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New public works director on the job

A new public works director is on board with the city of Heppner. Craig S. Canham from Portland started employment in that capacity on December 3. I'm real pleased with the job so far," said Canham. "I've got a great crew of gentlemen working with me and great support staff at the city, including Mayor Bob Jepsen."

Canham said that he wanted to emphasize community relations and is initiating citizen service requests whereby city residents can bring maintenance requests to the attention of the public works department.

"The most important tool I can have in my tool box is the citizens," said Canham. "Any concerns the public has, maintenance-wise, will be dealt with. All we need to do is know about them." Canham says that anyone with concerns about city maintenance issues, such as a pothole, broken swing at the park, broken street sign or bad street light, for example, should stop by city hall to fill out a request or just give him a call at 676-9618.

"I'm open to any and all input in the community," added Canham. "My priority is having the town be clean and safe. It's pretty enough just as it is, but everything can be cleaner, everything can be sharper."

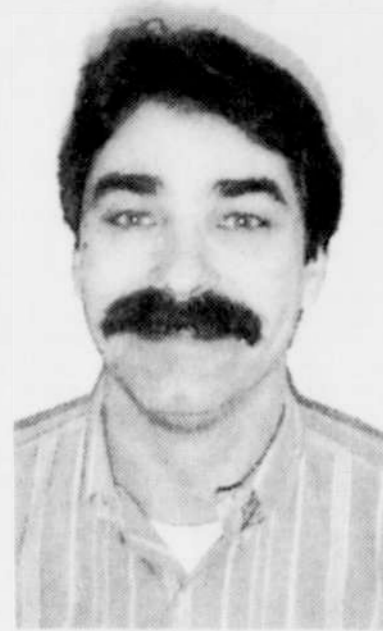
Canham says that the public works department will be taking preventative measures and has some future campaigns laid

out. His agenda for January emphasizes water resources. In addition to the crew's regular duties, he plans to focus on repairing meter boxes and straightening and repairing water hydrants.

February's focus is community cleanliness. That month and the first week in March, the city crew will focus on cleaning up the town in preparation for St. Patrick's weekend. "We'll be making sure this town is pristine," said Canham. "No paper, no garbage."

"We'll do the same in August for fair and rodeo," he continued. "When people come from all over to Heppner, I want them to come in and go. 'Wow.'"

Canham, 40, was raised in Portland and graduated from Benson High School in 1979. After graduation he entered the family white water rafting manufacturing business. When he was 25 he began working for the city of Portland, "doing a little bit of everything," including street repair and maintenance, sidewalk repair, sewer maintenance and water line repair and maintenance. After 11 years with the city he went to work for Storm Water Management, a private water purification company. Prior to coming to Heppner, he worked for the Mannex Corporation, which contracted industrial maintenance, facilities repair, welding and fabrication.



Craig Canham

Canham and his wife Jymme (pronounced Jimmy), have four children, John, 15, Jesse, 14, Laicina, 11, and Shane, seven. Jymme works in the billing department at Woodland Park Hospital. The family plans to join him in Heppner after the school year.

Park district meeting slated

A Willow Creek Park District strategic planning meeting will be held Monday, January 7, beginning at 1 p.m. at Columbia Basin Electric in Heppner.

Local college student witnesses September 11 New York attacks up close

What are the chances of someone from Heppner being in New York during the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center? Pretty darn good.

Matt Van Liew, born and raised in Heppner and attending college in New Jersey, was right on the scene.

The morning of September 11, Van Liew had been working on the Hudson River as an intern as a part of his civil engineering studies at Stevens Institute of Technology at Hoboken, New Jersey. The Hudson River flows between Hoboken and Manhattan. He and others were collecting water samples on a boat in the river and just happened to have a digital camera on board to document their work. He heard of the attack on a radio on the boat and then took a series of photographs from the boat after the first attack, the second attack and the aftermath

and then downloaded the images to his laptop computer.

"When the buildings fell, people started panicking and became a lot more concerned," said Van Liew. "It was unbelievable that they (the terrorists) got the building to fall."

He said that they on the boat were not too concerned for their safety. "Afterward, you started worrying about gas attacks and stuff, but because we were out on the water, we could get away from it if we needed to."

He said at first they were advised to stay away from the area, but then were asked to ferry people away. "They had been telling boats to stay away, because they were worried about the towers falling in the water and I guess some people panicked after the towers fell and they were jumping in the water,"

said Van Liew. "But then they called all boats to come and help evacuate people."

Smoke was billowing from the wreckage, but Van Liew said it wasn't too smoky on the river, but rather "kind of hazy" and "smelled like burnt plastic."

His boat loaded some 50-60 people up at the South Street Seaport nearby, transported some to the base of the Brooklyn Bridge and some back to Liberty State Park which is behind the Statue of Liberty. "We went back and tried to pick up more people, but couldn't, because there was no room," he said. By then the rescue procedure was more organized and the larger boats and ferries were lined up at the ports to board passengers.

"We were doing what we needed to help out, but we were kind of removed from it, so we weren't in any immediate danger," he said. "They had

closed off the bridges and tunnels, though, so we didn't know how we were going to get back." They weren't able to get into their school, but instead were dropped off about 10 blocks away. "A lot of people were walking back (home)," he said. "I took a lot of people all day to get back. A co-worker lived in

The Bronx and she had to spend the night in New Jersey because she couldn't get home."

Van Liew says the incident won't deter him from returning to school. "I like it a lot," he said. "There's a lot going on, a lot more to do. People were pretty concerned about their own safety at first. But it's kind of

gotten back to normal. People generally feel pretty safe about traveling and that sort of thing. Security's a little bit tighter and there are a lot more cops around. I was more concerned directly after it happened. Now it (traveling) is more of an inconvenience. I feel secure that

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Photos by Matt Van Liew



The World Trade Center buildings after the second airplane hit, but before the buildings collapsed.



After the collapse—the World Trade Center buildings, which were a little over twice as tall as World Financial Center, the three larger buildings on the left, are obviously missing from this photo.



People were ferried away from the disaster area on the boat from which Van Liew and his co-workers were conducting studies.



Matt Van Liew of Heppner shows photos he took of the Sept. 11 tragedy in New York using a digital camera.

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