

# Council okays \$6 million city water project

The Heppner city council Monday approved a \$6 million water system upgrade project that will take 30 years to repay.

The project will be paid for with \$1.25 million in grants and \$4.75 in loans. Water rates will be raised to pay back the loans. (See table)

The council unanimously endorsed the project but not after hearing comments from the public, city administrators and members of the council. About six members of the public were present to speak about the project.

Everyone acknowledged that the water system was deteriorating and needed to be fixed, but some questioned the size of the project and others said the new rate plan, which will begin charging some groups that have not been charged in the past, would be a hard burden.

Kim Cutsforth sits on the Willow Creek Park District board which oversees operation of the Heppner swimming pool, said the pool has never been charged for water. "We are not prepared for a full-blown water bill," she said. The pool is always working on a slim budget and she said she was not sure what the additional \$260 per month charge would do to its budget. The pool uses about one million gallons per year Cutsforth said.

Dave Pranger of the Willow Creek Little League echoed Cutsforth's concerns, saying if the little league started being charged for water to irrigate their three baseball fields in Heppner "It is going to be a tremendous burden."

"We have been trying to conserve now," Pranger said. "I don't know where the money is going to come from."

In order to get the low cost loans the city is required to charge everyone who is hooked to the city water system. This includes the pool, little league, churches and the hospital, which in the past have not been charged. Under the rules of the loan the city is also required to charge a minimum for water. The charges are necessary to repay the \$4.75 million in loans.

Breazeale said it could be possible that the city might reimburse groups like the little league for the cost of water, but that they had to put on a meter and bill them initially.

"I would support that and the city paying for that water for the good of the city," said Heppner resident Jerry Healy.

After approving the project Monday, the council said it would reserve the right to "tweak" the water rates.

The only opposition voiced about the project was questioning the need for another one million gallon reservoir to hold water for the city.

Randy Lott said that while he approved of the need for fixing Heppner's old and deteriorating water system, he did not see the need for the new storage tank, estimated to cost \$1.1 million.

City officials said the storage was needed because of the configuration of the current water tanks, and to make sure that there would be enough water to fight a major fire on a dry summer day. "Our main reservoir drained in seven hours," said city manager Jerry Breazeale. "If we have a fire in the summer we will not have the capacity." He also pointed out that if the \$1.1 million storage tank were cut from the project it would not lower the loan amount local people would be required to repay. He said the project grants would be cut first and local water users would still have the same debt to repay.

Council member Judy Buschke also questioned the need for the large new storage tank. Public works director Craig Canham said it does not cost much more to build a one million gallon tank as opposed to a 500,000-gallon storage tank.

Dave Campbell of Heppner spoke in favor of the project. "Our water system has problems," he told the council. "Our water lines are a mess. We are going to have to spend some dollars. We have to support this. This is your prime responsibility to take care of the infrastructure. This is a good deal. We are not going to find a better deal," Campbell added.

After the council approved the new water project, Breazeale said the engineering would take about one year, and then another two years to complete construction of the new water system.

In other business the council reviewed bids to put a new

heating and cooling system in the city manager's office (the former police dept. office) but decided to wait before making a decision. A master plan for remodeling of city hall is currently in the works and the council was concerned that the

heating system would not match the remodeled offices.

Heard a report that Dave Fowler had been appointed to the city planning commission.

Heard that a Heppner house the city is buying for \$1

plus other expenses from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) may

need an additional \$1,500 in repairs before it can be sold to a buyer. The city has a buyer for the property located on Gilmore St.

## CITY OF HEPPNER PROPOSED WATER RATES FOR 2003-2004

Residential, Commercial, and Minimum for 0 - 2,000 gallons	\$ 8.75
2,000 - 3,750 gallons	\$17.50
3,750 - 5,625 gallons	\$26.25
5,625 to 7,500 gallons	\$35.10 plus \$.90/1000 gallons over 7,500 gallons

• Multiple dwelling units shall be charged \$35.10 plus \$8.75 for each additional dwelling unit over one, plus \$.90/1000 gallons over 7,500 gallons plus 2,000 for each separate dwelling unit.

• Commercial shall be charged \$35.10 plus \$8.75 for each business under a separate name using the same meter, plus \$.90/1000 gallons over 7,500 gallons plus 2,000 gallons for each additional separate business.

• Residential, Business, and Industrial Services outside city limits Will be charged a Right of Service Fee of \$20.00 per service in addition to the charges listed above. This "Right of Service Fee" is not part of the water rates which are evenly applied to all customers.

## Arts and Crafts Sale to be held during St. Pat's celebration

An Arts and Crafts Sale will be held during the St. Pat's Celebration, Friday, March 14, from 12-4 p.m. and Saturday, March 15, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., at Les Schwab Tire Center in Heppner. Local artist and craftsmen will be featured with their works.

One such person is professional artist Sandra Gaynes. She will be available with her scratchboard western art and animals, along with pencil and oil paintings. Gaynes has recently come back from the Western Art Show in Spokane, WA, and will soon be opening a framing business.

Lynne Uitto has her beautiful cross stitch all framed and ready to hang in your home. While husband Irv will be displaying his woodwork, including small folding tables and jewelry and other boxes.

Mary Ella Johnson has a special accent for your

home with her crocheted cotton and wool rugs of various sizes.

Two talented people in household crafts can be found in Betty Christman and Lorene Montgomery. Their work done in decorative wood and various materials will decorate your home with a country craft flair.

Molly Day has framed her painted feathers and has them ready to hang in your home. She will also have other artwork done in acrylics and pencil.

The Mural Society will also be at the sale with prints of the Mural of Railroad and Sheep in Morrow County. See Louie and Betty Carlson, Doris Bronson, or Bob and Sharon Harrison for more information.

Stop by Friday and Saturday and see these local artist and craftsmen of Morrow County.

## Filing deadline for elected school board positions nearing

The deadline for filing for elected positions for the Morrow County School Board is March 20.

Five school board positions are up for election: Position One currently held by Gary Frederickson, Boardman; Position Three, held by John Rietmann, Ione; Position Four held by Larry Mills, Heppner, who was appointed; Position Five, held by Pat McNamee, Irrigon; and Position Six, held by Burke O'Brien, Heppner, who was also appointed.

According to the Morrow County Clerk's Office as of Tuesday, March 11, John Kilkenny of Heppner has filed for Position Three and Barney Lindsay, a former board member from the Lexington area, has filed for Position Six. School board members are no longer elected by zone, but by at-large positions.

## Magazine sales raise money for HES



Mrs. Dowdy's fifth and sixth grade class



Mrs. Haguewood's fourth grade class

From Feb. 18 through March 4, students in grades four, five and six at Heppner Elementary School worked to raise money for special programs at their school. The magazine sale began in 2000, and has grown each year with support of the parents and community.

The grand total for 2003 was \$12,064.00. Chairperson Patti Rill reports, "We get to keep 40 percent of the money here at HES, so this is a very important fundraiser for our kids." The money raised will be used for outdoor school, class field trips, assemblies, Artist and Education, and other special classroom activities.

Students were rewarded with prizes for the

number of subscriptions they sold. The top seller in each classroom was: Mrs. Gibbs: Tori Lankford; Mrs. Haguewood: Willie Gentry; Mrs. Allen: Joe Pranger; Mrs. Smith-Griffith: Tomas Elguezabal; and Mrs. Dowdy: Kasey Wilson. The class that earned the most money also earned an ice cream feed. Mrs. Dowdy's class and Mrs. Haguewood's class both received ice cream sundaes for their efforts, as their final numbers were so close.

HES's students and staff certainly appreciate the support of the community on this project. "Creative ways will continue to be used to keep those valuable programs which our students enjoy so much," said an HES staff member.

## St. Patrick's Committee donates fountain

All Irish families are invited to attend the dedication of the drinking fountain in memory of the early Irish settlers at the corner of Willow and Main on Friday, March 14, at 4 p.m.

The committee has been saving for the fountain for a number of years. Donations have been given over the years toward the annual event from individuals. In the beginning, the entire celebration was funded because Jim Farley had a gift of blarney. Many, like Ebb Hughes, would say, "here, give this to Farley; he'll be looking for me anyway."

Then, with the passing of Ilene Kilkenny Laughlin, Herb McLaughlin, John Barrick and Bill Healy, came memorial donations. Plans

## McElligott named to Gonzaga President's List

Jacob McElligott, a senior from Ione, was among the 713 students named to the Gonzaga University President's List for fall semester. Students must earn a 3.7 grade point average or better to be listed.

Gonzaga is an

## Happy St. Patrick's Day!

We will be open until 7 p.m. on Friday, March 14  
**SUPPORT THE AUCTION AT THE ELKS CLUB AT 7 P.M.!**

We will open at 8 a.m. on Saturday, March 15

COME IN AND SEE ALL THE "GREENS" Beautiful shamrock plants and St. Pat's arrangements

Irish Ornaments NOW

Irish Creme Latte or Mocha and Try the Kiwi Lime Amalfil

20% OFF

New Sweatshirts with 2003 St. Pat's design!

**Murray's Drug**

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217 North Main • Heppner  
676-9158  
Serving Heppner, Lexington & Ione

233 N. Main • Heppner  
676-9426

## Judy's Therapeutic Massage

has moved to 280 S. Main

(at Hair Expressions, Heppner)

Call for Appointment:

Temp. Business phone: 676-5271

Home phone: 676-9962

Judy Durkee-Norris, LMT Lic. No. 5226

## HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!

Celebrate St. Patrick's Weekend

at John's Other Place with

Barbecue Ribs, Brisket, and Chicken

ALL DAY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

**JOHN'S OTHER PLACE**

Main Street, Heppner