

HEPPNER



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## Bond measure reduces school taxes

According to figures presented at a Feb. 2 community meeting on school issues, held at Heppner High School, voters will pay fewer taxes for schools than they do now, even if they pass a \$13,290,000 school bond levy.

Ballot Measure 5 will knock the school operating taxes from \$7.50 per thousand assessed valuation for the 1994-95 school year to \$5 per thousand for 1995-96. So, when \$5 per thousand for operating costs is combined with the \$1.96 per thousand for construction and remodeling, the result is \$6.96 per thousand, which is 54 cents less than school related taxes for the 1994-95 year. The \$1.96 per thousand is only for the first year of the levy; the rate will decline in subsequent years.

If voters pass the construction bond (for a combined rate of \$6.96 per thousand for operating funds and construction funds), a taxpayer with \$50,000 home will pay \$348 in taxes; one with a \$200,000 business will pay \$1,392; and one with a \$1 million farm will pay \$6,960.

If voters reject the construction bond (for a rate of \$5 per thousand for school operating funds only), a taxpayer with a \$50,000 home will pay \$250 in taxes; one with a \$200,000 business will pay \$1,000; and one with a \$1 million farm will pay \$5,000.

At last year's rate of \$7.50 per thousand for operating funds, a taxpayer with a \$50,000 home paid \$375; one with a \$200,000 business paid \$1,500; and one with a \$1 million farm paid \$7,500.

According to the school district, classroom construction is needed, especially because of overcrowding in north county schools. A school district fact sheet says that enrollment at Sam Boardman Elementary School has increased 71 percent since the last construction; Riverside High School enrollment has increased 66 percent; A.C. Houghton Elementary, 74 percent; and Columbia Junior High, 58 percent. According to the district, computer labs, storage rooms and library and cafeteria areas are now being used for classroom space and more growth is expected.

District officials say that passage of the bond levy will also ease budget woes. The district expects to lose at least \$1 million because of Ballot Measure 5 and the state school funding formula. If the bond

issue is passed, monies for equipment, technology, repairs, such as repair of the Columbia Junior High roof, and some state and federally mandated items, which have been budgeted in the general fund, can be funded by the bond issue. With passage of the bond issue, the district expects to save \$180 to \$200 thousand per year from the general fund.

A summary of the proposed bond issue projects is as follows:

-Heppner Elementary-\$1.2 million, six classrooms, updated technology, American Disabilities Act requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs;

-Ione Elementary-\$225 thousand, remodel basement area, updated technology, American Disabilities Act requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs;

-Sam Boardman Elementary-\$1.4 million, eight classrooms, storage space, two conference rooms, one staff room, updated technology, American Disabilities Act requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs;

-A.C. Houghton Elementary, Irrigon-\$1.7 million, eight classrooms, replace media center, remodel current library for staff conference room, add storage space, updated technology, American Disabilities Act requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs;

-Columbia Junior High School, Irrigon-\$2.1 million, 10 classrooms, remodel locker

room area, new roof, repair gym floor, updated technology, American Disabilities Act Requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs;

-Heppner High-\$437 thousand, one new computer lab, remodel gymnasium space, updated technology, American Disabilities Act Requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs;

-Riverside High-\$2.1 million, 12 classrooms, remodel media center, remodel commons area, add storage space, updated technology, American Disabilities Act Requirements, additional maintenance, repair and equipment needs.

Several controversial line items have been eliminated, including a greenhouse at Heppner High School at \$22,500; an art music, cafeteria and gym facility at Heppner Elementary at \$1,020,000 and a gymnasium/wrestling area at \$1,275,000, lockers and weight room at \$400,000 and restrooms at \$110,000 at Riverside.

Administrators stress that the 7-12 configuration at Heppner High School will still proceed whether the bond issue passes or not. "Don't take it out on the ballot box," said principals, Steve Dickenson and Bill Karwacki, moderators at the Feb. 2 meeting.

The fact sheet also stated that this does not mean that the chance for a high school in Irrigon is lost forever and made it clear that the old Irrigon school will not be destroyed.

## Doctors express interest in area

A husband-wife doctor team from Bangladesh has expressed interest in joining the staff at the Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner, Pioneer Hospital Administrator Kevin Erich told the Morrow County Health District Board at their meeting Feb. 6.

Erich told the board that the doctors, currently completing their residency in Chicago, have visited Heppner.

Erich added, however that because the doctors have a certain type of visa, a J-1 visa, they must work for a "medically underserved" area if they wish to work in United States. While the Heppner area qualifies as an underserved area according to state requirements, it may not qualify according to federal regulations. According to Erich, federal regulations require a 3,000 to one patient/doctor

ratio, while the south county area currently has a 4,500 to two ratio.

Additional doctors are sought for the Heppner area, because the current doctors, Ed and Jeanne Berretta, have an extremely heavy workload, said Erich. In addition to regular office hours, they are also on call evenings and weekends at Pioneer Memorial Hospital. The clinic has not been accepting new patients because of the patient load.

An additional dentist and a hygienist are also being sought for the dental offices located in Heppner and Boardman. According to Erich, Dr. Blair Smith, who splits his time between the two dental offices, has a two to three month waiting period for appointments.

## Why four day school week works

By Chuck Starr, superintendent of Morrow County Schools

**Why didn't teachers take a pay cut when you went to a four day student week? They only work four days a week now.**

There are two major reasons why teachers did not take a cut in pay when we went to the four day student week. They are as follows:

1. Teachers are actually working more total hours now for the district than they were under the five day student week calendar. Their work on student days has been extended by one hour per day. They are required to work many Fridays, and those involved in coaching are working Fridays whether there is school or not. They are participating in both required and volunteer inservice training activities that are conducted on Fridays and do not detract from student contact time.

2. Teachers are actually providing more direct instructional time for students than was possible under the five day student week calendar. This fact is made possible by eliminating most interruptions to instructional time.

**Hasn't the four day student week robbed our kids of valuable instruction time? For example, our kids only had nine days of school in December.**

The absolute, flat out honest answer to this question is no. As a matter of fact, our students have actually gained in actual instructional time under the four day student week calendar. Let me give you three concrete examples of how they have gained this time.

1. By having most of our cocurricular activities (athletics, etc.) on Fridays now, we have gained significant instructional time for all high school and middle school students, as well as elementary students who either attended those activities in the past or were impacted by teachers leaving for them. We know we have gained at least 60 hours of direct instruction in our high schools.

2. Under the five day student week, parent/teacher/student conferences were scheduled during times which impacted instructional hours. We closed school for elementary and middle school students anywhere from two to four days per year for those conferences. Under the four day week, our teachers have agreed to conduct those conferences on Thursday evening and Friday morning. Students gain back those two to four days of direct instructional time.

3. All around us, and across the state, schools are closing one or two days per month for planning and inservice related to the 21st Century Schools requirements. Even though we far exceed the state minimum instructional hours in all of our schools but Riverside High School; and even though we are allowed by state rule to use

all of our excess hours and an additional 30 of the minimum hours to close school for students and have planning/inservice days, we have not done so. The four day student week has allowed us to meet most of our needs on Fridays, without disrupting student instructional time.

Yes, we only had nine stu-

dent days in December. If we had been on a five day student week, we would have had 12 student days, with less hours per day. The overall result of the four day student week calendar has been an increase in valuable instructional time for all of our students.

Keep those questions coming.

## MCGG breakfast Saturday



Photo by Joyce Hughes

Jenny Krein (front) arranges items on the shelf at MCGG while Char Coe watches. For the past several years MCGG has hired the senior class of Heppner High School to help prepare the store for the annual appreciation breakfast. The money raised goes toward the senior drug and alcohol free graduation trip.

The Morrow County Grain Growers will hold their annual customer appreciation day this Saturday, Feb. 11 from 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

The day starts off with the traditional free pancake breakfast, followed by product

displays, door prizes and factory representatives.

The new 2100 series combine from Case IH will be on display, as well as a huge inflated replica of a Case tractor.

Everyone is invited to attend the customer appreciation day.

## Armato heads up BEO Mortgage



Mike Armato  
BEO Mortgage, the newest division of the Bank of Eastern Oregon, is now up and running

ing in a new office at the Heppner Branch, announced bank president George Koffler. Managed by Mike Armato, the new company offers a wide variety of products, including conventional, jumbo, custom construction and VA loans. FHA Loans will be available soon, Koffler says.

"The addition of the bank's mortgage company with many products we have available will allow people to find the program to best fit their needs with the most competitive rates and turnaround time. Also, by processing the loans locally, we're making it much easier for people to go through the loan process," Koffler explains. "We're lucky to have Mike on board. His experience in the mortgage lending business will be a big asset, both for the bank and the local people as well."

Originally from San Francisco, Armato graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, and began his career

in finance in 1979. He was most recently employed with DeMark Financial Corporation in Lake Oswego. Armato's wife, Kim Cutsforth, and their two children, Maggie, three, and Joe, 20 months, will be joining him in Heppner soon.

## City receives grant for police position

Heppner City Manager Gary Marks told the Chamber of Commerce Tuesday, that the city has qualified for a grant to fund a third police officer for the city of Heppner.

Marks said that he was notified by Senator Packwood's office and the U.S. Attorney's office that Heppner will receive a \$72,270 grant over a three-year period from COPS FAST (Community Oriented Policing Services Funding Accelerated for Smaller Towns).

Marks said that the grant will provide salary and benefits for an entry level position, with the city to provide approximately \$25,000 in matching funds over the three-year period. He said after the city receives a mailing from the Department of Justice, the position will be advertised.

The city was forced to eliminate its third policeman's position on July 1, 1992, because of Ballot Measure 5 budget shortfalls.

## Customer Appreciation Day

Friday, Feb. 10 - Chemical Clinic  
Sat. Feb. 11 - Free breakfast • Trade Show, 8 a.m.-noon  
Door prizes • Knife Sharpening  
Morrow County Grain Growers  
Lexington 989-8221 1-800-452-7396