

HEPPNER

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VOL. 121 NO. 3 8 Pages Wednesday, January 16, 2002 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

School board seeks applicants for board positions

The Morrow County School District is seeking applicants to fill two school board positions that were vacated when it was determined that two board members did not live in the zones from which they were elected.

Applicants must live in Zone 4 or Zone 6.

Zone 4 is described as the "area within the Heppner City limits except that area east of Cowins Street, Court Street and Highway 74, north and east from its junction with Court Street".

Zone 6 is described as the

"area in Morrow County east of a north-south line extending Paul Smith Road in Boardman, which extends from the Wheeler County line to an east-west line one mile south of Township 1S, east on that east-west line to Highway 207 and northeast on Highway 207 to Bombing Range Road and north on Bombing Range Road to Finley Buttes Road to the Umatilla County line, except for that area detailed in Zone 4". The Zone 6 area takes in the Hardman, Ruggs, North Lex, Lena, Buttercreek,

Hinton Creek, Upper Willow Creek and Sand Hollow areas.

According to the district, it is the applicant's responsibility to determine eligibility based on the legal description of the zones.

Applicants must turn in a letter of interest by 4 p.m. on Monday, February 4. Interviews will be held on Monday, February 11, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Sam Boardman Elementary School in Boardman.

New board members will be sworn in at the regular school board meeting that same evening, Monday, February 11, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Geography Bee held at HES

Questions such as: "Which continent has the world's largest known oil reserves?" (Asia) and "Which continent is crossed by every line of longitude?" (Antarctica) were asked at the Heppner Elementary School Geography Bee on Thursday, January 10.

The bee is sponsored by the National Geographic Society and held each year to encourage interest among youth in geography and people of the world.

Former Heppner teacher Al Beck served as the reader for the contest and Heppner Elementary School teacher Jannie Allen was scorekeeper. HES teacher Lindsay Harle prepared a slide show depicting children from around the globe as the song "We Are The World" played in the background.

The competition began with 13 young geographers. Nacho Elguezabal, Spencer Palmer, Logan Anthony, Ashley Wolff, Emily Thompson, Andre Rauch, Kelsey Wolff, Jordan Hatfield, Maggie Armato, Luke Young, Kate Kendrick, Eddie Ramirez and Tayler Hodges. After the preliminary round, six contestants remained. Emily,

Andre, Kelsey, Maggie, Luke, and Kate. At the end of the final round of questioning, Andre Rauch and Kelsey Wolff remained.

In the championship round, Andre became the champion by correctly answering this question, "An opera house was built in Cairo to celebrate the opening of what canal in 1869?" The answer is the Suez Canal.

Andre received a medal from the National Geographic Society and a globe bank. Andre took a written test which will determine if he moves along to the next level of the competition.

At the end of the day, all participants in the geography bee feasted on ice cream sundaes with all of the extras.

Men's breakfast scheduled

A community men's breakfast will be held on Sunday, Jan. 20, at 8 a.m. at Christian Life Center, 535 W. Morgan St., Heppner.

All men are invited to attend and "enjoy a time of fellowship and breakfast together."

Pieter Bos, an evangelist, will share a devotional.

Healys donate padded chairs to HHS gym

Heppner High School gymnasium received a new addition, thanks to the Jack Healy Memorial Fund. On January 12, Jack's wife Gwen and children, Jean, Jerry, Jim, John, and Judy, along with their children, dedicated and passed on to the Heppner High School Student Body royal blue padded "Running Mustang" folding chairs to be used on the balcony for the senior citizens of the community.

Jack Healy, who passed away in March of 2001, was a 1938 graduate of Heppner High School and an avid Mustang fan who supported his children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews and the Mustang teams for nearly 40 years. For Jack and Gwen, the best seats in the house seemed to be on the balcony. So it is only fitting that in Jack's memory his family chose to honor him with soft-padded seated chairs to be used by the senior citizens on the balcony where he so loved to be watching the Mustang teams pound the hardwood floor. You can now say "the best seats in the house are still on the balcony," says the family.



Left to right: Brent Eckman, Sarah Eckman, Diana Healy (front) and Jared Eckman, on behalf of the Jack Healy family, present padded Mustang chairs to Principal Dick Allen, representing Heppner High School.

Jack Healy passed away in March, but not before he watched his Mustangs at the State 2A boys basketball tournament. The family hopes the senior citizens

will enjoy the chairs for many years to come.

Donations and memorial funds for specific items or purchases can be established through the Heppner Booster Club.

School cuts not expected to be as severe this time around

Morrow County School Superintendent Bruce Anderson told the board at their regular meeting Monday night that the district is expected to face cuts with the projected state funding shortfall, but said that because the district took action during the last budget crisis it shouldn't see such drastic cuts as previously.

Anderson said that it was too early to determine how much money will have to be cut from the budget and where the cuts will be made. "The worst case scenario would be about a \$1 million deficit," said Anderson, "but I don't believe it will happen." "I'm not prepared to make any projections," he added. "As soon as I have better numbers I'll get them out right away."

The board announced that it will accept applications for the two vacated board positions on February 4. That day marks the end of a 30-day appeal of the circuit court decision which upheld the vacation of the board position held by Barney Lindsay because of residency issues. Applicants for board zones 4 and 6 must provide a letter of interest by 4 p.m. Monday, February 4. Interviews for the positions will be scheduled for Monday, February 11, at 5:30 p.m. and new board members will be sworn in at the regular board meeting at 7:30 p.m. that same day. The board plans to appoint the new board members from existing zones who will serve until the next election. The board earlier voted to address rezoning in April of this year.

The board heard an audit report from Bob Armstrong of Oster Professional Group, which has offices in John Day and Burns. Armstrong told the district that they found "no instances of non-compliance, no material weaknesses, no issues of internal control" and "no difficulties in dealing with management." "The district is complying with rules and regulations," he said. Armstrong told the board, however, that there is "room for improvement" in the area of tracking purchases of fixed assets, such as furniture and equipment, since government agencies will soon be required to report depreciation of fixed assets.

Nan Hall, school bond project manager with Heery International, told the board that architects will meet with staff and administrators on January 23 for a focus group meeting on the interior building details of the Heppner Elementary project. She said that a public hearing will be held at the Heppner Planning Commission on Monday, February 4, to review the conditional

use application made January 10 and the issue will also be discussed at the February 11 Heppner City Council meeting.

The Ione School bond project focus group meeting with architects, staff and administration to review interior building details has been postponed until after the Ione Advisory Committee meeting. Hall said that considering the postponement of the focus group meeting, it may be possible to let bids on new construction and then lump all the remodel projects together, to avoid delays. "It should not affect the costs," she said. However, she said that the lone project was overbudget because of estimated foundation costs, but added that they were "working on a solution" to the problem.

Hall said that traffic analyses of both the Irrigon and Boardman bond projects indicated no sign of impact at either site, except for "signage revisions".

In other business, the board: -Approved the second reading and adopted a revision to a policy requiring sports physicals every other year;

-approved the second reading and adopted a three-year maintenance plan, with a correction;

-heard of correspondence from Oregon Representative Greg Smith, R-Heppner, which apparently accused Anderson of mishandling a situation with the Oregon Legislature which, according to Anderson, Smith said ended up "costing the district \$138,000 in state funding". Board Chair Julie Weikel commented that the correspondence was confusing and suggested that it was a misunderstanding, but she neither read the correspondence out loud nor distributed it outside of the board. Anderson said that the correspondence and accusation were "related to my decision to not allow him (Smith) to distribute what I consider political material." Smith had apparently left congratulatory letters to Heppner Elementary students to be distributed at the school. The letters were taken by Heppner Elementary administration to Anderson for review. Anderson decided the letters were political in nature and did not allow them to be distributed. He declined to release the letters to the public.

-heard a report from George Murdock on the superintendent search. Murdock said that 14 people had applied for the superintendent's position. "Fourteen is a very good number," said Murdock. The district screening meeting of superintendent candidates has been set for Wednesday, January 23, at the district office beginning at 4 p.m.

-heard a report from board member John Rietmann who is on the district's negotiating team. Rietmann said that "contract negotiations are off to a good start." "We hope to have it over and done in a week or two. Both parties feel that's a possibility," he said. Rietmann said that "negotiations are the most positive that I've ever seen" and added that they appear to be easier than board zoning issues.

-accepted resignations/retirements from: Gary Olsen, Riverside High School Learning Center teacher retiring September 30; and Mike Wetherell, RHS career counselor/registrar retiring December 31.

-approved interim agreements for Olsen from September 30, 2002, through June 2003; and Wetherell from December 31, 2002, through June 2003.

-approved employment for: Howard Sheets, maintenance supervisor; Christina Wall, English as a second language educational assistant at A.C. Houghton Elementary, replacing Irma Rodriguez; Julie Steinbrueck, RHS assistant cook/food service clerical assistant, replacing Teena Strueck; and Tera Tolar, temporary special education one-on-one assistant for a special needs student at ACH.

-approved extra duty contracts for: Poul Murtha, Columbia Middle School head track coach; Judy Daniels, CMS assistant tract coach.

-approved maternity leave for Rachel Luke, ACH teacher, for February and March.

-heard the following announcements: January 21-Martin Luther King Day holiday; February 11-next regular board meeting, Sam Boardman Elementary; March 16-Oregon School Boards Association spring regional meeting at LaGrande.

BMCC offers class on 1903 Flood

Blue Mountain Community College is offering a class on the 1903 Heppner Flood on Tuesday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at Heppner High School.

The class will provide insight to the events that occurred before, during and after the flood. Personal letters and media coverage will be discussed. Also, Beijing Wang has recently translated the Chinese flood victims' headstones that remain at the Heppner Masonic Cemetery and the class will include a discussion of Wang's interpretation.

The class will be led by Marsha Sweek and Tammy Sneddon. Sweek is a historian who was the director of the Morrow County Museum for 12 years. Sneddon is also a previous Morrow County Museum employee and has designed and currently maintains Morrow County's genealogy and history website. This site, www.rootsweb.com/~ormorrow/ also includes information on the flood as well as Wang's interpretation of the Chinese headstones.

For more information or to sign up for the class, contact BMCC coordinator Anne Morte at 422-7040.

Extension office closed on MLK

The Morrow County Extension office will be closed on Monday, Jan. 21, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The office will reopen on Tuesday, Jan. 22, at 8 a.m.

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