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HEPPNER

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Terrace residents enjoy tea party



Residents at Willow Creek Terrace in Heppner were treated Wednesday, April 6 to a tea party given by the Red Hat Society ladies. The gathering room at the Terrace was filled with ladies in red and purple hats and the "gents" were invited as well.

New auto body/custom painting business opens in Heppner



Kirk Looslie, with a car he is performing a complete paint job on.

Kirk Looslie of Lexington has recently opened Looslie's Auto Body and Custom Painting in Heppner. Looslie previously worked with his father at Lexington Auto Body and has grown up around the business. He has also worked at several other auto body shops, gaining experience along the way.

Looslie does custom

cars, complete paint jobs and insurance work. He also has painted customized snowmobiles and enjoys jobs on old cars and Mustangs.

By summer, Looslie plans on adding a paint booth to his operation. The paint booth will be a "clean" room set aside for painting.

Looslie has also worked with Mike Hann, who has helped him with

custom lettering for his signage and in creating Looslie's recent float in the St. Patrick's Day parade.

Looslie's shop is located at 235 Linden Way, across from Green Feed and Seed. For more information or to set up an appointment with Looslie, call 676-5280.

Local group tours glue-lam plant looking at Heppner



(Left to right) Morrow County Commissioner Ray Grace, plant manager Mike Kinkae, Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Vice President Nancy Snider and Bank of Eastern Oregon President George Koffler look over newly opened glue-lam plant in Molalla.

A contingent from Morrow County, interested in helping open a glue-lam plant in Heppner, toured a similar operation Tuesday that recently opened in Molalla. The plant is owned by a company named Savannah Pacific.

Traveling to Molalla Tuesday were representa-

tives of the county, Port of Morrow, Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group, the city of Heppner and private businesses.

The tour of the plant showed how large glue laminated beams are made out of 2X4s. The company is hoping to start the Heppner op-

eration at the industrial park by the end of this year to fill a high demand for its product. The company has been meeting with local officials to work out financing plans to bring in the plant which could employ up to 40 or more people.

More photos and information in next week's Gazette-Times.

City of Irrigon wastewater treatment change could cost school district

A city of Irrigon waste water treatment project may end up costing the Morrow County School District as much as \$100,000, according to Keith White, city of Irrigon public works superintendent. White spoke to the school board at their regular meeting in Heppner Monday night.

White said that the city is in the process of changing from a septic system, in which solids are stored in septic tanks and "gray water" is released, to a gravity system, which accepts both solids and liquids. According to White, under the city's waste water facility plan, 90 percent of new connections in the city should be made to the new gravity system in order to keep a biological balance for treatment, as per the DEQ.

Because the school district plans to build a new 9,000 square foot agriculture/shop building at the Irrigon Junior/Senior High School, the school would have to be hooked up to the new system. This would entail installing pipe to connect the school to the gravity sewer that is approximately 2000 feet away, which could result in a substantial cost to the district. White said that if the city allowed the school district to hook onto the old effluent system, the city would compromise its DEQ permit. "Irrigon has no plans to stop or diffuse plans for the ag building," he said. "We want to see you build that to its fullest potential." He added that the city of Irrigon and the Morrow County School District will have to work together to resolve the issue.

White also said that some of the residential users in the area will share costs with the school district. Board member Pat McNamee, Irrigon, suggested that installation of the pipe required could be done by volunteer labor to cut costs for the district.

MCSO Superintendent Mark Burrows said that the building plans for the

"professional/technical/education" building have been completed and bids for construction will go out this week. He said that bids will be open for three weeks with building planned to get underway before the end of May.

Also at the meeting, Burrows announced that the Heppner Schools principal interview process is underway, with interviews scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this week. The public is invited to attend. Current Heppner Principal Wade Smith has accepted a position as assistant superintendent for the district.

In other business, the board:

-heard a presentation from Smith concerning a newly implemented work order system to expedite repairs district-wide. The system involves e-mail notification and on-site maintenance workers, which should improve response time.

-heard a request from a citizen to change the district's policy on rehiring retired PERS employees. Board Chair John Renfro said that the district does not prohibit rehiring retired PERS employees, if they were the best qualified for the job.

-heard from Burrows that increases in PERS (employees retirement plan) could skyrocket, dramatically affecting the district's budget. According to Burrows, PERS costs amount to 11.1 percent currently. PERS costs will rise to approximately 14.7 percent the coming year; and could go as high as 19 or 20 percent. Burrows said that Deputy Clerk Rhonda Lorenz estimates that every time PERS increases one percent, it costs the district approximately \$100,000.

-heard from Burrows that schools statewide are expected to be funded at \$5.175 billion, which is good news for the district, because its budget was built on \$5 billion for statewide education. Burrows said the in-

crease could yield the district in the neighborhood of an additional \$300,000.

-learned from board secretary Julie Ashbeck that the new electronic board packet system should be in effect by the next meeting. The move from paper to an electronic system could save the district \$3000 to \$4000 annual.

-thanked state Representative Greg Smith for inviting the state House Committee on Elections to meet in Heppner last week. A dinner following the session was hosted by the Lindsay and Murray families and the school district.

-learned that the East Oregon will no longer cover MCSO meetings, unless a significant issue is to be discussed and the board requests the EO to attend.

-discussed eliminating some meetings in order to reduce the number board members are required to attend, perhaps combining the Site Council and CEC meetings. The Heppner CEC meetings have had difficulty in achieving a quorum.

-adopted a resolution to adopt public contracting procedures to conform to state regulations.

-approved the assistant superintendent's contract.

-approved the first reading of the district's alternative education diploma, which, according to Renfro, is "not all that different" from the requirements for the regular diploma.

-approved resignations for: Jill Sabo, A.C. Houghton Elementary School counselor; Kristi McNamee, ACH special education one-on-one assistant; Tiffanie Greenup, Morrow Education Center ed assistant.

-approved transfers/promotions for: Dan VanLiew, from Heppner High School assistant custodian to Heppner-Lexington facilities coordinator; Elaine Miller,

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