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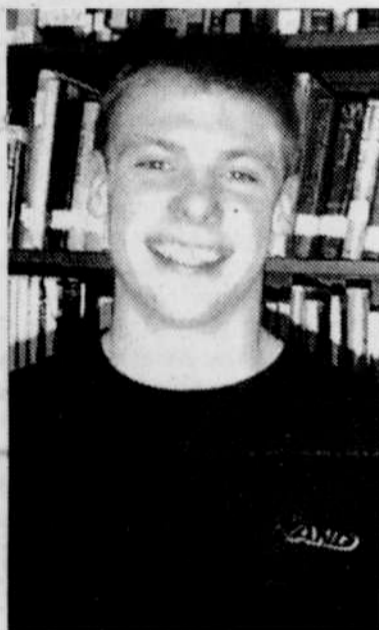
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Ione hosts exchange students from England, Argentina



Ashley Roberts

Ione High School exchange student Ashley Roberts is the type of kid who would succeed just about anywhere he chose to live, but lucky for us, he has a "thing" about America.

"Ever since I was young I had this thing about America. I wanted to go to school in America," said Ashley, 16, who hails from South Hampton, England, known as the port the Titanic set sail from. "I love my home," said Ashley, "but America fascinates me. I just wanted to experience it."

Ashley, who looks very much like an "all-American boy," is not only enamored with America, but the American sport of basketball. He was the only kid in his school who played basketball. He learned to play it well, so well, in fact, that he was selected to play in the English National League. He played for his country when he was 15, but discovered that he missed too much school.

Ashley says he never got into soccer, which is one of England's national pastimes. "I looked for another sport," said Ashley. "I don't know how I got into basketball, because no one ever played it."

He started playing basketball when he was seven years old and later played for the Thames Valley Tigers, a London team, and was named their most valuable player. He was also named captain of the Hampshire Schools area team, which would be like a district team here. The England national squad was selected from the area teams.

Sports teams in England are not connected to schools as they are in the U.S. There, sports are a year-round activity through various clubs and most athletes stick with one sport.

Since he started school in Ione, Ashley has tried his hand at football for the very first time and did pretty well for never having played before. By the end

of the year, he had improved to the point where he played starting offense and defense.

Ashley had his first taste of American life when he traveled to Indiana on a basketball tour. His team was hosted by families of students in a 2A school. "I liked the community where everyone was close and everyone was proud to go to the school," said Ashley. "I liked the whole idea of everyone being close."

Obviously, when he came to Ione, known for its close-knit community, staunch supporters of its schools and athletic teams, he came to the right place.

He says that in England, there aren't any public schools that have fewer than 200 people. There, he says, because of the large size of the schools, most people don't hang out with kids outside their school class.

Also, in England, Ashley says, "You don't ever really get out of the city." England is as big as Oregon, he says, but they have 15 million people, compared to Oregon, which has around three and a half million.

Ashley says that while he was a little shocked at the size and remoteness of Ione, it "wasn't a problem." "You can find something to do anywhere," he says. "It's up to you. You can make your own fun."

People are a lot more friendly here," he added. "Everyone knows everyone else. People make the effort and support the community. People go out of their way to make people feel welcome."

Driving long distances doesn't seem to bother him either, but the roads are another matter. "They look dangerous to me," says Ashley, who adds that the roads are very well maintained in England. People in England don't drive as much as they do in the U.S., he says partly because of the distances involved here, and partly because of the high cost of "petrol" in the U.K.

A junior at Ione High School, Ashley lives with his host parents, Dave and Debbie Radie and their son, Mike, 16, also a junior at IHS. "I get along great with my family," he says. "Mike and I are like friends. We have a lot of fun. I like Dave and Debbie, too. It's a real good family."

Back home in England, Ashley lives with his dad, Kevin, a graphic designer who produces magazines, mom, Kari, a special education teacher, brother Samuel, 12, and sister Caitlyn, 10.

Ashley says that since he has been in the U.S. awhile, his

friends in England tell him he speaks with an American accent. He says that he hasn't had any trouble understanding Americans, partly because he had American coaches, but says sometimes Americans have a little more difficulty understanding him. In England, he says, people speak faster and use a lot of abbreviations. Here he has learned to speak more slowly and pronounce words more carefully.

While Ashley is in America, he is actually missing his first year of college, since students in England finish high school earlier than they do in the U.S. He is not yet sure about his college plans, but they may even entail a return trip to the U.S. As to the future, Ashley is thinking perhaps a career in real estate.



Macarena Esposito

There's no other way to describe Macarena Esposito, Ione High School's exchange student from Argentina, but in a very American way--petite and perky.

Macarena the tiny 16-year-old native of Argentina, is spending this school year with the Joe and Anita Orem family of Ione. The Orem family includes Marc, 22, Caitlin, 16 and Zac, eight, son, Eric, 27, who also lives in Ione, and daughter, Heidi, who lives in Metolius.

Macarena says that she has acquired "a lot of moms" in her new home. "I like the people a lot. I like the sports and I love my teachers, but the place is a little boring," says Macarena, who is used to a much larger city.

Macarena comes from San Martin, a city of around 200,000 in mid-western Argentina, where she lives with her father, Aldo, a doctor, her mother, Monica, a teacher, and her sister, Carolina, 17. Her brother, Gonzalo, 20, attends school at a university.

Speaking a mile-a-minute in English, Macarena has a list of "loves" a mile long. She

County commissioners hear investment proposal

By Doris Brosnan

Representatives of McGee Financial and county budget officer, Lianne Currin, presented an investment proposal for the county retirement plan at the Morrow County Commissioners meeting on Nov. 14.

Currin explained that the pension attorney for the county recommends that an investment manager be responsible for managing the equity portion of the retirement fund, not the county commissioners. Such a shift in fiduciary responsibility would change the role of the McGee investment advisors from broker to investor/broker and would increase the cost of the contract. Currin further explained that the court would continue to hold the legal obligation of authorization on the movement of money.

Discussion continued on the details of such a plan's setup and operation, the drawing up of a contract and some proposed investments. The court approved the recommended transactions. McGee Financial will hold a group employee meeting, probably in January.

Also at that meeting, Children and Families director Barbara Hayes described the new "Healthy Start" program, for which funding was anticipated and included in the department budget. The court agreed to sign a letter of intent but also agreed to further study the details of the program.

Judge Terry Tallman reported that the fiscal administrative arm of the Legislative Emergency Board is recommending that Morrow County not get one million dollars

from the state's sale of the north-county property to Offutt. The commissioners noted that on the previous day, Representative Mark Simmons had assured them that the funding was perfunctory and would pass without a problem. The commissioners agreed that Tallman should attend the hearing scheduled for the following day and that they should call the governor's office and Representative Greg Smith.

At the November 21 meeting, Morrow County School Superintendent Bruce Anderson, board member Gary Frederickson, and planning director Tamra Mabbott discussed with the commissioners the development of First Street in Irrigon for the proposed new high school. The court and Mabbott reaffirmed the policy explained to the school district in 1999, included as a condition of their land-use approval by the planning commission, which requires all developers to build required roads as part of their developments.

Mabbott also discussed with the court the proposed notice to surrounding-property owners for pending land-use changes in industrial zones and space-age zones.

County building inspector Brett Cook reported to the court that Offutt has appealed the county's required building permit for the dairies.

The court discussed with economic development specialist Martin Davis the one million dollars meant for Morrow County from the land sale to Offutt but not provided for by the emergency board.

The Court heard, from an Irrigon Fire Hall representative, about the improvements planned for the hall with the tipage fees awarded the project.

Public works director Burke

O'Brien reported the Valby Road project as ongoing, the fence building at Cutsforth Park completed, and the fence along Forest Service Line 50 percent complete.

The crew has been grading Holtz Lane, Gus Road, Kinkade Lane, Palmateer Road, Cecil Road, Ely Canyon, Baker Lane, Stock Drive, Fuller Canyon, Hale Ridge Road, Buttermilk Canyon, Blackhorse and French Road. They have burned weeds on Gus Road and Brenner Canyon. They are burning brush piles at Cutsforth Park. A citizen has offered to donate a steel gate and labor to install it at the main entrance to Cutsforth.

O'Brien reported that HB2042 should mean close to one million dollars to the county, enough to do the Brenner Canyon and the Juniper Canyon projects. He noted the hard work the staff had put in on getting the funding.

Other actions of the court:

- approval of the contract between Morrow County and the Morrow County Commission on Children and Families;

- approval of a permit to CenturyTel for new cable on Gooseberry, a permit to Morrow Development Corporation for fiber optics from Olsen Road to Rippee;

- approval of the motor oil and lubricants bids, the diesel and gasoline bid and the antifreeze bid from Devin Oil;

- approval of Carol Michael as coordinator of a \$7500 grant received for the Columbia River Heritage Trail;

- approval of a desk and a fax machine for the behavioral health department;

- approval of \$3500 from the general fund ending balance to fund the rest of the veterans' budget.

Farm Fair upcoming

The 28th Annual Hermiston Farm Fair will be held at the Hermiston Community Center, Wednesday-Friday, November 28-30.

Farm Fair is an agricultural forum co-sponsored by Oregon State University Extension Service, local agri-businesses, and the Ag Committee of the Greater Hermiston Chamber of Commerce.

The program on Wednesday will include a potato production seminar all day on the main stage. Running concurrently in the North Conference Room, a livestock seminar will be held in the morning and a forage seminar in the afternoon.

The ag issues forum on the main stage Thursday morning will be titled "Sources of Help with Rules and Regulations Affecting Umatilla River Landowners." In the North Conference Room, talks will be held about grass seed issues. The onion seminar will be held Thursday afternoon on the main stage.

On Thursday from 1-2:30 p.m. in the Altrusa Room a seminar will be held on motor management.

A general session Friday morning will cover other miscellaneous crop and pest issues.

All sessions are free with no pre-registration required. Pesticide

recertification credits and 31CCA credits have been applied for and are pending. The "Core" pesticide program video will be offered Thursday and Friday mornings from 8 a.m. to noon. In order to earn the credits offered for attending any accredited presentation it will be necessary to be present the entire time.

Various agriculture-related businesses will display their wares and services in a trade show with booths inside and outside the Community Center.

The Hermiston Farm Fair Banquet will be held Thursday night at Cottage Flowers Conference Center in Hermiston with dinner catered by Round-up City Catering. A no-host social hour from 6-7 p.m. will begin the evening. Dinner entertainment will be provided by Arthur Atsma, magician/entertainer.

"The Farm Fair is a great opportunity to grab a few credits and visit with neighbors over refreshments. Come treat yourself to freshly prepared snack food items courtesy of our local food processors. Whether merchant, farmer or just interested citizen, come on down to the 28th Annual Hermiston Farm Fair," said a news release.

Senior class seeks grocery receipts

The Heppner High School Class of 2002 has been actively raising funds for the past three and a half years for their senior trip after graduation next May.

Their destination hasn't been determined yet, but it will be alcohol/drug-free, outing with chaperons.

A current fund raiser is participation in the Central Market

Red Apple grocery receipt collection. Through the program, Central Market pays the senior class one percent of total receipts collected.

Anyone who would like to help support the class may drop off their Central Market receipts at the HHS office, the Shoebox in Heppner or at Morrow County Grain Growers in Lexington.

For more information, call HHS at 676-9138.

Register for BMCC winter term now

Students planning to attend BMCC winter term 2002 now have the opportunity to pre-register for classes.

Preregistration is designed to help students succeed in their academic careers by making advising available to all students, said a news release. Students have online access to an up-to-date schedule of classes on BMCC's web page at www.bmcc.or.us.

New freshmen and transfer students who have applied for

admission will be sent information about registration and orientation. New degree-seeking students will register beginning Monday, Dec. 3, after meeting with an advisor and participating in an orientation, either online or in person. Students who are non-degree seeking or taking non-credit classes may register by contacting the BMCC location nearest them. BMCC has centers in Baker City, Boardman, Hermiston and Milton-Freewater.



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Continued page 2