

HEPPNER

Gazette imes

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School board resolves to distribute resources equitably

The Morrow County School Board passed a resolution at its regular meeting Monday night at Heppner High School resolving to "present a budget for the 2000-2001 school year that equally distributes the resources of the district, taking into consideration the varying needs of the student population."

Board member Dwayne Carroll cast a sole vote against the resolution, saying that equal distribution of the resources of the district has always been a function of the superintendent and board.

The board's action was prompted by a million dollar shortfall in funding for the district and a report that indicated that schools in south Morrow County spent more per student than schools in north

Morrow County (see Sept. 22 Gazette-Times). The board also received a history of class loads at the district's elementary schools over the past four years which shows an increase in the elementary school student population in north end schools and a decrease or status quo in the south end.

According to school district figures, A.C. Houghton Elementary School in Irrigon has increased 87 students over the past four years, from 292 to 379; Sam Boardman Elementary in Boardman has increased by about 28 students during that same time period, from 401 to 429; Lone Schools have increased by 17 students, from 48 to 65; and Heppner Elementary has

increased by 12 students, from 212 in 1996-97 to 224 in 1999-2000, but actually lost 31 students over the past year.

Lone resident Meg Murray brought a letter which was read to the board protesting rumored cuts in electives at HHS (see letters to the editor, this edition). Morrow County School Superintendent Bruce Anderson, at the Heppner Chamber of Commerce Tuesday, quashed rumors of merging Heppner and Lone high schools together, saying that "It won't happen in my lifetime."

The board has not yet approved a solution for the budget cuts, nor a method to equalize the differences in spending per student and the student/teacher ratio.

Tracy Rankin fair & rodeo queen for year 2000



Left to right: Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Princess Rachel Faber, Queen Tracy Rankin and Princess Salli McElligott.

The Morrow County Fair Committee selected Tracy Rankin as the Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Queen for the year 2000 Sunday, October 10, at the fairgrounds in Heppner.

Tracy, a 17-year-old senior at

Heppner High School, is the daughter of Tim and Kathy Rankin, Heppner. She was a princess during the reign of her sister, Bobbie, this fair and rodeo season. She has also been a pennant bearer.

Princesses are Rachel Faber and Salli McElligott.

Rachel is the 18-year-old daughter of John and Karen Luciani, Big Buttercreek. She is also a senior at HHS.

Salli is the 15-year-old daughter of Paul and Charity McElligott of Lone. She is a sophomore at Lone High School.

Assisted living facility moves closer to reality



By Doris Brosnan

Assisted living in the Willow Creek Valley has again moved closer to becoming a reality, as community response to the concept has been strong, encouraging the board members of the Willow Creek Valley Assisted Living Corporation to hope for a completed facility by next summer.

Last month, the public was invited to hear consultant Jim Rippe explain his recommendations and describe the small, assisted living facilities in which he specializes. Previous studies, surveys and interviews with some key individuals supported his and the board's belief that Heppner can support a 16-unit facility.

Knowing that lending institutions would require evidence of local support, the board invited people to reserve apartments and hoped for at least eight requests. By the end of the second meeting, nine residents had deposited \$200 each to reserve apartments.

After those meetings, the board sent a solicitation letter that generated more interest. So far, 17 people have deposited \$200 each to be guaranteed an apartment when the facility opens or to be kept on a list for eventual residency.

In addition, 42 other individuals responded to the letter by contributing a total of \$10,653 to the corporation's efforts. These funds, added to the \$18,812 the corporation has received from a Challenge Grant and from tippage fees, will offer important affirmation when the board meets with lending institutions on October 29 to plan a financial package.

Board members, after a trip on October 8, are especially excited about what the assisted living facility will mean to Heppner. Don Bristow, Rene Devin, Suzanne Jepsen, Doris Brosnan, Diana Ball, Gail Hughes, and Luella Taylor traveled to Odessa and Wilbur, Washington, to tour two assisted living facilities that Rippe helped to build in these communities smaller than Heppner. Joining the board for this trip were other interested individuals: Darrell Raver of the

Bank of Eastern Oregon, Jerry Gentry of Allstott and Gentry, Molly Rhea of Home Health, Jim and Barbara Hayes to video the tours and Gerald Bergstrom to drive the bus.

These visitors were invited into several of the apartments, talked to several residents and some of their family members and asked employees many questions. Enthusiasm grew among the group as residents spoke highly of their homes. And the board members were delighted to see that the apartments in both facilities

were an adequate size, though they are 40 square feet smaller than the ones planned for Heppner.

Eventually, the video of the two Washington facilities will be broadcasted on Heppner TV's Channel 3. The board wants to share their experience with as many local people as possible, and this will be one method of doing that.

The board also invites contributions to WCVL, P.O. Box 244, Heppner, OR 97836. WCVL is a non-profit corporation, so contributions are tax deductible.

County court approves enterprise zone sponsorship

By Doris Brosnan

Morrow County Public Works Director Guy Van Arsdale offered a road report, during which he and the court discussed the intersection at the Main Street-May Street intersection in Heppner.

The court approved two road permits for CenturyTel, one on Clarks Canyon Road and one on Patterson Ferry Road. The court also approved a road permit on Blackhorse Canyon Road. Van Arsdale reported that the county crew is crack-sealing roads.

The court held a public hearing on the amendment to the comprehensive plan, Goal 5, Aggregate Site Partition Plat, Clarks Canyon Quarry Site; no testimony.

Planning Director Tamra Mabbott and director of Emergency Management, Casey Beard, discussed with the court a letter concerning impact aid and that general situation.

Superintendent of Morrow County Schools, Bruce Anderson, discussed the effect on the county schools of the Tillamook Dairy's receiving the tax exemption for the three to five years. He informed the court that the county could have access to the Internet line through the schools.

Sheriff Verlin Denton and District Attorney Dave Allen

discussed the Rural Domestic Violence Grant, which the court approved.

The court approved a resolution to sponsor an application for designation of an enterprise zone in the county to be known as the Willow Creek Valley Enterprise Zone. The court requested that county counsel draft an agreement to terminate the intergovernmental agreement with the city of Boardman and Port of Morrow for a zone board.

The court approved an order in the matter of initiating the annexation of territory into the Boardman Rural Fire Protection District and set a public hearing date of October 20 at 10 a.m. at the Morrow County Health Department in Boardman.

The court approved an ordinance amending the county comprehensive plan to include a site to the Goal 5 aggregate inventory, the Clarks Canyon Pit.

Mike Mills, of the Heppner Economic Development Corporation, reported to the court disappointment over the county's not funding the economic development position that the court had planned to do at budget time. The court explained it as a matter of a shortfall in the budget.

Advertising Deadline
12 noon Tuesday

Booster Club steak feed & auction Oct. 16

The Heppner High School Booster Club annual steak feed and auction planned for this Saturday, October 16, at the Heppner Elks Club promises a steak dinner with all the trimmings and an extensive array of auction items.

Auction items this year run the gamut from lodging at the Inn of the Seventh Mountain and the Columbia George Hotel to a country club membership, a bird hunt, cash, tools, fuel and even Blazer tickets.

The dinner will be held from 6-8 p.m. with the auction getting underway at 8 p.m.

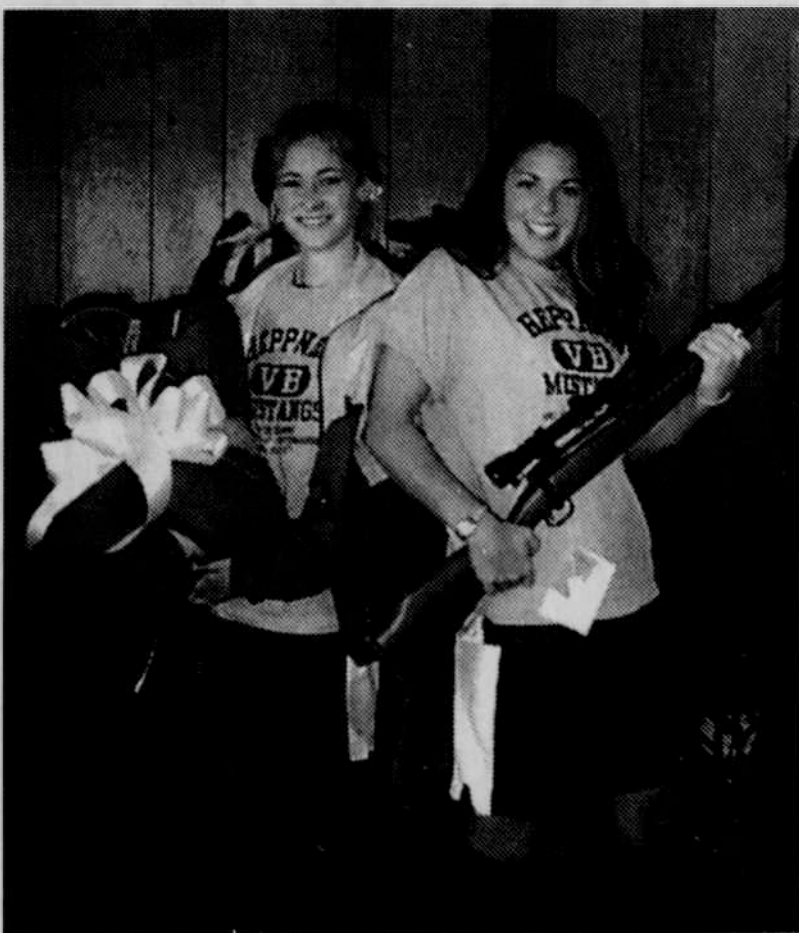
Proceeds from the feed and auction will benefit academic and extracurricular activities at the school.

Lexington Fire Dept. meeting

The Lexington Fire Department organizational meeting will be held on Thursday, Oct. 14, at the town hall at 7 p.m.

Volunteers are needed and the department is accepting applications for a new fire chief.

The public is invited to attend.



Leah Denton and Kim Pointer display some of the items featured in the Booster Club Steak Feed and Auction Saturday.



OIL SALE ENDS

SATURDAY, OCT. 16TH

MORROW COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS

Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgg.net