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Is there a problem?

Council grapples with stray cat question

The Heppner City Council Monday again addressed the problem of feral, or wild cats, running loose in the city.

The council discussed the problem last month when sheriff deputy Randy Rayburn said he had received citizen complaints but told the council he would need an ordinance if he were to deal with reported stray cat problems. The council took no action but again discussed the problem after receiving a letter from Heppner resident John Edmundson who wrote: "At our residence on North Gilmore St. we have frequent invasions of our deck by neighborhood cats. They occupy our deck furniture and leave lots of cat hair on the furniture. We are also subject to frequent cat defecations on our lawn and flower beds. I urge you to address the stray cat problem," Edmundson wrote.

He suggested that the council "consider a licensing requirement for household pet cats in the city, accompanied by a procedure for trapping, marking and disposing of repeat offenders."

The council took no action with several council members saying they might consider action if there is a "hue and cry" from the public or if the problem seems to reach "critical mass."

Long time Heppner resident Jerry Healy told the council there has been "a cat problem in Heppner for 30 years." While he did not ask the council to act he did say there are many stray cats on Hagar Street where he lives. "The council will monitor the situation," council member George Koffler said.

In other business, the council heard from Bill Ferguson of Ferguson Engineering who said the water project should be wrapped up by the end of the month. He said Moore Excavating is going around the city finishing up little things on the project as well as the work on Baltimore Street. He said some repair work had to be done on Balm Fork Bridge where the water line was strung under the bridge, but by the "end of the month we should be out of here." He said Heppner had received a "good product" with the water line replacement project and that the project was on budget.

The council also talked about painting the newly paved Riverside Street. Much discussion was held on where to put the center line on the road. Placing the line on the crown of the road would change the nature in which some residents along the road have been parking. Some on the council urged not to have the road stripped, or painted, but eventually the council voted 4-2 to move ahead with a center line and fog lines being painted on Riverside Street.

The council heard a report from Judy Buschke of the housing authority that runs the St. Patrick's Senior Center, that there were 54 at last week's Wednesday lunch. There had been some personnel problems concerning the senior lunch, but "that is a good number," Buschke said. She also reported that there were five vacancies at the center with one person possibly moving in soon.

Ione restaurant re-opens with new name

Taylor's restaurant owners Roy Taylor and Carol Taylor (right) with Karan Piening.

Ione's former Beecher's restaurant re-opened in August with new owners and a new name.

The business is now named Taylor's Restaurant and is owned by Roy and Carol Taylor. The couple bought the restaurant in April of 2004 and have been doing extensive remodeling to get it ready for opening.

Hours of the restaurant are 7a.m. to 9p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. The lounge is open until 2:30 a.m. They are closed Monday.

Taylors is offering barbeque Friday and Saturday outside and "we have good food and good atmosphere," says Roy.

One interesting aspect of the restaurant is that the old hardwood floor of the Heppner Grade School gym was purchased and installed as the Taylor's restaurant and lounge floor.

District has fewer students than expected

Morrow County School District Superintendent Mark Burrows told the board, at their regular meeting Monday night at Heppner High School, that the district's student population is down around 50 less students than anticipated.

Burrows said that the student population at Sam Boardman Elementary is down, after consistently growing for several years. He also said that the alternative education program attendance is also down, but added that later growth is typical and expected.

According to enrollment figures on Sept. 12: Heppner Elementary School (kindergarten though sixth grade) reported enrollment of 193 students; Heppner High School (seventh through 12th) had an enrollment of 232; Sam Boardman Elementary (k-fourth), 424; Windy River Elementary (fifth-sixth), Boardman, 154; Riverside High School (seventh-12th), 458; A.C. Houghton Elementary (pre-k-fourth), Irrigon, 333; Irrigon Elementary (fifth-sixth), 133; Irrigon High School, (seventh-12th), 296; district total, 2239.

Actual attendance on Sept. 12 was somewhat lower: HES-190; HHS-224; SBE-400; WRE-149; RHS-450; ACH-311; IES-131; IHS-259; district total-2140.

Burrows also commented on the impact the increased cost of gasoline has on the district. He said the district burns about 38,000 gallons of gasoline a year, which amounts to a cost increase of around $36,000 per year over last year. The district, however, is reimbursed by the state for transportation costs at a rate of around 70 percent. He said that the main concern is the affect increased gasoline costs will have on state funding.

Burrows also discussed recruiting and retaining quality staff; partnering with Blue Mountain Community College to provide advanced placement classes for MCSD students; and setting policy

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ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

Cycle Oregon stops for lunch in Ione

An Ione volunteer serves up lunch to Cyle Oregon participant

Bike rider signs the Yikes Bikes! wall in Ione. Riders came from all over the USA

Cycle Oregon brought 1600 bicyclists through the streets of Ione on Saturday, Sept. 10. The stopover in Ione was the first lunch break of the eight-day ride. Participants from all over the world and the U.S. began in Boardman and are following a trail that takes them to Condon, The Dalles, Corbett, Champoeg State Park, Vernonia and ends in Astoria on Sept. 17.

While in Ione, cyclists also had a chance to visit with local residents and sign the hardware store wall to show where they were from. According to Anne Morter, lunch coordinator, cyclists were from places such as Ireland, England, Sweden, Germany, Canada, and most of the states, including Hawaii.

The ride this year was slightly undersold, with only 1600 tickets sold, while Cycle Oregon has the ability to accommodate 2000 cyclists. At their daily "final" stopping points, cyclists have the chance to enjoy hot showers, massage, yoga, cold microbrews and Oregon wines and live entertainment. They are also fully supported along the route with state police escorts on motorcycles and two support wagons.

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