

HEPPNER

# Gazette times

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## HEDC working on community response team

The Heppner Economic Development Corp. is in the process of formulating a community response team to assist businesses that may be interested in locating in the Heppner area, it was announced at the bi-monthly Kinzua transition meeting Tuesday.

The team would consist of various members of the community who could be assembled quickly to work out problems, and also sell the area to prospective businesses.

In other economic development news, application has been made to the state to establish an enterprise zone at the old Kinzua mill site. The zone could be used as an enticement for businesses who may be interested in moving

into the area.

The economic zone would offer property tax abatements to businesses who wish to locate here and offer employment opportunities.

In addition a plan to extend the economic zone now in place in Boardman, is now before the Oregon legislature. If approved this could make the Heppner area part of north county's economic zone.

It was also announced that a final decision on whether Pioneer Resources will donate the old Kinzua mill site to the Port of Morrow, will probably be made around the first of June. However, indications are favorable that some sort of property transfer will take place.

It was also announced that a proposed third shift at the Pilot

Rock mill, which could have offered opportunity for employment to some laid off Kinzua workers, will not be added. Pioneer Resource officials said because of maintenance requirements the third shift could not be added.

Pioneer Resource officials did indicate however, that a small log converter might be added at Pilot Rock, which could open up some employment opportunities.

It was also learned that laid off Kinzua workers may be eligible for extended unemployment benefits beyond the normal 26 weeks. However, application has to be made before those benefits can be extended. It was recommended that laid off workers contact the Hermiston employment office for more details.

## World champion Blue Grass group to perform at Hardman Center



### Nolan Murray and String 'Em Up

Local residents who have a fancy for top notch Western and Blue Grass music will have the opportunity to treat themselves to a live, on stage performance, and also satisfy their appetites with a juicy ham dinner, Sunday, May 16, according to a local spokesman for the Hardman group.

The scheduled two hour performance will conclude at 6 p.m., followed by the Hardman ham dinner for those who wish to enjoy a Sunday evening meal. Cost of the meal will be \$5.50

paid at the door. Pre-school-age children may eat free.

Through special arrangements, the executive directors of the Hardman Community Center have contracted Nolan Murray's 1998 World Champion Blue Grass "String-em-Up" recording artists to appear in live concert Sunday, May 16, at 4 p.m. at the Hardman Community Hall.

Murray's "String 'Em Up" group have made appearances in Nashville and other major U.S. cities. They reached international acclaim in 1998

when they captured the World Champion Blue Grass crown in competition. They have received world attention ever since.

Although Hardman is off the beaten track, Nolan Murray's group has consented to appear at the Hardman Community Center. Seating is limited and will be available to those without tickets on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Tickets for the concert are \$10 for adults and \$7 for students and seniors. Tickets are on sale at Murray Drugs in Heppner.

## CAPECO to assist displaced workers



### Bernice Erskine

A program designed to assist displaced mill workers, and others adversely affected by the closure of Kinzua Resources in Heppner, has been opened in Heppner and is ready and willing to help out.

Bernice Erskine, a workforce development specialist with CAPECO, just opened an office in the Pettyjohn Building in Heppner.

"We want to be of service to the community to help displaced workers get through the red tape of federal programs and make it as easy as we can," said Erskine. "Government help is available and it is exactly for people in this situation and they deserve it."

"It's hard for people to ask for help," added Erskine, "especially when they've been working for 20-30 years."

The program can help displaced workers assess their skills and career interests; help them fill out job applications, help with interviewing skills and stress management; can assist in job searches and can help them with expenses necessary in seeking jobs, such as lodging, meals, transportation and relocating expenses; can provide up to 50 percent of the displaced worker's wages; and can also help with expenses for attending vocational retraining or college.

Erskine says that the displaced

workers are now eligible for two sets of benefits—from both CAPECO and the Oregon Employment Division through NAFTA, which provides extended unemployment benefits as well as retraining money.

Erskine says that many people who were laid off when the mill shut down came to CAPECO initially. "Most people prefer to remain in the area," she said. "We did help relocate one man who went to work in the Willamette Valley. Most people are seeking retraining."

Around nine people are enrolled in the Oregon Department of Corrections Program; three are attending an industrial maintenance technicians program to work in food processing plants; three are attending lineman's school and two are attending school in automotive technology and two people are seeking associate degrees in criminal justice.

Erskine says that in addition to displaced mill workers, the program will also aid those who lose their jobs as a result of the mill shut down. For example, says Erskine, if a logging operation or log truck operation has to shut down, a business has to cut back or a gas station is forced to close, these workers would also be able to apply benefits. She says that the benefits apply to business owners as well as employees.

Erskine, who moved to Heppner from Pendleton in March, has had over 20 years experience in her field. She began working for East Central Oregon Association of Counties in 1977 and has been working for CAPECO since 1992. She received a bachelor's degree in liberal studies with an emphasis in business and communication in 1997.

Erskine, who grew up in

Scappoose, has lived in Pendleton since 1969. She and her husband, Pete, who is from Clarkston, WA, have three children, two who are living in Pendleton and one who is in Seattle, and four grandchildren.

Erskine is interested in genealogy and has discovered that her French-Canadian great-great-grandfather, a voyager with the Hudson Bay Company, was one of the first white people to come to the Willamette Valley—before the arrival of the first wagon train. He married a woman who was half-Indian, so Erskine has a diverse cultural heritage. "I started researching the family around 1990 and I haven't stopped since," laughs Erskine.

CAPECO plans an open house at its workforce development center at the Pettyjohn Building, 430 Linden Way in Heppner, this Thursday, May 6, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Representatives from Blue Mountain Community College and the Oregon Employment Department will also be on hand. Everyone is invited to stop by to visit with staff from all three agencies: Erskine, Deborah Hayward and Deanna Peck, CAPECO; Karen Reeder and Chuck Matteson, BMCC; and Kathy Davison, Oregon Employment Division.

## District spelling contest May 13

The annual Morrow County School District spelling contest will be held on May 13, 1999, at 6:30 p.m., at Sam Boardman Elementary School, Boardman.

The public is welcome to observe the district contest. Theresa Proctor-Reece is in charge of local arrangements at Sam Boardman Elementary School.

Refreshments will be served at the end of the competition.

## Heppner High School to present two-act play



### Heppner High School students rehearse for upcoming play.

The Heppner High School Drama Club will present a two-act play, "Help! I'm Trapped in a High School," this Friday and Saturday, May 7 and 8, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the HHS cafeteria/stage.

The play has a big cast, with 34 students participating as cast members or crew. The cast includes Paula Spicerkuhn,

Mandy Sneddon, Molly Turrell, Craig Scott, Blas Elguezabal, Jeff Currin, Jake Roy, Julie Watkins, Abby Kahl, Kristen Marshall, Brandon Blodgett, Autumn Chick, Ashley Collette, Heidi Turrell, Joey Bourrie, Laurie Michael, TyLynn Smith, Marissa McCabe, Nick Anthony, Mitch Mathews, Chris Bowman, Allison Sykes, Sarah Saine, Sally Calvert, Courtney Nelson, Sarah Eckman, Kim Pointer, Scott

VanWinkle and Krista Adams. Make-up is by Audra Bunch and Kim Hansen. The stage crew includes Darrin Ployhar, Matthew Van Liew and Samuel Van Liew.

Director is Shelly Rietmann. Assistant directors are Lea Calvert, Patti Allstott and Barb Watkins. Costumes are by Casey's Costumes.

Admission is \$2 each.

## Park district meeting changed

The Willow Creek Park District meeting has been changed to Lexington Town Hall on Thursday, May 6, at 7 p.m.

The budget meeting will follow at 8 p.m., also at Lexington Town Hall.

## Ione Lions plan Italian dinner

The Ione Lions Club Italian dinner will be held Monday, May 17, at Beecher's Cafe in Ione.

The dinner, with two seatings, at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., will feature lasagna, spaghetti and chicken cacciatore, with garlic bread, salad, dessert, coffee or

soft drink and a complimentary glass of wine for adults.

Reservations are by advance ticket sales available at Beecher's Cafe, Wheatland Insurance, Heppner and Ione Bank of Eastern Oregon or any Ione Lions Club member.

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