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Heppner Day Care begins school year with new outlook and new staff

Day Care board (Back Row L-R): Merry Brannon, Tiffany McCurry, Nikki Coe and Nicole Mahoney; (Front Row L-R): Cari Scrivner and Brandi Sweeney. Not pictured: Ruth Shaw.

New Year, New Start, New Opportunities... is the slogan of the Heppner Day Care and Preschool this year. A new staff, along with Merry Brannon, and a new board of directors give a fresh outlook for the future of the Day Care.

Brannon is staying on as the director of the facility. Brannon has been with the Day Care for eight years. "I am really excited that Merry has decided to continue as Director, she has a lot of experience and the kids love her," said Day Care board member Cari Scrivner.

Day Care employees: (L-R): Merry Brannon, Lela McDaniel, Cyde Coil, Autumn Morgan

The new head teacher at the preschool/day care is Lela McDaniel. McDaniel completed her degree in early childhood education this spring at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton. "We are grateful to have her on staff this year and she is really eager to take part in curriculum and working with the children," stated Tiffany McCurry, board secretary. Also new to the staff is Autumn Morgan. Morgan and her husband Troy, the new math teacher at Heppner High School, moved to the area from Florida. She had been working in the school system in Florida for the last couple of years and wanted to find a job where she would be able continue working with youth. Cyde Coil, a junior at Heppner High School, will be at the center after school and on Fridays as an aide. She will also be assisting with preschool as part of a work-study program through the high school. The board is really excited to have Coil on their team; she brings a lot of babysitting experience to the job.

An all new volunteer board was created this spring, consisting of Nicole Mahoney, President; Brandi Sweeney, Vice President; Tiffany McCurry, Secretary; Nikki Coe, Treasurer; and Members: Cari Scrivner and Ruth Shaw. This group has been full force in implementing change and updating the facility. "I am thrilled to be able to help Merry and the rest of the staff as well as the children of our area and to work to keep this valuable asset in our community," stated Coe, board treasurer. "We have had great support from local people, parents and businesses and we rely on that to continue operating."

This year the preschool has extended its days and hours to allow more time for instruction and various new curriculums, in hopes that the children will be better prepared for kindergarten. Along with letters, sounds, numbers, counting, art and music; they are adding math, science and social studies. They also will be incorporating more fieldtrips into their schedule, a favorite among the kids. Morrow County Health District has donated "Hands on Science," a science based curriculum that contains lessons of instruction and all supplies needed for a full year of teaching. Brannon said she is grateful for the donation is looking forward to implementing the new curriculum.

There are still preschool slots available for three and four year olds, as well as daycare openings for infants and children, call or stop by the Day Care Center for more information. The Day Care wishes to express their sincere gratitude to the community for their support.

Ballard appointed Morrow County DA

Elizabeth Ballard is sworn in as the new Morrow County District Attorney by Circuit Court Judge Jeffrey Wallace.

After the resignation of District Attorney David C. Allen, Governor Ted Kulongoski appointed Elizabeth Ballard, deputy district attorney, to serve the remainder of Allen's term, before beginning her elected role of DA in January 2007. Ballard was sworn in on Thursday, Aug. 31 by Circuit Court Judge Jeffrey Wallace.

Ballard won a three-way race in May, against John Ballard of Hermiston and Valerie Doherty of Lexington, for the position of district attorney.

Allen resigned from his position early to make a move to Bend where he will resume practicing law. He served in private practice for three years before being elected Morrow County District Attorney in 1998. Allen's family had moved to Bend a few week's previous to his resignation so that the children could start school at the beginning of the school year.

Past Heppnerites to come to life for visiting cyclists

"We see it as a quasi-historical musical dram-edy," Doris Brosnan answers when asked to explain the "Dinner-at-the-Cemetery Repertory Theatre" production set for Sept. 10.

Returning in vignettes from previous Theatre productions, local and visiting actors will bring to life several historical figures from 1903 and 1904 Heppner, as they take the stage at the downtown Shamrock this coming Sunday.

Reprising his role a fourth time as Mayor Frank Gilliam is Cliff Green. Joe Lindsay returns as photographer-with-an-eye-for-detail Mike Galloway. Interpreting Thomas Murray Spencer, who was a frequent visitor to Heppner in 1903, is Dan VanSchoiack. Newcomer Julie Rowell, Kathryn Hoskins' granddaughter, comes all the way from Beaverton to join the cast, so she can portray her great grandmother Gertrude Crawford. Traveling from Roseburg to recapture the personality of Edward Ashbaugh is Mike Healy, who was raised in Heppner. Janet Greenup takes on a new role for this production, as she becomes the theatre group's interpretation of Mabel Ayers, a prominent woman in 1903 Heppner. Also appearing on stage, as Molly Reid, is Nancy Gochnauer, and she will be joined by her "girls" May Flemming, May McKay, Ida Smith, Bertha O'Neill, and Dotty Carlson, played by Nancy Vander Does, Jodi Chapa, Kolleen Chapa, Nici Apperson and Robin Bredfield. Not coincidentally, another historical figure, Sheriff Shutt, played by Pat Sweeney, will appear on stage at about the same spot in the production.

Adding the appropriate musical ambience to the dram-edy is McMinn's Orchestra, historically a 1903 Pendleton musical group familiar to Heppner citizens. McMinn is played by Louis Carlson, who is joined by orchestra members Sarah and Alex Carlson, Karl Blaeuer, Cameron Anderson, Laura McElligott, Gayle Arbogast and Myrna Van Cleave.

Co-producer Sharon Harrison further explains

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