

Track renovation project moves forward



Pavers work at laying asphalt at the new Heppner High School track.

Renovations on the Heppner High School track continue to progress as pavers laid asphalt down on the track last Friday, May 6. Once the paving is finished, the track will need a rubberized coating and stripping for lane designation. The final stage of the renovations is estimated to cost \$35,000.

Through cash and in-kind donations, the school has raised between \$40-50,000 for the project and has received \$75,000 from Morrow County School District, said HHS principal Wade Smith. Those that have been instrumental in the project include Bailey Heavy Equipment, Roger Britt and Jerry Gentry.

To help in the project, the track teams have held numerous fund raisers. The junior high team

recently held a car wash and pop can drive and raised nearly \$2000, said head coach Susan Hisler. The team is still collecting pop cans for those interested in donating them.

Retaining wall bricks are also being sold at \$35 a piece. Donators' names will be engraved on the bricks.

Another fund raising project is the "Adopt a Lane" program. Any individual or group may purchase one of the lanes of the track for \$5000. The school still has three lanes left to sell. There are several possibilities for lane recognition, with ideas such as having the sponsors name on the track rather than the regular numbers, along with a large sign designating the lane and its sponsor(s) or just having a sign.

The school is also collecting Red Apple receipts to help raise money. A donation can for the receipts has been placed at HHS.

In addition to the numerous fund raisers, Smith has submitted grants for the HHS project. Grant applications have been submitted to organizations such as the Bowerman Grant (sponsored by the Nike Corporation), Ford Family Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust and Wildhorse Foundation. As of yet, no word has been received on the acceptance or rejection of these grants.

For more information on the projects or fund raisers, you may contact track coaches Dale Conklin or Susan Hisler at HHS by calling 676-9138.

Heppner City Council votes to re-write parking space law

The Heppner city council voted Monday to re-write the law governing the number of parking spaces required of downtown businesses.

Review of the parking space law was sparked by Hayden Family Dentistry being required to have nine parking spaces in downtown Heppner. Hayden who is remodeling and moving into the former Shoe Box building, had objected to what it felt was an excessive amount of required parking spots. Hayden's dentist office is presently located in the back of city hall.

Hayden's application for a building permit to turn the former shoe store into a dentist office triggered the requirement for more parking. Existing buildings downtown are not required to follow such stringent parking requirements, explained City Manager Jerry Breazeale.

Since Hayden does not at this time have extra land for parking, the business asked for and was granted a public hearing May 2 before the city planning commission. At the hearing Hayden asked for a variance waiver to reduce the parking requirement from nine to three spaces.

At its meeting last Monday the planning

commission had extensive discussion on the variance request and in the end voted to grant a variance that would reduce the needed parking spaces to eight. With three spaces available on the street the Haydens were told that under the existing ordinance they would have to come up with an additional five spaces.

At its meeting Monday the council held a long discussion about the parking ordinance.

"We need to back up," said councilmember George Koffler. "These people are spending one hundred and fifty to two hundred thousand dollars (to remodel the Shoe Box building) and I don't think you find anyone who thinks they need eight to nine parking spaces to do their business," he said. "We need to help people develop business in town."

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Court hires new executive secretary

Karen Wolff was chosen as the new executive secretary to the county court and the county personnel director. A s executive secretary she will be assisting the three county commissioners, specifically Judge Terry Tallman. As personnel director she will be in charge of recruitment and hiring for county jobs and as well assisting department heads in personnel matters.

Wolff had been working as the administrative assistant to the public works director for

Morrow County. However, when the opportunity for the job change presented itself she decided to venture out. "I am delighted that they picked me," said Wolff. "There were many qualified applicants."

Wolff said that there are still many things she needs to learn in her new job, but that she has an understanding of the county philosophy, which should help her. With her prior county experience, she says she knows that keeping what's right for the county in mind is the key.

Wolff also said that her children, Kelsey and Ashley, students at Heppner Junior/Senior High, are excited to have mom in Heppner. Wolff's husband, Tom, works for Columbia Basin Electric Co-Op.



Karen Wolff

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MCSO could be affected by proposed Boardman urban renewal plan

The Morrow County School Board has learned that an urban renewal plan for the city of Boardman, if approved, will cause a loss of around \$24,000 to the school district. MCSO Superintendent Mark Burrows said that he believed the district would not be adversely affected because the state school fund would fill in the loss. Other local districts will also lose tax monies. A hearing on the urban renewal plan has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 17. (See related story p. 2.)

In a separate matter, Burrows called attention to a story published in The

Oregonian, which, in effect, claimed that Morrow County schools are "stealing from Portland," said Burrows. The Oregonian story said that Portland taxpayers are subsidizing Morrow County and other rural schools. Morrow County was listed as one of the top five receiving extra funds from Portland to operate its schools. Ironically, Measure Five, which changed school funding from districts' dependence on local taxes to statewide funding to equalize per capita student spending, did not pass in Morrow County. It did,

however, pass in the Portland area.

A similar situation occurred several years ago within the Morrow County School District, when people in the north end of the county charged that north end taxpayers were subsidizing schools in south Morrow County. The district then switched to a system where each school's expenditures are tied to that particular school's income, based on student population and state school support. The board, however, ultimately took into consideration that each

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Ione music program considered a success

By the Ione Journalism Club

The Ione Music program is considered a success even before the first year is complete. Teacher, Michelle Stone, is funded half-time by the Ione Education Foundation, which considers their grant one of the best things they have done so far for the Ione Community School. The Ione program serves students in grades K-12 and includes guitar and chorus instruction. "The #1 reason this program is so great is because of Michelle," comments Bryn Browning, Ione

Schools superintendent/principal, "she is full of energy, talent and creativity which is contagious to the children." Daily you can find local musicians volunteering their time with individual students or tweaking the donated sound system. Each instructional class consists of musicians, soloists, or group pieces.

To date the students have given performances at school board meetings, the Christmas concert, Willow



Students prepare for "We Sing of America" spring concert.

Creek Assisted Living, Umatilla-Morrow ESD Arts and Culture Fair, football and basketball games and pep assemblies. Individual students performed at the Ione Idol talent show in March, which raised money for new stage curtains. Most recently the high school guitar and chorus performed at Inside Ione for parents and community members.

You can catch the next act for the music program at their "We Sing of America" spring concert, on

May 25 at 7 p.m. in the Ione High School gym. This is a tribute to all veterans and active military personnel, who will be given tokens of appreciation from the students. Local heroes including fire, hospital, ambulance, police and search and rescue personnel will be recognized as well. Students have prepared a slide show presentation, poems and personal tributes to their heroes. Please wear your uniform or red, white and blue to celebrate our country.

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