to this date, said Sweek.

Properties appraised by the Morrow County Assessor's Office have remained relatively stable. Commercial and residential values have shown little change, industrial properties have increased \$5 million and farm values have dropped by \$6 million county-wide.

The decline in utility values will mean that the other properties within the county, such as homes and farms, will shoulder a larger portion of the taxes than they have in past years. In contrast to the county-wide trends, the city of Heppner has

shown a three percent increase in value due to new commercial construction.

Assessor Sweek says that everything is on schedule for the mailing of tax statements by October 25. This year's statements will have more detailed tax information on them and will also be the valuation notice. Measure 5 changed the time to file an appeal. An appeal may be filed with the Board of Equalization from October 25 to December 31 of this year. Sweek says that the compression tax rate homes and commercial property in Heppner with Measure 5 is \$27.50, down from \$34.20.

The city of Heppner has received notice from the county that the city will be receiving \$88,889 less (a 40 percent loss) than anticipated because of Measure 5. City Administrator Gary Marks said that the city had already made some cuts at the first of the year in anticipation of the effects of Measure 5, but they will still have a serious shortfall of \$63,000.

Marks said that he was hesitant to speculate which city departments will be cut, because it is a city council policy decision. He says if cuts are not made this year and the city spends its reserve, next year's budget situation will be even worse because of lost interest. He said that cuts must be made from the general fund, which includes police, fire, library and swimming pool budgets. The water sewer and street departments are self sufficient.

The city council will meet Thursday, October 17 to discuss the budget.

According to information released by Morrow County Assessor Greg Sweek, the city of Ione will be cut by \$5,154 or 26 percent but the town of Lexington budget will not be affected. Irrigon faces a 26 percent, \$14,508 loss and the city of Boardman a 35 percent, \$58,238 loss.

Bullet marks found in Ione school

Several 22 caliber bullet marks were discovered at the Ione School cafeteria outside wall on Wednesday, Oct. 2, according to Ione Schools Principal Dick Allen.

Allen said that a custodian discovered the marks on the concrete wall. Casings were also found, he said.

The incident is under investigation.

Smoke triggers Sr. Center alarm

Smoke from food residue on an electric burner of a cook stove was the cause for a fire alarm at the St. Patrick's Senior Center at 8:48 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 8.

Heppner Volunteer Fire Department chief Forrie Burkenbine said that there was no fire and no smoke damage. All smoke detectors in the senior building are tied into an alarm system at the sheriff's department, said Burkenbine.

help fund a new roof for the Odd-fellow Hall.

The hall was donated by Minnie Leach McMillan in 1929 for a meeting place for the Rebekahs and Oddfellows with the understanding it was to be used as a community hall. This has been done throughout the years, but during hard times, and few members the income for the upkeep has been low and costs for repairs have increased. The lodge now needs community help and support. The building has been used for weddings, receptions, showers, get-togethers, family dinners, meetings, bereaved family dinners by the Rebekahs and many other projects.

Community leaders to 'kiss goat' for hall benefit

By Delpha Jones

Who will kiss the goat? That is the question to be answered at the rummage sale, mini-carnival, sponsored by the Lexington Oddfellows Saturday, Oct. 12. The contestants to kiss the goat are Larry Mills, manager of the Morrow County Grain Growers, Carl Martin, Oregon State Policeman and Bob Taylor, Lexington mayor. The lucky recipient will be determined by who collects the most money in their jar at 5 p.m. Saturday.

Along with the rummage sale there will be a carnival for children and small craft table, hot turkey sandwiches from 5 to 7 p.m. and a pinocle party at 8 p.m. All proceeds

Man sentenced on cocaine charges

A Boardman man was sentenced in Morrow County Circuit Court on Friday Oct. 4 after pleading guilty to two counts of delivery of cocaine according to Morrow County District Attorney Jeff Wallace.

Jose Luis Mendoza, 25, who resides at Sandpiper Apartments in Boardman, entered the guilty pleas before Circuit Court Judge Pro-Tem Ralph Currin. He was sentenced to two years' formal probation, and 120 custody units were imposed on each conviction. Mendoza was also ordered to submit to a standard range of drug-related probation conditions,

including evaluation and treatment, random urinalysis and search of his person, residence and vehicle for the presence of controlled substances. He was ordered to reimburse the state of Oregon for the costs of his court-appointed attorney fees, according to Wallace.

Mendoza was arrested following his sale of cocaine to an undercover informant in May of this year. According to Wallace, the sales occurred during an undercover drug investigation conducted by the Morrow County Drug Task Force in the North Morrow County area during the spring of 1991.

toward the \$1,000 project, but he is seeking donations for the remaining \$500. An account has been set up at the Bank of Eastern Oregon to accept donations for the DARE light stick program.

DARE is a non-profit anti-drug/alcohol program provided in the schools by concerned law enforcement officers.

Neon light sticks will be available for every child in Morrow County up to sixth grade on Halloween night, according to Steve Myren, Morrow County Sheriff's deputy and representative for the DARE program. The DARE program is offering the light sticks free as a public service to area kids. The sticks will aid in visibility for young trick-or-

Myren said that he has raised \$500

City of Heppner to lose \$88,890 in wake of Measure 5

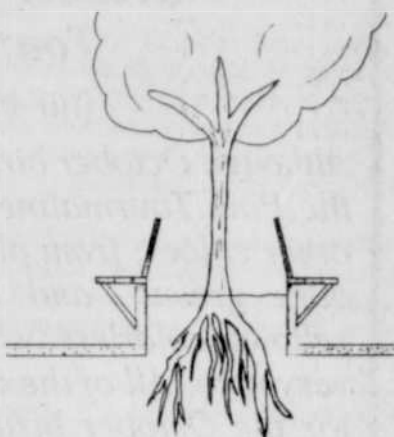
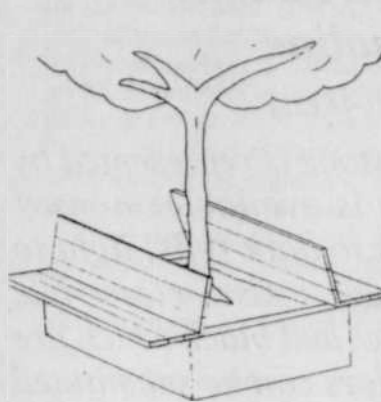
The Ione Rural Fire District will lose \$3,302, a three percent loss, and the Irrigon Rural Fire District will lose \$2,698, an 8.4 percent loss, while Heppner and Boardman will not be affected.

The Morrow County School District will also not be affected this year. The Heppner Cemetery District will lose \$3,780, a 13.6 per-

cent loss but the Boardman, Ione-Lex and Irrigon Cemetery Districts will not lose significantly.

Heppner residents will be assessed at \$34.52 per thousand assessed valuation, but will pay only \$27.94 per thousand after compressions resulting from Measure 5. Last year's rate was \$31.95 per thousand.

City receives funding for downtown tree project



Picture strolling down Heppner's Main Street, the sidewalks dotted with green trees and planter-box benches. The scene is inviting, attractive and comfortable. This fantasy is becoming a reality, according to Heppner City Administrator Gary Marks.

The city has received notice that a \$4,830 grant has been approved by the Urban and Community Forest Assistance Grant Program of the U.S. Forest Service to place 21 trees and benches on Main Street sidewalks. The grant must be matched by donations and in-kind services. The total estimated project budgeted is \$10,865.

The chamber is initiating the "Buy a Tree Program" to purchase the trees. Individuals or organizations purchase a tree, at \$80 each and in exchange a brass plaque with the donor's name will be attached near the tree. The planter box benches will be wood with a concrete base.

Marks said that many individuals and groups are needed to volunteer for planting, hauling and disposing of concrete from sidewalks and assembling benches. He is also seeking contributions of lumber, good quality topsoil, fertilizer and other materials as soon as possible. He says that someone who is skilled in concrete work will be invaluable for

the project. He has set a target date of next spring, but would like volunteers to contact him immediately.

Marks stresses that the project will not deplete an already stressed city budget, since the city's contribution will be in-kind labor and services such as curb cutting, tree watering and professional services. The city's estimated in-kind contribution will be around \$2,060. Community donations and in-kind services are expected to amount to around \$3,975.

He said that the community "can feel good" about funding for this project, because Heppner's tree-project is one of only 13 projects receiving grants. The Forest Service grant program received 45 requests for a total of \$233,000. The 13 approved requests amounted to a total of \$80,000.

Marks is also in the process of looking for grants to fund sidewalk construction for Main Street. The sidewalk project is hoped to coincide with scheduled repairs of Main Street, planned by the Oregon Department of Transportation within the next two years. The street project may involve tearing out Main Street and completely redoing it or simply resurfacing.

Bank of Eastern Oregon hires loan officer

G.H. Pierson, president of the Bank of Eastern Oregon, has announced the addition of John Moffit to the staff. John, 22, is a 1987 graduate of Condon High School and a Condon native.

Moffit finished his undergraduate degree at Linfield College in May of 1991 and received a bachelor of science degree in business with a management and marketing emphasis. He lists his hobbies as hunting, fishing, and sports.

John, who is single, will be living in Heppner and training at the Heppner branch as his first assignment. He will be handling lending duties in Arlington, Condon and Ione as his permanent assignment.

Of his move back to Eastern



John Moffit

Oregon, Moffit said, "I like this side of the mountains, the people, the atmosphere. It's not so crowded."

Heppner TV adds FOX channel

Heppner TV also announces that a new channel will be added soon. FOX 49 KPDX out of Portland has become available through a newly installed transmitter relay system that carries signal from Stacker Butte near The Dalles to Black Mountain in southeast Morrow County. From this point it is relayed to Mt. Fanny east of LaGrande and Beaver Mt. south of Baker City.

Heppner T.V. has purchased the necessary equipment to be installed in order to put KPDX on the cable system. As soon as it arrives KPDX will be put on Channel 17 which now broadcasts VHI. VHI will move to channel 16. Expected launch of FOX 49 will occur approximately October

15 or later. Notice will be given to the Gazette on definite dates.

FOX 49 carries "top rated programming five nights a week including "The Simpsons", "Married-With Children", the FOX Children's Network featuring excellent kids programming week-day mornings, afternoons and Saturday mornings plus syndicated programs and movies," said a Heppner TV spokesperson.

This new channel expands Heppner T.V. Inc. cable service to 17 channels on basic service and two channels on the pay tier which includes Home Box Office and The Disney Channel.

DARE program to aid trick or treaters

Neon light sticks will be available for every child in Morrow County up to sixth grade on Halloween night, according to Steve Myren, Morrow County Sheriff's deputy and representative for the DARE program. The DARE program is offering the light sticks free as a public service to area kids. The sticks will aid in visibility for young trick-or-

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