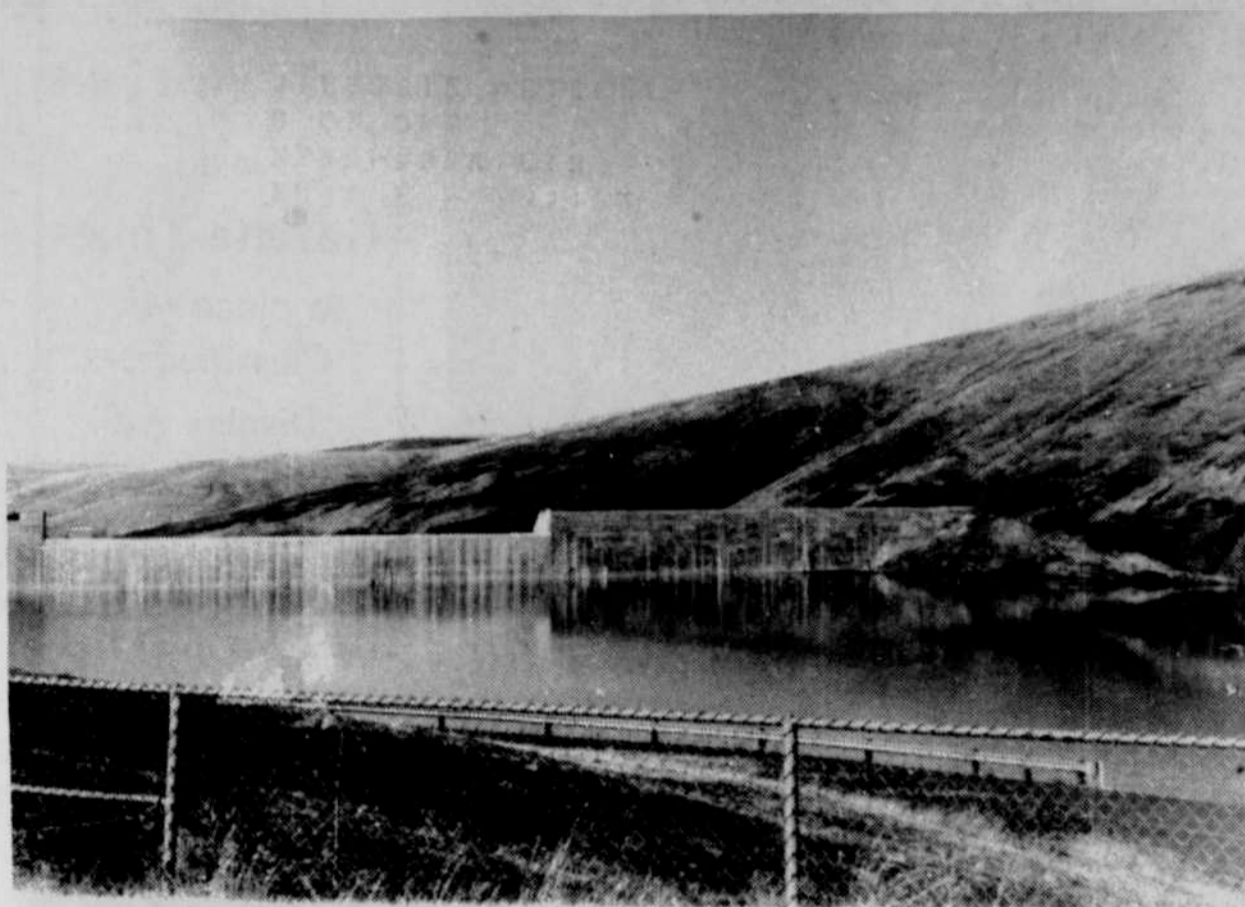


Willow Creek Dam prevents flooding



Willow Creek Lake fills up with water

By April Hilton-Sykes
South Morrow County escaped serious flooding following record snow, rain and runoff—thanks to the Willow Creek Dam.

"The dam saved the day for us," said Emergency Management director Casey Beard. Beard said that while the situation would not have resulted in a catastrophic flash flood, the area including Heppner, Lexington and Ione, would have been inundated. "It certainly would have meant three to four feet of water in downtown Heppner," said Beard. "It would have gotten businesses on Main Street. It would have been an economic disaster."

Beard said that at one point 570-580 cubic feet of water a se-

cond was coming into the dam with 170-180 cubic feet a second coming into Balm Fork. Hinton Creek, which comes into Willow Creek below the dam was about 280 cubic feet a second, with Shobe Creek also at record amounts and Rhea Creek full to the bank. Beard said that the problem was compounded by many ice jams.

Beard said that Willow Creek Dam had been drawn down, as is done every fall, in anticipation of flooding, and the Corps of Engineers shut down the flow of water coming out of the dam to five cubic feet per second.

Beard said that while the dam was critical in averting a flood, management of the situation was also crucial. He says that

county, city, federal and private individuals worked together to prevent a disaster. He said that the National Weather Service out of Pendleton notified local officials of a potentially dangerous situation. He said that the Heppner Volunteer Fire Department worked all night checking streams, city crews kept culverts clear and the county public works department cleared ice jams.

Beard said that stream gauges have been installed as far downstream as Rhea Creek. Beard said that the county suffered \$1,400,000 in damage, mostly to roads, but also including some private property. Of that, he said that around \$100,000 of the damage was uninsured. Beard added that local officials are now working to have the county receive a presidential disaster designation and will meet in Pendleton Thursday with Federal Emergency Management Agency representatives.

Beard said that flood sirens will be activated in March, probably with intermittent testing and a major flood drill is scheduled for June.

Mini-retreat set at Hope Lutheran

Laurie Larson-Caesar, a graduate of Harvard Divinity School, will present "Women of the Bible" at a mini-retreat at Hope Lutheran Church in Heppner on Sunday, Feb. 25. A salad lunch will be at noon, with Larson-Caesar's presentation following at 1 p.m.

The presentation is a condensed version of a class she taught at Blue Mountain Community College. Those attending are asked to bring their Bibles and to contact Vicki Broden, 676-5065 or Carol Hoobing, 676-5069, so there will be enough salads for all attending.

Larson-Caesar is married to Pastor Drew Caesar of the First Presbyterian Church in Pendleton. She is currently a candidate for ordination Lutheran ministry.

Rachei Hoobing, a biology major who graduated from Pacific Lutheran University, will be the liturgist and preacher at the 9 a.m. service at Valby Lutheran Church in Ione and at the 11 a.m. worship service at Hope.

Sunday School for children ages four through sixth grade will be held at both churches during the worship service hour.

Visitors and friends of the parish are welcome to attend worship services and events of the parish.

Flood damage needs to be reported

Morrow County residents who have experienced flood damage to private property should report uninsured damages as soon as possible. They should call the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Teleregistration Center at 1-800-462-9029 and then Morrow County Emergency Management (MCEM) at 676-5161.

"Morrow County residents should call these numbers, especially the toll-free number, as soon as possible," says MCEM director Casey Beard. "This gives Morrow County residents a better chance of receiving federal money to pay for uninsured damages from floods."

Oregon governor John Kitz-

haber has declared Morrow County a Disaster Area. However, Morrow County was not included in the Presidential Disaster Declaration. Morrow County officials are requesting to be included in the Presidential Declaration in order to receive federal assistance.

"Morrow County experienced the worst flooding in 30 years last week," said Beard. "Damage to roads, bridges, utilities and parks is estimated at 1.5 million dollars. An estimate of damage to private property is still being assembled."

In addition to the numbers mentioned above, Morrow County residents who are planning to do streambed repair should call (541) 388-6112 before making repairs.



Happy 16th Birthday Jayme!

Love, Mom, Dad & Kimberly

ST. PATRICK'S DAY IS NOT FAR AWAY...

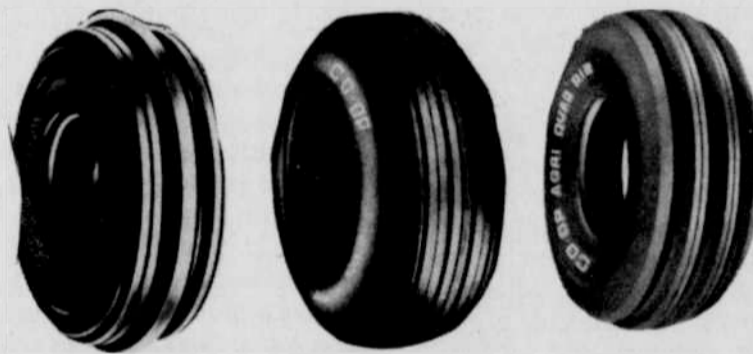
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10.00-16	92.36	12.5L - 15/12	91.55		
11.00-16	113.15				
7.50-18	81.25				

AS LOW **59.82** AS
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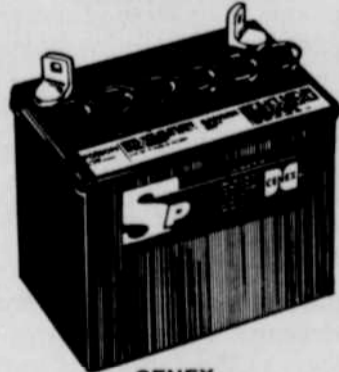
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Game night and dinner scheduled

Game night and dinner is planned for Friday, Feb. 23, at Stokes Landing Senior Center in Irrigon. The dinner will be served from 5-7 p.m. at a cost of \$3. The menu will include roast pork, applesauce, fresh bread, dessert and coffee.

Pinochle and scrabble games begin at 7 p.m.; or those attending may bring their own favorite game. The cost is \$1.

Everyone is welcome to attend. The center is located on N. Main at Opal Place in the west part of Irrigon.

Private applicator's training set

Department of Agriculture (ODA) will give an exam following the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Space is limited to 45 participants, so preregistration is encouraged by calling HAREC at 567-8321. There will be no registration fee for the course, but participants are encouraged to study the "Oregon Pesticide Applicator Manual" prior to the training session. A limited number of copies are currently available for \$14.50 each at the HAREC or the Morrow County Extension Service in Heppner. Four recertification credits will be available for attending this training session for those who currently hold a license.

Exams for a private applicators license will be given at 1:30 p.m. in the HAREC conference room, or at a later date by contacting ODA, 567-2249.

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