

HEPPNER



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VOL. 117 NO. 14 10 Pages Wednesday, April 8, 1998 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Gary Marks resigns as Heppner city manager

Heppner City Manager Gary Marks has submitted his resignation to the Heppner City Council.

Marks, who has been Heppner city manager for seven years, has accepted a position as city manager for North Bend, a town of around 9,000 people.

Marks announced his resignation at a special council meeting held May 1. He will begin work in North Bend on May 11.

Marks says that he accepted the position with mixed emotions. "It's been seven great years," said Marks. "This is a wonderful community and I will always have a special place in my heart for Heppner. You can't live here seven years without setting down roots. It's a special place. You don't find this type of place very often. It just makes leaving all the more difficult."

Marks said that it was time for him to make a move to advance

his career and to take on some new challenges. He said that North Bend has some exciting new projects in the works.

Marks said that he did not apply for the North Bend position. "They sought me out," he said.

Marks said that while Heppner will have some new challenges in its future, the city has "a strong council, a supportive community and a reputation in the state for having a unique quality of life." He said that it was because of these assets that he believed

Heppner would have some good candidates trying out for the city manager's position.

Prior to accepting the Heppner city manager's position, Marks was self employed as a consultant and a full-time student and was a member of the Tualatin City Council. He graduated from George Fox with a degree in human resources in December of 1990.

Marks, 35, and his wife, Laurie, have three children, Benson, eight, Adam, six, and Aimee, four months.

Candidate's Forum slated April 15

A candidate's forum will be held on Wednesday, April 15, at 7 p.m. at the Morrow County School District Office in Lexington.

The forum is sponsored by the city of Ione, the Ione Community

Agricultural Business Organization (ICABO), the town of Lexington and the Heppner Chamber of Commerce.

Everyone is invited to attend and ask questions of the candidates.

Ione egg hunt 10 a.m. Saturday

The Ione Easter egg hunt will be on Saturday, April 11, at 10 a.m.

Babies through kindergarten children will hunt eggs at the Catholic church and grades

one to four will hunt at the Ione City Park.

The hunt will begin promptly at 10 a.m., so children are reminded not to be late.

Easter Bunny plans visit

The Easter egg hunt, sponsored by the Heppner Elks Lodge, will be held this Saturday, April 11, beginning promptly at 10 a.m.

Preschool children will hunt eggs in the Heppner City Park;

first and second graders at the middle school playground; and third and fourth grade children at Hager Park.

The Easter Bunny will make his annual visit to the city park at 10 a.m.

Museum to be site of "invasion"

If you stood in line in 1977 to see "Star Wars" when it first came out - and then saw it 17 times in the days before video; if you know what level of what deck of the Enterprise houses sickbay (G deck, level 7); if you know more about John Sheridan, Hari Seldon and Gort than you do about your relatives, then you need to know what's going on at the Morrow County Museum.

SCI-FI FANTastic III, the third annual exhibition of local science fiction-related collections is open now at the Museum in Heppner and will remain on display through the month of April. The Invasion, a special gathering of fans, will take place in the afternoon and evening of Saturday, April 18, beginning at 2 p.m. at the museum.

The public is invited to view the collections, enter trivia and costume contests and talk about their favorite works of science fiction with collectors and fans of all media-print, film and tv.

Special guests of the Invasion

will be Capt. Lea Morgan and the crew of the USS Rubicon (NCC-71816), official Starfleet International Star Trek Fan Club of Kennewick, Washington. An intergalactic passport will guide visitors through downtown Heppner and will allow participants to be eligible for the costume contest and other prizes. A silent auction of science fiction-related treasures, including among other things old, new and upcoming movie posters, scripts and books, will take place during the afternoon. At 5:30 p.m. everyone is invited to regroup in the upstairs dining room of the Elks Club for a no-host dinner and the awarding of prizes.

SCI-FI FANTastic III exhibit and the one-day Invasion are open to the public and there is no admission charge. Costumes are encouraged (but not required). For more information, call the museum, (541) 676-3524, 1-5 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday.

HHS/IHS Senior Girls' Luncheon held



Glo Baker (left) and her daughter Sarah, both front, and Nola Binschus and her daughter Mindy (right) prepare to enjoy the annual Senior Girls' Luncheon, April 2.

The luncheon, for Heppner and Ione senior girls and their mothers, is sponsored by the Soroptomist International of Heppner.

This year's speaker was Melissa Lindsay. Entertainment was by Julie Howard. The event is catered by All Saints Episcopal women.

Heppner, Boardman agree-they want their doctor

North and south Morrow County residents may not agree on much, but they do agree that they want to keep their doctors.

Heppner and Boardman contingencies appeared before the Morrow County Health District Board at its regular meeting Monday night in Boardman demanding why the board hasn't negotiated contracts with Dr. Ernie Atkins for Pioneer Memorial Hospital and Clinic in Heppner and Dr. Robert Boss for the district's Boardman Medical Clinic.

The board was in the process of reviewing its contract with Dr. Atkins, which originally was to expire May 31, when negotiations broke off. The board did, however, extend Atkins' contract to June 30.

"Now you know how we feel," said Tom Meyers, Boardman. "A year ago this board wouldn't make a deal with our doctor (Dr. Boss)." Meyers, a member of the Boardman City Council, is married to Sharron Meyers, a MCHD Board member and former employee of Dr. Boss.

Both Dr. Boss' attorney and the board said that they attempted negotiations and, at one time, both parties believed they had a contract, but then negotiations broke off. "We came to an impasse that couldn't be overcome," said Dan Grant, MCHD chief financial officer, concerning Dr. Boss' contract.

Since then, the district hired another physician for their Boardman clinic, Dr. Shanika DeSoyza, and Dr. Boss opened up a private clinic, the Boardman Healthcare Center, next door to the district's medical clinic.

Ken Schmidt, MCHD and PMH chief executive officer, said that evening that Dr. Boss has asked to reopen negotiations and the board indicated that it would be open to a proposal.

Supporters of Dr. Atkins said they were feared that they would lose their only doctor. "There's a lot of concern coming out of Heppner. We've had three very good doctors and lost two of them," said Jackie Allstott, Heppner, who attended the Boardman meeting.

Drs. Jeanne and Ed Berretta, who were employed as physicians at PMH and PMC, moved from Heppner in 1996 to establish a practice in Walla Walla. Dr. Atkins began working for the district in 1995. A nurse practitioner, Wendy Haack, came on board in 1997.

The Heppner contingency criticized the board for not doing enough to retain Atkins and asked if he was getting enough time off and was paid sufficiently.

"It's not the salary," said Susan Atkins, the doctor's wife. "I know Dr. Atkins works hard and a lot

of times Dr. Atkins worked on weekends when doctors didn't show up."

Although Dr. Atkins did the scheduling for doctors himself, she said that he stepped in to work weekends and holidays if a scheduled doctor cancelled or didn't show.

The board was also criticized for not recruiting new doctors to help Atkins. "We are recruiting to get more doctors here," said Schmidt.

Meg Murray, MCHD Board member, said that part of the delay resulted from the district's application for a rural health clinic designation for Pioneer Memorial Clinic. If a clinic is designated under-served by physicians, it can get more monies back in reimbursements. After a clinic receives the designation, the number of doctors serving that clinic can be increased without reduction in the amount of reimbursement.

Schmidt told the board later that evening that, "as of today, Heppner doesn't qualify" because at the time of the review in 1990, Heppner had more physicians, exceeding the number for rural health clinic designation. Boardman and Irrigon did qualify, however, he added.

Another issue of contention between the board and Atkins is a stipulation in his contract that he negotiate with the administrator. Atkins has refused to negotiate with Ken Schmidt. Bernice Lott, a Heppner resident, asked if there was a personality conflict between Atkins and Schmidt.

"I don't know what the problem is," said Schmidt. "Dr. Atkins has never come to tell me what the problem is."

The board had met earlier with Atkins in executive session without Schmidt at Atkins' request.

"We met with him over an hour," said Murray. "We asked him point blank what we could do. And he didn't have an answer. He's written three letters stating that he doesn't wish to negotiate."

The board agreed at the Monday meeting that while they would not negotiate with Atkins without Schmidt present, they would agree to have several board members sit in on the negotiations.

Since Dr. Atkins traveled to Boardman, but remained outside during the meeting, several people attending the meeting suggested that he be asked for his input. "Let's ask Dr. Atkins to step in and say what's wrong," said Laura McElligott, Morrow County Public Health director. Shane Fritz, a member of the Boardman community volunteered to speak with Atkins, but after a brief conversation

with him, relayed the message back to the board that he wouldn't make a public statement without his lawyer.

Susan Atkins said, "I think a lot of times people don't talk because they're afraid of litigation."

A Morrow County Health District budget meeting was held prior to the regular board meeting.

Grant said that recent union negotiations would increase salaries by two percent and health insurance costs by nine percent.

Budget member Gene Allen of Boardman said that he did not feel that enough information was made available through the budget and requested a breakdown of salary by position or individual. Allen also requested more detail in the capital expense fund.

EOSC releases

dean's list

Eastern Oregon University has announced its 1998 winter quarter dean's list. To qualify for the dean's list, students must have a minimum of 12 graded credit hours and a grade point average of 3.5 or better.

Local students who qualify include: Brent Martin and John Qualls from Heppner; and Tina Kemp and Becky Wagenblast from Lexington.

Tourism group plans meeting

The Morrow County Tourism Committee will meet Wednesday, April 15, at 4 p.m. at Beecher's Restaurant in Ione.

Agenda items include: progress on the Columbia River/Lewis and Clark Trail; topics presented at the Governor's Conference on Tourism; 1998 direction of the Heritage Tourism Partnership; distribution of the 1998 Eastern Oregon Visitor Guide; status of the Morrow County Panel at the 1-84 Visitor Info-Centre; and other items.

Community representatives, visitor related businesses and interested individuals are invited to attend the quarterly meetings of the committee.

Future Morrow County Tourism meeting dates and locations include: July 15, Driftwood RV Park, Boardman; and September 16, Port of Morrow, Boardman. Committee meetings begin at 4 p.m.

For more information or directions to the April 15 meeting, contact Carol Michael, chairman, 481-3014.

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