

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF ELECTION
On May 19, 1992, an election will be held for the purpose of electing board members to fill the positions and terms for the following district, Morrow County, Oregon.

PROPOSED OREGON TRAIL LIBRARY DISTRICT -

Position 1: Director - At-large position for one year term ending June 30, 1993

Position 2: Director - Boardman position for three year term ending June 30, 1995

Position 3: Director - Boardman position for one year term ending June 30, 1993

Position 4: Director - Heppner position for three year term ending June 30, 1995

Position 5: Director - Heppner position for one year term ending June 30, 1993

Each candidate for the offices listed above must file a declaration of candidacy or petition for nomination with the Morrow County Clerk's Office in Heppner, Oregon, not later than 5:00 p.m. on March 10, 1992.

Barbara Bloodworth
Morrow County Clerk
Published: January 22, 29; and February 5, 1992

BMCC knitting class to begin

Wearable socks will be the subject of a Blue Mountain Community College knitting class taught by Sandra Van Liew. The class starts Jan. 27 at the St. Patrick's Senior Center and will run from 7 to 9 p.m. for six weeks.

Other knitting projects are welcome and patterns are

available from the instructor. Students need to bring four double-pointed needles size three and four. Van Liew also has wool sock yarn for sale and encourages students to call ahead for availability. Registration is \$20. For more information contact Van Liew at 676-5050 or Sue Warren at 422-7040.

Students should file for financial aid

Anyone interested in attending college next fall should file for financial aid as soon as possible, according to Jaime Shea with Blue Mt. Community College Financial Aid Office. Current and potential college students are encouraged to get the 1992 Federal Financial Aid Form sent in before April 15 to ensure that they will be considered for all available financial aid.

The FAF is a national form used to determine student eligibility for financial aid. Even students who think they may not qualify for financial aid should submit a FAF—they may be surprised the

types of funding that is available. College bound students are also encouraged to check into scholarship information. At Blue Mountain Community College there are over 60 scholarships available. Some general scholarships are available to any BMCC student, others are specific to a department. Students should keep in mind that not all scholarships are tied to grade point average and academic performance.

Federal financial aid forms and scholarship information is available through local high school counseling offices, as well as the BMCC Financial Aid Office.

Vandals bring town to a costly standstill



Wilma Mabe enjoys the luxury of electricity after a power outage caused by vandals.

Imagine you're a 72-year-old grandmother living alone in a mobile home. During the dead of winter, you sit next to the electrical wall heater because just outside your barely insulated walls, howling desert winds freeze the thermometer below zero. Then just for fun, some pranksters knock out your electricity for four hours.

That's what Wilma Mabe of Heppner had experienced one January day in 1990.

Or imagine working in a lumber mill hoping to get overtime because you still have to pay for Christmas. Then somewhere out in the desert vandals cut the power lines to the mill. Everything stops. You and 139 co-workers are sent home, without pay. That day still costs the company about \$25,000 and the plant safety manager is glad the high-pressure boiler on the co-generator didn't explode.

That's exactly what happened at Kinzua Lumber Mill two miles north of Heppner at the same time Mabe's power went out.

That same day, Dixie Verstoppen couldn't make pizzas in her electric oven at Kate's Pizza and Pastry in Heppner and John Bristow at Bristow's Market in Lone had to tape the doors to his 22 freezers and coolers shut so customers wouldn't open them and let out the cold. He also had to watch for theft in the dark store. And without heat and lights, Morrow County Schools had to be closed, costing taxpayers just under \$15,000. Business phone systems in Heppner went dead, including "911"—until a police officer started the emergency generator. Imagine what happened to all those computers at the Forest Service and other businesses. Even the critical monitoring instruments at the chemical waste disposal facility at Arlington couldn't operate. The entire area is dependent on electricity.

Altogether, power to 2,450 customers - residences and businesses - went dead that day, darkening an area about 60 by 80 miles in Morrow and Gilliam Counties.

The cause for the outage: two 17-year-olds having fun with their .22 rifles. Apparently they couldn't find enough rabbits and birds as targets, so they started shooting at ceramic insulators holding power lines on the poles. The boys shattered nine insulators, causing 69,000 volts of electricity to "flash over"—or short out. As a result, the Bonneville Power Administration's transmission line supplying the area went dead.

"The total repair bill to Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative was approximately \$2,000," according to Fred Toombs, manager of the local utility supplied by the BPA line. BPA experienced additional costs. But Toombs was more concerned about the effects of the outage. "The city water pumps didn't work," he said, "so if we had a serious fire, we couldn't fight it." In fact, Heppner did have a disastrous fire a short time after the vandalism. If the outage had occurred on the day of that fire, firemen with empty hoses would have had to watch the town burn. Not only is shooting at

transmission lines costly and potentially hazardous, it's dangerous to the vandals themselves.

"They could have been killed," Monty Ward, an assistant line foreman for BPA said. He recalled an incident where two teenagers were shooting at a power line. "The two boys were leaning on the car to steady their rifles. They must have been shooting straight up because the line fell down right on the car. Killed both of them instantly," the veteran lineman said. "Even sadder, there were two girls inside the car. One tried to jump out, but as soon as she touched the door, she was killed. The other stayed in the car and survived." Imagine the horror of watching your friends "fried" with enough electricity to light a city.

"A downed transmission line could also fall on a fence, electrocuting someone quite a distance away," Marv Wohlman, transmission line maintenance superintendent for BPA's Snake River Area said. Simply standing on the ground near a downed line could be dangerous. "Often underground wires are attached to the poles to dissipate the energy from lightning strikes," Wohlman said. "Anyone standing near one of these buried wires could be killed when a power line goes down."

Besides the danger of electrocution, the weight of the cable and tension on the cable could also be lethal. A section of the cable that stretches from one transmission tower to the next might weigh 6,000 pounds. Tension on a broken cable causes it to act like a whip violently striking nearby objects.

"If you're in the right-of-way, you're in danger," Wohlman said. That's usually between 30 to 50 feet out from the center of the line, depending on the amount of voltage on the line.

The gunshot-caused outage in the Heppner area is only one of hundreds, perhaps thousands of such incidents each year. BPA operates more than 14,000 miles of transmission lines which supply local utilities. These utilities in turn have thousands of miles of their own lines.

Throughout the entire system, supervisors and line foremen report gunshot incidents. Orion Albro, operations superintendent at BPA's Snake River area office, estimates that in his region alone there are 25 to 30 gunshot damage incidents each year. And it's worse in the more populated areas. Off to one side of his desk are a stack of vandalism reports.

Some of the documents he started reading at random made the Heppner incident look like child's play.

Someone shot out 177 insulators on a line northeast of

Redmond. A helicopter, at \$500/hour, and BPA crews, including one flown in from The Dalles, worked for seven hours in freezing rain to restore service.

The line over 6,000-foot-wide Spar Canyon near Challis, Idaho, took nearly a full day to repair. The lines feeds a molybdenum mine which lost \$10,000 per hour.

When two men shot 28 insulators, the line "flashed", starting a brush fire and knocking out power to Carson and Stevenson, Washington.

About 4,000 Skamania County residents lost power when a line was shot out for the third time.

A line near Lakewood was out for more than 24 hours when two strings of insulators were shot out.

It took a truck load of insulators to replace the 500 shot out near Grizzly substation in Oregon.

And the damage isn't confined to BPA lines. Don Lang, chief engineer at Central Electric Utility in Redmond reports an outage this past summer caused by an 18-year-old shooting at insulators. Some 5,000 customers in the Bend area lost power, including medical clinics and a hospital. Doctors were performing open-heart surgery at the hospital at the time. Fortunately emergency generators kicked in.

Unlike Heppner and Bend incidents, most transmission line vandals aren't caught. The shooting usually happens in remote areas, often requiring two or three hours of searching by helicopter before the problem site is even located. Many longtime BPA linemen report that the worst times are during hunting season—when frustrated hunters need to shoot something—and just after Christmas—when guns from Santa Claus need to be tested. "And it isn't just the kids doing it," Oregon state trooper Carl Martin, who caught the two juveniles responsible for the Heppner outage said, "the adults are just as bad."

Regardless of who does it, the price tag is high. Repair work for vandalism costs BPA between \$500,000 and \$1 million per year, according to Marv Wohlman. That doesn't include damage to local utility lines. To calculate lost revenues to BPA during outages is difficult, but Wohlman figures that some lines carry about \$60,000 of electricity per hour. Someone's got to pay these costs. If the vandals are caught they are liable for damages, but usually they get away.

BPA will soon implement a reward program to encourage citizens to report vandalism. This program will be an attempt to educate the general public about the problem and give them an opportunity to stop incidents like those described in this article.

1991 4-H horse judging slated

The 4-H Horse judging division II for the 1991 fair year will be held Feb. 8. The time and place will be announced at a later date.

All members that were registered in horse for the 1990-91 year are eligible to enter.

Awards will be given. All clubs are invited to attend a horse judging review on Sunday, Jan. 26 at the fairgrounds in Heppner at 2 p.m. This will give members a chance to review what will take place at the horse judging on Feb. 8, said a spokesperson.

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