

Schools to Careers Program-a win-win situation

By Lonnie Rill
and April Hilton-Sykes

Some members of the junior and senior classes in Heppner and Lone high schools are trying something a little new.

They are participating in a work experience program that teaches them the responsibilities they need on the job. One or two periods a day, four days a week, these kids are experiencing the working world through the Schools to Careers program.

"This is something that has always been done," said program organizer and Heppner High School teacher Greg Grant. "It's not a new thing. But it's a push to help our students attack an ever-changing and more diverse work place. It's not as simple as it used to be."

Grant says that one of the goals of the program is to help curb the dropout problem and to "get as many kids as possible to experience something that will motivate them in the classroom."

"I was motivated to get involved in this," continued Grant. "Because I saw how excited kids could get about school and work. I've always been frustrated as a teacher when I've felt that students were completely disconnected with school. So many kids can be alienated to the classroom and then I see them four or five years later--they're turned on by something and return to college."

Another positive aspect of the program is that it teaches students how to become employable. Business and industry have set standards, "employability skills", which schools can help impart to the students.

"Schools have been discouraged from teaching values and personality traits and I see the pendulum swinging back," said Grant. "Business and industry are telling us that without the right values and traits, it doesn't matter how intelligent you are. Without the proper values, you may not be a good employee."

Grant says that he is extremely pleased with the community's acceptance of the program. "The community's willingness to help educate these kids has been tremendous. It really is about the community taking part in the development of our youth. We do a lot within these walls, but there is a lot that can be accomplished that is very powerful," said Grant. "I couldn't be happier with the way people have been willing to help."

And how do the kids feel about their work experience?

Robby Schultz, a senior at HHS, works with supervisor Nate Arbogast, who is a computer technician with the Morrow County School District (MCS). Robby, who accompanies Arbogast all over the district, says that he learns more going out in the field than he does at school because he enjoys computers. He says he intends to become a full-time technician.

Lonnie Rill, also a senior at HHS, works at the Gazette-Times,



Brandi Marshall (left) with Gardner's Men's Wear manager Sharla Snider



Lonnie Rill

writing articles for the Heppner JV and junior high sports teams and also about events at HHS and the community. Lonnie says he has learned a lot about journalism, which he would like to eventually pursue.

HHS senior Brandi Marshall works at Gardner's Men's Wear as the marketing manager of the HHS Wild Horse Club, an athletics club Brandi does purchasing and checks inventory. She says she enjoys her co-workers and likes working outside of school because she gets much more of a "hands on experience".

Some students have been involved with the program over a six to seven-week period. Others have participated for a shorter time and some work after school and weekends. Following are Heppner and Lone students working in the community:

David Michael-self employed janitorial service; U.S. Post Office; Lindsey Waterland-Pioneer Memorial Hospital (PMH) office management; Rebecca Ward-Central Market Red Apple sales and inventory; Genny Sneddon-PMH assistant and HHS kitchen program; Brent Gunderson-Morrow County Accounting Dept. HHS treasurer; Brandi Marshall-Gardner's Men's Wear school wear marketing and sales; Ross Van Etta-Heppner Elementary School (HES) janitorial and maintenance; Katie Nichols-U.S. Forest Service (USFS) engineering; Dusty Rollis-Morrow County Grain Growers parts and sales; Josh Roy and Travis Wilhelm-USFS geographical information system; Linsey Ropp-Pioneer Memorial Hospital (PMH) business administration; Traci Dickenson,

HHS office management; Jerry Young-Wilde Ranches ag management; Lonnie Rill, Deana Hendricks-Gazette-Times reporters; Lori Moeller-Kinzua Corporation, HES; Nicole Van Etta-Kuhn, Spicer and Mills law firm; Mandi Gutierrez-Bank of Eastern Oregon; Josh Coiner-HHS associate athletic director; Stormi Howard-USFS office management; Justin Matteson-HHS; Damien Wilhelm-USFS maintenance; Chris Smith-HHS motor pool manager; Emmet Evans-Mahoney Ranches horse training and management; Miles Hill and Matt Baker-Mid-Columbia Bus Co. mechanic; Josie Proctor-Green Feed marketing and sales; Jeff Wilson-NAPA Auto Parts Store; Ryan Nevala-lone Repair; Joe Bacon-lone High School associate athletic director; Kimmery Burright-PMH internship; Tiffanie Munkers-Munkers Farms ag management; Stephanie Haguwood-Murray Drugs internship; Cam Sweeney-Murray Drugs sales and merchandising; Phil Telechea-Les Schwab sales and service; Christy Taylor-PMH assistant; Andy Burt-Al Burt construction; Jeff Watkins-Cal's BP Station; Katie Kenny, Jamie Perez, Jon Humphreys, Jon Blake- HES; Kara Miller-PMH physical therapy; Steve Allen-Morrow County Road Dept; Camie Crum-Beecher's Restaurant; David Gray-Yaw's Restaurant; Corey Breeding, John Looney-HHS; Matt Jepsen, Justin Nelson, Matt Van Liew, Jeff Sneddon-MCSD.

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Mini-grant program established

North Central Oregon Regional Strategies, a lottery-funded economic development program serving Morrow, Gilliam, Grant, Sherman, Wasco and Wheeler counties, has established a new mini-grant program for the smallest communities in the region.

This pilot program targets cities and unincorporated areas of fewer than 1000 in population and special districts, associations, or non-profit organizations with annual operating budgets of under \$50,000 or target service populations of fewer than 1000. Grant amounts will range from \$500-5,000 in a wide range of categories.

The Regional Strategies Board

designed the program to be flexible and easy to access, as well as being broad in scope. The purpose is to support new projects, facilities and activities in small rural areas, as well as enabling communities to build their capacity and capability to develop and manage their projects, to use innovative common sense solutions and to access more resources for their communities.

A simple one-page application form has been designed and is available to eligible applicants from all North Central cities and counties, or by calling the Regional Strategies office at (541) 575-2786. Applications will be accepted beginning Saturday, March 1.

Tourism plan to be implemented

Two-year implementation of a tourism strategic plan for the six counties of north central Oregon will begin through a contract executed last week by the North Central Oregon Tourism Council.

Under the contract, the 12-member council and a consulting team will focus their efforts on developing a stable funding base for short and long term tourism activities in Morrow, Gilliam, Grant, Sherman, Wasco and Wheeler counties.

Funding for the project was made possible by the North Central Regional Strategies board, which last year designated \$70,000 from Oregon lottery proceeds for the two-year project.

"We are enthused with this project as it has unfolded thus far," said John Edmundson of Heppner, chairman of the six-county tourism organization. "One of the most important aspects of this project is to develop the stable funding base in order to sustain tourism efforts in this region as we enter the next century, while preserving our culture and heritage."

The council will work closely with the consulting team, which consists of Mike Wetter of Michael Wetter & Associates, a Salem-based firm; Lyn Jensen of OutPost Communications, based in Fossil; staff from the Oregon Downtown Development Association, a Portland

marketing firm, and a Seattle-based telecommunications firm.

Implementation will follow strategies developed over the past two years by the consulting team. Key implementation elements include incorporation of the tourism council as a viable organization to serve the six counties, enhanced downtown development, hospitality training workshops, as well as

assessments and recommendations for continued development of historical and cultural attractions, visitor infrastructure, tour routes and visitor systems in the region.

The North Central Oregon Tourism Council is comprised of two representatives from each of the six counties and will be based in Fossil.

Representatives include Edmundson and Bill Sharkey from Morrow County; BG Cain and Cassandra Flatt, Gilliam County; Tim Kimble and Sue Newstetter, Grant County; Joe Weber and John Weber, Sherman County; and Carol White and Jeannette Bondsteel, Wasco County.

Council meetings are open to the public. The next meeting will be held Thursday, March 13, at 9 a.m. at the Round-Up Cafe in Condon. For more information contact Lyn Jensen at 541-763-2355.

Heppner Elementary lists honor students

Heppner Elementary School has released its second quarter honor roll. Following are students who qualify.

Fifth Grade 3.50 - 4.00: Luke Murray, Danielle Looslie, Kaitlyn Sagely, Brooke Rust, Courtney Nelson, Kiel Nairms, Stefanie Hanson Brian Haguwood, Lindsey Clough; 3.00-3.50-Matt Young, Jessica Westberg, Kory

Degree of Honor plans meeting

Members of the Degree of Honor Protective Association will meet for a dinner meeting Thursday, March 6, at 6 p.m. at Kate's Pizza, Heppner.

Installation of officers will be conducted by Nellie Henderson, state director of Bend. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 676-9264.

HES Site Council holds meeting

Heppner Elementary School (HES) teacher Linda Shaw presented the draft copies of new portfolios at the February meeting of the Heppner Elementary Site Council. She explained that the portfolios would be piloted at HES this year.

The council approved Jean Strange and Shaw's request for money to attend in-service meetings.

Brian Smith and Brad Adams, representatives of the Heppner Middle School Student Council, were in attendance. They presented the results of a survey taken among the middle school students concerning improvements that they would like to see on their playground areas if there was available money. These areas will still be used for playgrounds even after the new additions are made to the elementary building. Among the most affordable items were a volleyball net on the tennis court, more basketball hoops, and a roof for the play deck. The Parent's Club has money that they would like to see put to use on these projects. It was decided that these projects could be implemented immediately with the availability of funds.

Tonia Adams agreed to contact the County Health Department regarding some confusion about required immunizations for students.

Twelve-year-old students are advised, but not required, to receive MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) boosters and 11-year-old students are advised to receive Hepatitis B series immunizations. These are not required at this time, however, students must have these upon entrance to college, and the issue is before the legislature to require these immunizations at the time of entering school. Notification will be sent home with students from to let parents know what the situation is.


The first draft of the school profile was presented and discussed. Parents suggested that information about the number of students eating school lunches should be included in this profile.

The next meeting of the HES Site Council will be held on March 3 in the HES teachers' lounge at 6:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend these meetings.

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REWARD
The City of Heppner is offering a \$100 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals responsible for vandalizing the Public Restrooms at City Park on Main Street on Saturday, March 1, 1997.

Contact Police Chief Douglas Rathbun or City Manager Gary Marks at 676-9618.

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