

Eastern Oregon comes unwired

The "Watermelon Capital of the World" is now one gigantic High Tech WiFi sweet spot.

Phase I of the largest region-wide wireless broadband digital communications (WiFi) system in the U.S. will be activated Feb. 5 in "wire cutting" ceremonies to be held in Boardman and Hermiston. Congressman Greg Walden (R-OR), EZ Wireless CEO Fred Ziari and other dignitaries will begin the "unwiring" of the 600 square mile wireless network at 12:30 p.m. at the Port of Morrow headquarters in Boardman. Several federal, state and local public officials, Homeland Security and emergency management personnel and global technology company executives will also be a part of the festivities.

The system is being developed through a unique joint public/private partnership with EZ Wireless, LLC, a global leader in application development, design and engineering for broadband wireless and mobile emergency management solutions and the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) being administered by the Morrow County Office of Emergency Management.

"Access to secure 'real time' data for emergency responders that are mobile has historically been difficult and expensive. We were asked by CSEPP to address this challenge and we were able to solve it," says EZ Wireless President Fred Ziari. "We developed a unique, highly secure 256-bit encrypted approach using wireless broadband that gave the emergency management people the capability they had, until now, only dreamed of. The big difference with our broadband wireless is we can cover a whole city or an entire region, not just a building or a city block. That means one can stay connected while walking or driving around town."

Judge Terry Tallman, Chairman of the Morrow County Commissioners adds, "But, the really exciting by-product was the creation of the nation's largest 'hot spot' that opens exciting opportunities for other agencies, businesses and consumers using universal wireless access to high speed internet connections."

A new sophisticated system called, Incident Response Information System (IRIS) will also be unveiled at the wire cutting ceremonies. IRIS allows first responders and emergency management personnel to have accurate

mobile information in real time as they respond to any emergency. "This exciting wire cutting not only allows our rural region to leap-frog the 'digital divide,' it proves that when working together in a public/private partnership, government can be an innovator," said Casey Beard, Director of Morrow County Emergency Management and the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP).

Congressman Walden and the other dignitaries will be shown a mobile demonstration of the high-speed broadband wireless (WiFi) internet connection capabilities. While driving around Boardman (and later in Hermiston) they will be able, from any location in the city, to get a wireless connection to the internet that is about 5 to 10 times faster than a normal T1 or DSL connection.

Officials will then visit the Hermiston Safety Center before arriving for a reception at the Hermiston Community Center. Hermiston Chief of Police Dan Coulombe has expanded the wireless capabilities of the CSEPP system to include intelligent traffic control applications and improved efficiencies for the deployment and paperwork challenges of his officers. He will demonstrate the local Hermiston "smart policing" capabilities to Congressman Walden and the other dignitaries before they go to the Hermiston Community Center for a follow-up "unwiring" celebration with Hermiston Mayor Bob Severson and Hermiston City Manager Ed Brookshier scheduled for 3 p.m.

"This kind of unique opportunity for our rural communities to be the first in the nation to have universal high speed wireless access to the internet is analogous to the first city to get telephones or electricity or even running water," Rod Davis, Hermiston Chamber of Commerce Manager said.

When completed, Phase I will encompass a geographical area more than four times the area of Portland, OR and six times larger than the City of Seattle. The 600+square mile "cloud" will feature broadband wireless communications technologies (WiFi) for emergency services, public safety, transportation and economic development for the region. The project includes parts of Oregon and Washington; four counties, and, seven entire cities. Phase II, planned for the summer of 2004 will cover an additional seven cities in Eastern Oregon.

WiFi, GPS and digital security experts such as,

Chameleon, Trimble and YDI Wireless were part of the technology team of EZ Wireless in the development of the hardware and software of the Wi-Fi system. Representatives from many of the companies will be on hand at the reception at the Hermiston Community Center.

Other attendees to the day's activities will include officials from FEMA's Region Ten, U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers, Oregon's Office of Emergency Management, Oregon State Police, Oregon Department of Transportation, Oregon State senators and representatives, area county commissioners and mayors, high tech industry representatives and many local civic and business leaders. IRZ Consulting, Inc. and its subsidiary, EZ Wireless, LLC are leaders in the engineering and installation of secure broadband wireless systems for Emergency Management and Homeland Security. IRZ has been involved in cutting edge digital communications, GPS and information technologies for nearly two decades. In addition to the completed design and installation of the CSEPP network, IRZ and EZ Wireless are working with several agencies and municipalities in designing and developing secure broadband wireless communications systems for first responders and emergency personnel as well as businesses and consumers.

Early studies of emergency preparedness of the communities near the eight chemical agent stockpile sites, including the Umatilla Chemical Depot in Hermiston, showed the need to improve existing emergency plans, training, equipment and facilities. The purpose of the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) is to improve the emergency response capabilities of communities that surround the chemical stockpiles. CSEPP recognizes that each community has its own particular needs for emergency preparedness. Emergency services, for the communities surrounding the Umatilla Chemical Depot, are provided by local fire and police departments; who train annually to test their response capabilities. The IRIS was developed with these emergency responders in mind. Ensuring their safety was the impetus. With a handheld RECON, first responders are able to view the "risk envelope" in relation to their location, via global positioning systems (GPS), and to retrieve, collect and send data from the field. WiFi has

allowed the IRIS to work in the field, building confidence and ensuring the safety of our first responders.

Sheriff's Report

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) reports handling the following business:

Sept. 10: MCSO received a report of an audible intrusion alarm at Bigfoot Industries in Boardman. The alarm was cancelled.

-MCSO received a report of a residential burglary alarm in Boardman. A deputy determined that no one was home and the building was secure. A neighbor advised the homeowner left just prior to the deputy's arrival.

-MCSO received a request for a deputy contact from the Morrow County Road Dept. regarding the dumping of dead animals.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Boardman that someone entered her property last night and left a gate open. Her vehicle had also been entered and the door left ajar. An extra patrol in the area was requested.

-MCSO received a relayed report from the Oregon State Police of a motor vehicle accident on Highway 730 east of Irrigon. It was a non-injury, non-blocking accident. A tow truck was requested to remove the vehicle from the ditch.

-MCSO received a request for a deputy contact from a caller in Ione regarding the theft of an air compressor.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Irrigon that her parents were fighting.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Boardman that a vehicle rolled over on Tower Road on Boeing property earlier in the day. There were no subjects in the vehicle or in the area.

-MCSO deputy arrested Curtis Ray Perkins, 32, on a Morrow County warrant for No Angling License.

-MCSO received a request from a caller in Ione for a welfare check on a subject and his horses. The caller had not seen him in several days. It was determined all was okay.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Ione of a male subject driving very fast on Main Street in Ione. A warning was given to the subject.

-MCSO received a report that Ross C. Van Eetta, 22, was arrested on a Morrow County warrant for Failure to Appear/Unauthorized Use of

a Motor Vehicle. He was already lodged at the Umatilla County Jail.

-MCSO received a report from a caller that she thought a male subject was at a farm in Boardman.

-MCSO received a report of a panic alarm at Gregg's Tavern in Irrigon. The owner called and advised it was a false alarm.

-MCSO received a request for a deputy at Huwe's in Irrigon for an unwanted male subject bothering customers.

-MCSO received a report from the Umatilla Police Dept. that Robert Brehm, 32, was arrested on an Irrigon Justice Court warrant for Forgery II and Failure to Appear/Driving while License Suspended. He was lodged at the Umatilla County Jail on local charges with a hold placed for the warrants.

Sept. 11: MCSO received a request from Intertribal for a deputy to check an Intertribal building on Tower Road. There was a report of an alarm sounding. The building was secure.

-MCSO received a report from a caller of a release violation. The caller's husband went to her residence in Boardman and gotten his car while she was at work.

-MCSO received a report from a caller who found one of his sheep dead in a field in Irrigon; it was possibly a dog attack.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Boardman that a male subject had been leaving threatening messages on the caller's mother's phone.

-MCSO deputy cited Dianna Garcilazo, 46, for Careless Driving.

-MCSO, Heppner ambulance, Lexington EMTs received a request for an ambulance from a caller at the MCGG convenience store in Lexington for a 60-year-old female who had fallen. The patient was transported to Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Irrigon that someone shot through his window yesterday.

-MCSO received a request for a deputy at the Irrigon Justice Court to contact a citizen at the location.

-MCSO received a request for assistance from a caller whose vehicle's electronic doors would not close. A Chrysler dealer would contact the caller.

-MCSO received a request for deputy contact from a caller in Heppner regarding her neighbor's dog.

-MCSO, Irrigon ambulance received a request for an ambulance from a caller in Irrigon who was feeling ill.

-MCSO, Boardman Police Dept. received a request for an officer contact regarding a theft.

-MCSO deputy cited Lazaro Rodriguez-Rivera, 41, for Violation of the Basic Rule, 73 mph in a 55 mph zone.

-MCSO deputy reported he found a bicycle at the Irrigon Sentry Market.

-MCSO, Boardman Police Dept. received a report from a caller that her husband

was at a location in Boardman, in violation of his conditional release agreement. Juan Artemio Martinez, 37, was arrested for Violation of Conditional Release Agreement and lodged at the Umatilla County Jail.

Sept. 13: MCSO deputy cited Joseph Lorin LaChappelle, 47, for Driving while License Suspended Violation, Violation of the Basic Rule, 72 mph in a 55 mph zone and Driving Uninsured. The vehicle was impounded.

-MCSO deputy cited a juvenile for Curfew Violation.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Heppner that the neighbor's dog was on her porch. It was an on-going problem.

-MCSO deputy arrested Christopher A. Buffo, 18, on an Irrigon Justice Court warrant for Failure to Appear/Criminal Mischief II. The juvenile was cited and released.

-MCSO deputies cited Keith Axtell, 34, for No Insurance. The vehicle was impounded.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Pendleton that her daughter was going to Bull Prairie and was going to call from Anson Wright Park, but hadn't called yet. The subject was located at Bull Prairie.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Ione that a male subject went past her residence and left after he saw her. The subject was to be given a stalking order when seen again. The caller will call back if the subject returned.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Boardman who had a door taken off an RV. It was unknown when it occurred or who took the door.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Boardman of a theft of a bicycle.

-MCSO received a report that Action Towing sold 10 vehicles for auction or salvage.

-MCSO received a request for a deputy contact in Irrigon regarding an unwanted male subject at a location in Irrigon. The subject was also involved in a disturbance a few days ago.

-MCSO received a report of an audible burglar alarm at a residence in Boardman.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Heppner that he found a scooter in some weeds near his residence.

-MCSO received a report from UCSO that Holly H. Mack, 32, was arrested on a Morrow County Circuit Court warrant for Failure to Appear/Possession of a Controlled Substance II, on a UCSO warrant and a warrant out of Multnomah County. She was lodged at the Umatilla County Jail with a hold placed for Morrow County.

-MCSO, Heppner and Ione Fire depts. received a relayed report of a fire from a caller in Ione. About 30 minutes later, it was advised the fire was contained and Heppner mutual aid could stand down.

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