

County plans layoffs if budget fails

Morrow County plans to lay off 24 employees if its levy fails again on June 29, according to Morrow County Judge Louis Carlson. The layoffs would be effective July 1.

In a third attempt to pass a one-year operating levy, the county is submitting a budget which freezes the wages of elected officials and department heads. Another no from the voters, though, leaves the county with only its beginning fund balance and its 1908 tax base, which total approximately \$1.6 million, upon which to operate for the whole fiscal year.

Morrow County uses nearly \$14 million per year to maintain services at current levels, but only \$3,240,353 is requested from the taxpayers for the operating levy. The balance is made up from the tax base, state and federal payments, revenues generated, and grants.

The total levy requested actually represents an approximate one percent reduction from the amount of operating levy requested last year.

The cutback would reduce the sheriff's department to two officers, whose sole function would be to perform their statutory duties, which are prisoner transport and serving civil papers, according to Sheriff Roy Drago. The department would also continue to maintain the Emergency Dispatch Center.

The road department would suffer a 50 percent slash in its budget, which would require a shutdown of rock crushing and construction projects, reports Charles Malcolm, public works director. Paving would be eliminated and operations would be limited to such things as spreading gravel until existing rock stockpiles ran out.

All other elected officials would function without any support staff. County support for non-mandated or non-essential programs would be eliminated.

Programs which will receive no county tax dollars will include the Extension Service, north and south Senior Centers, Neighborhood Center, Irrigation-Boardman Emergency Center, Soil and Water Conservation, Weed Control, Soil Erosion Control, Watermaster and Predatory Animal Control.

Carlson and Commissioner Ray French both said that tippage

fees will not be used to offset the budget, "at least this year."

Ballots will be mailed from the county courthouse on Tuesday, June 15. Ballots must be returned to the clerk's office by 8 p.m. Tuesday, June 29.

If the county budget does not pass in the June election, it may go up before the voters again on Sept. 21.

French said that if the June county ballot does not pass, the proposed cuts will allow the courthouse to stay open until July 1994, the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Officials say they battle misconceptions

Morrow County officials say they believe that the public perceives a significant increase in county costs and personnel, but maintain that the perception is inaccurate.

Although the overall county budget has increased over the past three years, the extra dollars have not been taken from Morrow County pockets, according to Louis Carlson, Morrow County Judge.

"Emergency Management is a classic example," Carlson points out. "Although the county contributes a portion of that department's budget, nearly 95 percent of the funding comes from state or federal sources. It actually represents a return to Morrow County citizens of some of their state and federal tax dollars."

"Since our one-year operating levy over the past six years has increased by less than one percent, it's obvious to me that someone other than Morrow County taxpayers are paying the bill," Carlson adds.

If the voters refuse the county's

levy request on June 29, the county will be forced to lay off 24 employees and eliminate the services they provide.

County Commissioner Raymond French says he finds the situation ironic. "We will have no choice but to let people go if we can't meet payroll, but unfortunately it's our people whose aggressive pursuit of grants and reimbursements have put us in the position of being able to provide nearly \$14 million worth of service for around \$4 million of county tax dollars."

Of the actual taxes to be raised within Morrow County, approximately \$784,892 represents the amount of the tax base. The balance of \$3,240,535 is what the county is requesting from the voters for its one-year operating levy.

More than 65 percent of Morrow County property taxes are paid by utilities, primarily the PGE coal-fired plant near Boardman, say county officials. Those taxes cannot be collected, however, unless the operating levy is passed.

HEPPNER



VOL. 112 NO. 23 8 Pages Wednesday, June 9, 1993 Morrow County Heppner, Oregon

Weather cooperates for IUCC auction

By Anne Morter

Despite what the weather man said and the threatening skies last Saturday morning, the 31st annual Lone United Church of Christ auction and barbecue went off without a drop of rain to mar the day.

A good-sized crowd attended the event and didn't seem to be shy about bidding on the array of merchandise. According to the auction chairman, Chuck Nelson, last year's sale was the biggest ever and this year was only \$200-300 under that record take.

"It was a real good crowd. Even the auctioneers commented that it wasn't hard to get a bid," said Nelson.

Rain looked likely until the sun broke through about 10:30 a.m. As far as anyone can remember, the auction has had rain only one time in the 31 years, and the event was still small enough at that time to move indoors. Several times it has rained right up until auction time before clearing up, much like Saturday.

Some of the hot sellers at the



Country store clerks collect the money

auction were the official first Lone Cycle Oregon T-shirt, a brick imprinted with Lone, Oregon, found in The Dalles and various dinners and desserts for a month prepared by church members. The antiques, refurbished by Pete and Laurel Cannon, brought good prices and the featured, hand-made quilt brought in a record amount.

About 400 people enjoyed the pit barbecued beef dinner, tend-

ed through the rainy night by Harold Rietmann and Virgil Morgan. The tantalizing smell of the barbecued beef made it easy to sell any leftover roasts.

Nelson felt the day ran smoothly, mostly due to advance work and members holding down the same jobs from year to year. He noted that many jobs are handed down within families, making them a time-honored tradition.

Parents Club plans walk-a-thon benefit playground

The Heppner Parents Club is sponsoring a walk-a-thon this Sunday, June 13, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Heppner High School track. Children in kindergarten through fourth grade will collect pledges for the number of laps they walk around the track or a flat fee. Proceeds will go toward

Parent Club projects.

The club is sponsoring an extensive project to replace the playground equipment at Heppner Elementary School. Because of safety requirements and the age of present equipment, the slide, jungle gym, swings, trapeze bar and the merry go round will have to be removed this summer. The present equipment was put in in 1954 when the school was built.

The Parents Club will replace the old equipment with "Tic Tac Triple Zip", which includes a multi-level platform with a spiral slide, a wave slide with a tunnel, a climbing pole, a corkscrew climber, a steering wheel and a Tic Tac Toe game. The new piece of equipment is also handicap accessible.

According to George Nairns, the Parents Club now has \$5 thousand toward phase I of the

project which is expected to cost around \$8,671. The club raised \$2 thousand of the money themselves during the school year. They also received a \$500 donation from Willow Lodge No. 66 IOOF and will receive another \$2,500 from the county tippage fee monies. Nairns said that the Lions Club will also be donating half of their proceeds from Fourth of July fireworks sales. Other gifts include a donation of bark chips from Kinzua, donations of labor from David Allstott, Jerry Gentry, Jim Lankford and Ken Eckman and private donations. "All donations are crucial to the placement of the new equipment," said Nairns.

The Parents Club earlier donated basketball hoops to the Heppner Middle School, and a map of the United States and large tires to the elementary school.

Dept. of Fish & Wildlife warns against picking up fawns and calves

The Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife sternly cautions against anyone picking up deer fawns or elk calves.

"It is against the law for anyone to have in their possession a deer fawn or elk calf," said a news release from ODFW. Anyone who does pick up a fawn or calf can expect to be cited by the Oregon State Police.

Leave the deer fawn or elk calf where you found it.

If you sincerely think something is wrong with the fawn/calf, call the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 676-5230, 676-9956 or

676-5882, and be prepared to give an exact location of where the fawn/calf is located.

Several fawns have already been illegally removed from the wild.

It is not uncommon for a mother deer or elk to leave their fawn/calf alone for several hours, said the ODFW. Contrary to popular belief, just because a fawn or calf has been touched by a human, it will not be abandoned by its mother. When a fawn deer or elk calf is removed from the wild, it will be forced to live a life of captivity or it will die.

Fishing derby planned at W.C. Lake

In celebration of National Fishing Week, June 7-13, the USDA Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Region, along with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, have adopted the concept of free fishing and free camping for specified days during the week.

Heppner Ranger District will hold its fourth annual fishing derby Sunday, June 13 at Willow Creek Reservoir one mile east of Heppner. The hours will be from 1 to 5 p.m. with events for different age groups up to 13 years old. Prizes will be awarded. This event is sponsored by the Heppner Ranger District and Heppner Lions Club. For more information call 676-9187.

June 12 and 13 have been selected as free camping days in Washington and Saturday, June 12 in Oregon. These days were selected to coincide with the free fishing days offered by Oregon and Washington thus providing an entire weekend of free camping and fishing.

This year, two other districts

on the Umatilla National Forest are planning events in conjunction with National Fishing Week. North Fork John Day District is sponsoring a "Hooked on Fishing Derby" June 12 at the Dale-Ukiah State Park, two miles south of Ukiah on Hwy. 395. Registration is at 8:30 a.m. and the Der-

by begins at 9 a.m. Hot dogs, chips, pop and cookies are provided to everyone who registers and participates in the derby. A special fly casting competition will also be held. Awards and prizes will be given to all participants. For more information call 427-3231.



Class of 1993—Peter Pearson and Staci O'Brien are happy Heppner graduates.



The lone graduating class of 1993. Local scholarship winners will be in next week's paper.

Grant named Coach of year



Greg Grant

Heppner High School football coach Greg Grant was named Football Coach of the Year in 2A schools. The announcement was made at a recent Oregon High School coaches association banquet held in Eugene.

Grant holds a career record of 62 wins and 12 losses. His record while coaching at Heppner High School the past three years is 26 wins, 6 losses. Before moving to Heppner Grant coached at Alsea.

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