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Gazette Times

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Sheriff's dept. beefs up reserve program; seeks funds

The Morrow County Sheriff's Department, anticipating additional growth and continued budget tightening throughout Morrow County, has decided to expand their reserve officer program from the current eight reserve members to 15. The department has begun fund raising efforts to help outfit the new reservists.

Reservists not only augment the normal sheriff's patrols on a regular basis, but also provide security at functions throughout the county, such as the Irrigon Watermelon Festival and the St. Patrick's Day celebration and Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo in Heppner, according to Morrow County Sheriff Verlin Denton. Reservists, says Denton, are volunteers who are required to work at least 10 hours a month, thereby creating an estimated savings to the department in excess of $100,000.

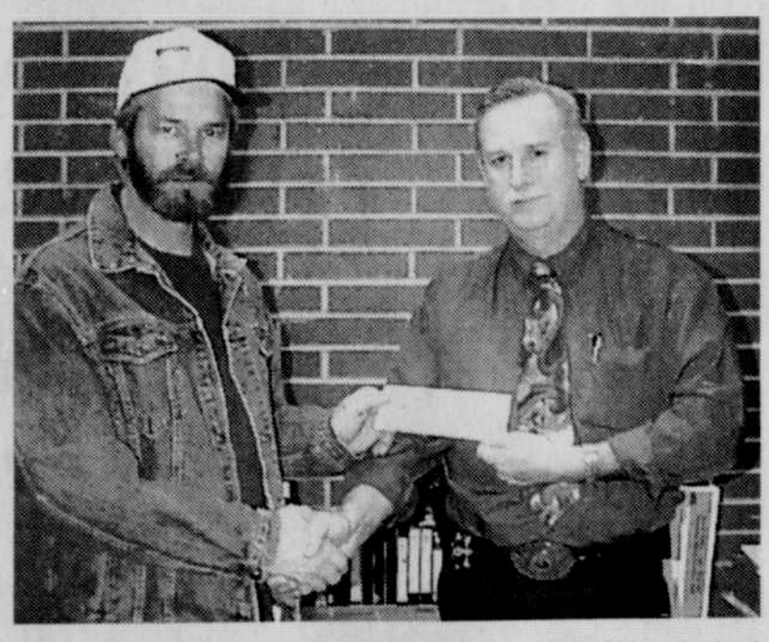
Reservists, who are trained to meet state standards, go through a testing process, take oral boards and undergo background checks, previously provided their own equipment through fund raisers or out of their own pockets. Their investment amounts to $750 or more for equipment and a firearm. Denton says the department hopes to be able provide a portion of the gear to the reservists.

"The reservists are required to complete 400 hours of training, very close to what regular officers have to do, on their own time," said Denton. "We often recruit and hire from our reserves. They're already here and have a commitment to the community. They're a great bunch of people and are a lot of help to the department." Both Denton and Morrow County Sheriff's Detective Mark Miller, reserve coordinator, attribute their current positions to their initial involvement in reserve programs. Denton said he spent three years as a reserve before being hired full-time.

Denton has compiled a list of basic items the department would like to purchase for the reservists: 15 protective (bullet-proof) vests at $600 each; seven sets of uniforms (two pairs of pants, one long-sleeve shirt, two short sleeve shirts) at $424 each; 12 winter coats at $140 each; eight reserve academy training for individuals at $500; seven complete sets of duty gear at $500; and training expenses for reserves, amounting to $4,5000.

Several area businesses, including the Bank of Eastern Oregon, which donated $1,000, and Finley Buttes Landfill, which donated $1,200, have already contributed toward the cause, but additional donations are needed. Donations may be mailed to Detective Mark Miller, Morrow County Sheriff's Reserve Coordinator, P.O. Box 159, Heppner, OR 97836.

Bank of Eastern Oregon President George Koffler (left) presents a $1,000 check to Morrow County Sheriff Verlin Denton to assist in the reserve program.



James Browning, manager of Finley Buttes (left), adds $1,200 to the fund raising efforts for the Morrow County Sheriff's Department reserve program. Sheriff Verlin Denton (right) accepts the check.

Man presumed drowned in boat accident

The search for the occupant of a pleasure craft that was struck by a barge on the Columbia River near Boardman has been called off.

John Patrick Garner, 50, Irrigon, the lone occupant of the pleasure craft is missing and presumed drowned.

According to the Morrow County Sheriff's Department, their office was notified Tuesday, Jan. 25, around 10:20 p.m. by the U.S. Coast Guard out of Portland that they were requesting assistance in locating the occupant of the boat.

Morrow County Sheriff's Marine Deputies responded to the area and found pieces of the pleasure boat floating but have not been able to locate the occupant.

The search, which was centered 4-5 miles east of Boardman near Blaylock Islands, was called off at 2:40 a.m. on January 26 because of darkness. It resumed at daylight that day.

According to the sheriff's department, family members said that Garner was alone in the boat fishing on the Columbia.

Elementary schools satisfactory; Columbia, Riverside low

School report cards published on the Internet

All three Morrow County elementary schools were rated satisfactory overall on the state school report card which came out on the Internet Tuesday morning. However, Columbia Junior High School in Irrigon and Riverside High School in Boardman were rated low. No rankings were available for Heppner Junior and Senior High School and Ione Schools.

Heppner Junior/Senior High School Principal Ron Anthony said that confusion concerning school numbers and the number of students tested may have contributed to the state's delay in release of HHS/HJHS results.

Ione Schools Principal Dick Allen also said that there may have also been some confusion concerning the reporting of test scores since Ione reports have been submitted variously for: Ione Schools, Ione High School, Ione Junior High School, Ione Middle School and Ione Elementary School.

Allen added that, according to the state, results of schools with less than 40 students would take longer to compile. The reports, however, will be out by the end of February.

Schools were rated Unacceptable, Low, Satisfactory, Strong and Exceptional.

Categories include: an overall rating; student performance-meeting state testing standards; student behavior-attendance; school characteristics-the percent of students taking state tests; improvement in student performance; and other information concerning teacher education and experience and student SAT scores.

Heppner Elementary School-According to state data, **Heppner Elementary School** was rated satisfactory **overall** and satisfactory in **student performance,** showing improvement over time. Seventy-one percent of students met state standards in reading in grades three and five, compared to 75 percent in comparison schools with similar demographics and 75 percent statewide.

In writing, HES students scored 82 percent, above comparison schools at 66 percent and the state at 60 percent.

In multiple choice math, 64 percent of HES students met state standards compared to 72 percent in comparison schools and 68 percent statewide. In math problem solving, 49 percent of HES students met state standards, below 65 percent in comparison schools and 59 percent statewide.

Student behavior, based on student attendance, also received a satisfactory ranking at HES, above the state average. In 1998-99 attendance was 94.2 percent, compared to 92.8 percent for the statewide average. In 1997-98 attendance was 94.9 percent, compared to 92.7 statewide. In 1996-97 attendance was 95.2 percent, compared to 92.6 percent statewide; and in 1995-96 attendance was 94.7, compared to 92.6 percent statewide.

In the **school characteristics** category, which is based on the percent of students taking state tests, HES was once again satisfactory, with 100 percent of the schools' students taking state tests, above 99 percent statewide.

According to "**other information**" supplied by the state, 32 percent of HES teachers have a master's degree or higher, compared to 46 percent statewide; HES teachers have an average of 16 years experience, compared to 14 years statewide; and have an average of 13 years of experience, compared to 10 years statewide. The teachers have an average of 13 years in the district, compared to 10 statewide.

Sam Boardman Elementary School, Boardman-Sam Boardman Elementary School was satisfactory **overall** and in **student performance**, showing improvement over time. Forty-six percent of the students in grades three and five at SBE met the state standards in reading; compared to 59 percent of students in comparison schools and 75 percent statewide; 56 percent met state standards in writing, compared to 51 percent in comparison schools and 60 percent statewide; in math multiple choice, 59 percent met state standards, compared to 56 percent in comparison schools and 68 percent statewide; in math problem solving, 50 percent at SBE and comparison schools met state standards, compared to 59 percent statewide.

SBE was also satisfactory in **student behavior** with 93.6 percent attendance in 1998-99, above 92.8 percent statewide. Attendance at SBE ranges from 93.6 in 1995-96 to 93.3 in 1996-97 to 93.4 in 1997-98 compared to 92.6 statewide in 1995-97 and 92.7 statewide in 1997-98.

In school **characteristics**, SBE was again satisfactory at 99 percent, matching the state average of students taking state tests.

In **other information**, only 11 percent of SBE staff have a master's degree or higher, compared to 46 percent statewide. SBE teachers have an average of 11 years experience, compared to 14 years statewide. The teachers have an average of seven years in the district, compared to 10 statewide.

A.C. Houghton Elementary School, Irrigon-A.C. Houghton Elementary School received an **overall** satisfactory rating. **Student performance** at ACH was also ranked satisfactory, with students showing improvement over time. Forty-nine percent of the students met state standards in reading, compared to 54 percent in comparison schools and 75 percent statewide. In writing, 51 percent of the students met state standards, surpassing comparison schools with 47 percent, but falling short of state averages with 60 percent. In math multiple choice, 49 percent of ACH students met state standards, compared to 51 percent in comparison schools and 68 percent statewide. In math problem solving 47 percent of ACH students met the state standards, compared to 49 percent in comparison schools and 59 percent statewide.

ACH students received a satisfactory rating in **student behavior**, with an average of 93.6 percent of the students attending school in 1998-99, compared to 92.8 statewide. In 1997-98, attendance was 93.4 percent, compared to 92.7 statewide; in 1996-97, attendance was 94 percent, compared to 92.6 statewide; and in 1995-96, attendance was 93.6 percent, compared to 92.6 percent statewide.

ACH was ranked satisfactory in **school characteristics**, matching the state average with 99 percent of the students taking state tests.

Twenty-six percent of ACH teachers have a master's degree or higher, compared to 46 percent statewide. They have more years of experience, with an average of 16 years, compared to 14 years statewide. They also have more years in their district, with an average of 13, compared to 10 statewide.

Columbia Junior High School, Irrigon-Columbia Junior High was rated low **overall** with low **student performance**. Student performance at CJHS has declined over time. Only 37 percent of CJHS students met state standards in reading, compared to 38 percent in comparison schools and 56 percent statewide. In writing 57 percent of CJHS students met state standards, above the 50 percent in comparison schools, but below the 68 percent statewide. In math multiple choice only 28 percent met state standards, compared to 33 percent in comparison schools and 52 percent statewide. In math problem solving, 33 percent met state standards, compared to 38 percent in comparison schools and 55 percent statewide.

In **student behavior**, CJHS fell below state standards in attendance, declining every year since 1995-96. Student attendance in 1995-96 was 92.3 percent, compared to 92.6 percent statewide; in 1996-97 92.0, compared to 92.6 statewide; 91.8 percent in 1997-98, compared to 92.7 statewide; and 90.4 percent in 1998-99, compared to 92.8 percent statewide.

CJHS was rated satisfactory in **school characteristics**, with 98 percent of the students taking state tests, matching the state average.

Fifty percent of the staff at CJHS have a master's degree or higher, which surpasses the state average of 46 percent. The teachers have an average of 12 years of experience, compared to 14 statewide and an average of seven years in the district, compared to 10 years statewide.

Riverside High School, Boardman-Riverside High School received an **overall** low rating. **Student performance** was rated satisfactory, however it has shown a decline over time. Forty-two percent of the students in the 10th grade met the state standards in reading, surpassing comparison schools with 28 percent, but falling short of statewide averages with 52 percent. In writing 66 percent of RHS 10th graders met state standards, compared to 53 percent in comparison schools and 72 percent statewide. In math multiple choice, 30 percent of RHS 10th graders met the state standards, compared to 15 percent of comparison schools and 36 percent statewide. In math problem solving, 36 percent of RHS 10th graders met the state standards, compared to 34 percent in comparison schools and 50 percent statewide.

Student behavior was deemed unacceptable, with attendance at RHS falling below state averages all years since 1995. In 1998-99 90.4 percent of RHS students attended school, compared to 92.8 statewide. In 1997-98 RHS attendance was 88.9 percent, compared to 92.7 statewide; in 1996-97 attendance was 90.5, compared to 92.6 statewide. In 1995-96 attendance was 91.1 percent, compared to 92.6 percent statewide.

The **dropout rate** at RHS is more than double the state average. In 1997-98 14.3 percent of the students in grades nine-12 dropped out, compared to 6.9 percent statewide. The dropout rate has dramatically increased from 1996-97, when only 6.5 percent of the students dropped out, compared to 6.7 statewide.

RHS has a satisfactory rating in **school characteristics**, with 99 percent of the students taking state tests, besting the state average of 95 percent.

RHS students fell below both the state and national averages in **SAT scores**. RHS students scored 493 on the verbal SAT, compared to an average of 525 statewide and 505 in the nation. In math RHS students scored an average of 486, compared to 525 statewide and 511 in the nation. Only 35 percent of RHS students (34 students) took the SATs, compared to 49 percent statewide

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