

## Ione youth group holds first meeting



Footstep Awards for the 1999-2000 year went to (left to right): Corey Morgan, Diana McElligott, Caitlin Orem, Amellia Peck, Salli McElligott, Karl Morgan, Shelby Krebs, Jeremy Rietmann, Adrienne Swanson, Allison Halvorsen, Adam McCabe, and Aaron Tworek. Not pictured are Ashley Carmack and Andrew Rietmann.

Thirty-four high school students gathered for the first Ione Youth Group meeting of the year on Wednesday, Sept. 27.

The youth were treated to sub sandwiches and Italian sodas. United Church of Christ minister

The Rev. Paul Clay led the group in prayer. Leader Cathy Halvorsen read a letter from Outreach Ministry of Burnside, thanking the group for their \$700 donation.

Ione Youth Group members sold snow cones and Italian sodas on the Fourth of July to earn money for the service agency in memory of Jason Halvorsen.

Rev. Clay described the celebration and dedication ceremony at the Ione United

Church of Christ Sunday, October 22. Eight youth volunteered to help with readings at the 3 p.m. service.

The annual food drive to benefit South Morrow County will be Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 6:30 p.m. Youth Group members will go door to door in Ione that evening asking for canned food donations. The collected food will be given to the Heppner Neighborhood Center, which will distribute it to needy families.

The group will make a service trip to Burnside in Portland this fall. The trip will be scheduled in November or December.

Footstep Awards were given to the youth who had fully

participated in Ione Youth Group during the 1999-2000 school year. Mark McElligott and Nikki McElligott had earlier received the Outstanding Service Award for four years of participation.

The evening ended with youth leader Jeri McElligott telling about saints and their importance in the Catholic faith. The group learned of St. Therese, a young nun who died of tuberculosis in 1897 after bravely sticking to her spiritual "little way" of simple trust in and love for God. According to several biographers, the child Therese was given a string of beads with which to count her acts of love accomplished for God. The Ione youth each made a set of good deed beads to carry with them.

## County court hears CSEPP update

By Doris Brosnan

County Assessor Greg Sweek advised the Morrow County Court of the latest development in a 1997 tax appeal by Power Resources, at the court meeting on September 27.

According to Sweek, the company is negotiating a settlement for a \$5 million adjustment in their value for the past four years for a total of \$20 million value. This would translate into a \$230,000 to \$349,000 refund to the company, coming from all the districts. The county's portion would be \$97,000.

Sweek shared better news with the court, also, noting that the county is up \$40 million in value from his estimate during budget committee meetings. This translates into an additional \$167,000 in taxes. Finance Director Lisanne Currin explained that this would cancel the \$150,000 short in the carry-over.

In answer to a question from Brosnan, Sweek said that the change would not affect the state's centrally assessed utility values. Brosnan noted hope of receiving the SB 1608 forest-fee money in October or November. Sweek added that he will better know the effects of both the refund to Power Resources and the additional value in two weeks.

Also at Sept. 27 the meeting, Emergency Management Director Casey Beard provided a thorough update on CSEPP and the Emergency Operations Center.

A pickup has been ordered through the state for the Irrigon Fire Department's decontamination unit. Which agency will purchase the decon unit is under discussion. The Irrigon fire hall is undergoing installation of the enhanced protection package.

Beard reported that emergency management has funds for an "Incident Command System" support vehicle to be housed at the Boardman Fire Department. They are awaiting a contract from the ESD for computer/technical support, have investigated the cost of ESD's providing a system for video conferencing, and have provided some older computers to the Sheriff's office. Judge Terry Tallman suggested that Beard coordinate with other telecommunications issues that the county faces.

Beard told the court that the Emergency Operations Center Phase II renovation passed final inspection. Work should be complete by the end of October. In November, the center plans an open house.

After having submitted the center's budget, Beard reported, he received a new format for submission. Beard has informed FEMA to redo the budget work, if they consider it necessary. Commissioner Dan Brosnan added his concern over the budget process and over the possibility of FEMA's including performance standards or measures that the county cannot meet.

Commissioner John Wenzholz said that these issues will be discussed at the next CSEPP Board meeting.

Beard provided a copy of the 2001 CSEPP Work Plan. Training and exercises are being scheduled with Irrigon and Boardman. BLM has installed weather stations in the north end of the county. Work with Nextel is hoped to provide service to Heppner and better signal strength in Irrigon and Boardman. Beard announced a completed map and resource book for the fire districts and public works department. He also told the court that he awaits the results of the consultant's study of tactical communication system requirements. He said that Wheeler Communications is fixing and upgrading the TARS infrastructure, will install a radio at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, and will fix the repeater site for the Boardman Fire Department.

The EOC has ordered carbon foam gloves for law enforcement personnel and is upgrading the dispatch terminals to a new state-of-the-art system. Beard believes the bus issue of evacuating Boardman schools has been resolved. Beard also informed the court that Congressman Walden has requested an update of the court's decision to join the coalition for impact aid or independently hire attorneys.

Also at the meeting, District Attorney David C. Allen advised the court of his concerns about signing the proposed agreement with Boardman for 911 and Justice Court services.

The agreement obligates the district attorney's office to file all traffic and misdemeanor cases in justice court, but Allen's office policy is to file all domestic-violence cases in circuit court. The agreement would also preclude the DA's filing in circuit court should he choose to do so in a case in which a defendant has other cases filed in that court.

The agreement language does not specify that cases involving city of Boardman ordinances be prosecuted by the Boardman city attorney. Allen will discuss the situation with the Boardman attorney.

Allen reported to the court that the video equipment is now installed, providing a link to the Umatilla County units and the Irrigon Justice Court. He noted that the county might want to consider some improvements and suggested further potential of the system, about which a hired technical consultant could advise the court.

Discussion continued about the role of the ESD, the involvement of the Sheriff's Department, T-1 lines and possible cooperation with schools. After the county court session, the commissioners participated in a demonstration of the video arraignment equipment.

Assistant Public Works Director Bob Nairns reported to the court as follows:

Fog sealing is complete on Wilson Road, Columbia Avenue, and Washington, with paint striping proceeding on Wilson, Columbia, Bombing Range, and Baseline, and in Gilliam County. Shoulder work continues on Wilson. The crew is patching for the winter and blading, and they have moved the pub mill from Gravel Pit Lane. Anson Wright Park roadwork into the improved

area is about half-complete. The crew will move equipment to Jordan Bridge and the crusher to Brenner Canyon. Brosnan requested that the court be notified before any future crushing and he repeated a previous request to have some old culverts on Little Butter Creek removed.

In response to Wenzholz's question, Nairns reported that the servicing of the motor pool was working, taking only a couple of days a week.

Also at the meeting, the court took the following action:

- approved Union 76 fuel cards for Irrigon;
- approved a property tax refund for a roll correction;
- approved purchasing two Windows 95 upgrades for two computers donated by CSEPP to the sheriff's office.

## Ione Topic Club holds meeting

Ione Topic Club began the fall season with the September meeting at the home of Katherine Lindstrom, with Anne Morter as co-hostess.

Officers were elected: Kathy Morter, president; Becky Hunt, vice president; and Anne Morter, secretary-treasurer.

In August, the Topic Club served a "very successful" Queen's Luncheon following the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo in Heppner with all the proceeds going to the Ione Library.

Members will again conduct a story hour for the pre-school classes at the library each month.

The Ione Library has about 6,000 volumes and many new adult books, as well as many new juvenile books. They also have videos, books on tape, magazines, and a computer for use.

The library hours are 3-5 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday.

Anne Morter reported on the summer reading program, which lasted six weeks.

Leah Starr, program director of the Libraries of Eastern Oregon (LEO) of La Grande, was the guest speaker. As The US Library of Congress celebrated its 200th anniversary this year, LEO is working to improve the library service in Eastern Oregon.

This district includes the 11 most eastern counties of Oregon, encompassing over 50 percent of the land in the state with a population of more than 186,900 residents. There are 36 libraries in this area with two of them, Ione and Cove Public Libraries, operated by private institutions.

The other 34 libraries are funded with an average of \$15.16 per capita as compared to \$31.78 in the western part of the state.

Many of the LEO libraries are poorly served with inadequate books, educational materials, dated technology and operate annually on less than \$10,000 per capita. Starr hopes to make citizens aware of the services of the library and help seek grants and other funds to improve these services.

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## Corps to begin lowering lake

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Tuesday, Oct. 10, will begin the annual lowering of Willow Creek Lake in Heppner.

The lake will be at its wintertime level by Dec. 1.

At 7 a.m., Oct. 10, water releases will be increased from three cubic feet per second to 15 cfs. The lake level will drop eight vertical feet between now and Dec. 1.

Residents living along the creek below the dam should see a water level increase of about seven inches - measured at the gage house - as a result of the increased water releases.

Water releases from the lake could fluctuate depending on the amount of water coming into the lake.

The lake is operated during the winter months for flood damage reduction and during the summer months for recreation.

The Corps lowers the lake level to elevation 2,063 feet each year to create additional storage space for winter rain and snow melt runoff which minimizes the effects of flooding downstream of the dam. The dam sits just upstream of the town of Heppner. The dam controls a drainage basin of 96 square miles. Willow Creek Dam was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1965 and was constructed by the Corps in the early 1980s.

## Toni Kemp selected for scholarship

AgWIN (Ag Women In Network) has chosen Toni Kemp to be the recipient of their \$1000 scholarship this year.

Kemp graduated from Heppner High School in 1997 and will be a senior at the University of Idaho this fall. She is enrolled in the agriculture/business program. She is the daughter of Gary and Marcia Kemp of Lexington. Kemp was chosen based on her current studies, her summer internship projects with the University of Idaho, her goals and her past involvement in 4-H and FFA.

AgWIN, a regional network of agricultural professionals, raises money for its scholarship program through an annual scholarship golf tournament.

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