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Gazette
Times

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Log donation and firewood cutting benefits locals



Community volunteers chopped wood to be donated to local families. From left to right are Brian Spivey, Charlie Grabeel, John Shepherd, Cameron Stinchfield, Dan Michael, and Lori Seitz.

On Tuesday, December 5, Donald Moody, a timber sale purchaser of La Grande Firewood who is currently working on a danger tree removal project, donated a truckload of logs to the Heppner Neighborhood Center. Janice Skaggs, who runs the Neighborhood Center, was contacted by Cindi Doherty, a Forestry Service employee of the Heppner Ranger District, about the donation of logs.

The plan was to have volunteers help chop the logs and then deliver the wood to local families that might have trouble collecting firewood this season. The Neighborhood Center chose eight local families to be the recipients of the firewood. The families were chosen based on income, medical limitations, and age.

The load of logs was taken to Bloodsworth Pharms and by Saturday, December 9, forest service employees from the Heppner

Ranger District along with community volunteers had cut, split, delivered, and stacked wood for the chosen families. Workers processed a total of 13 cords of wood.

There were 35-40 community volunteers including members of the Heppner High School Wrestling Team: Coach Brian Harmon, Dillon Lutzer, Tyler Robinson, Tomás Elguezabal, and Matt Holland. Other volunteers were Tim Rankin, Lee Faren, Patrick Collins, Jesse Boyd, Joyce Shepherd, and Dick Sargent and Charlie Grabeel who helped supply trailers for transport.

The danger tree removal project identifies trees that could be possible hazards in the national forest.

Tom Mafera, District Ranger of the Heppner Ranger District who worked on this project, said, "This was a good community project and our goal is to repeat it again next year."

High school bleacher dedication planned

A dedication to thank the supporters of the new bleachers at the Heppner High School will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 19, during the Grant Union basketball game. The old bleachers had become unsafe for people attending the games, especially for young children and elderly people.

The project to replace the bleachers was undertaken by Bob Kilkenny who did all of the fund raising for the project. His first call was to his son Pat Kilkenny in San Diego, who volunteered to pay for one-half of the project. After that, Bob made many phone calls over the next few weeks to raise the money for the other half of the bleachers. There were over 20 other groups and people who donated to the project to make the new

City ponders bridge responsibility



The Heppner City Council Monday discussed who is responsible for upkeep on this bridge across Willow Creek from Kirk street.

The Heppner city council Monday debated whether or not the city is responsible for maintenance of the Kirk Street Bridge, which runs across Willow Creek near the old McBride Body Shop.

If the Kirk St. runs on both sides of the creek then the city is probably responsible for its upkeep. If the bridge runs from a public street to private property then it most likely is the responsibility of property owners to maintain

the bridge. (An example is Cannon Street which has several bridges across Shobe to private property which are maintained by private property owners.)

City Manger Dave DeMayo told the council that it could not be determined where Kirk Street was actually located without a survey being done. He also asked if the city had paid for repairs to the bridge in the past, would this set precedent for acceptance of responsibility of the bridge by the city. The bridge is access for what was a former dairy building, which is now storage and a shop, and also the back yards of several property owners. The council took no action, and the city manager agreed to study the situation more and report back.

In other action the council discussed its franchise agreement with Heppner Garbage Disposal. DeMayo reported to the council the Heppner Garbage, which provides pickup in the city and is in the first year of a new four-year agreement, was six months in arrears with payment to Finley Butte where the garbage is dumped, and is also late on its franchise fees with the city.

DeMayo said he had repeatedly tried to contact David Green, owner of Heppner Garbage, about the problems, but phone calls have not been returned. "We owe it to him to call him on the carpet and tell him to get his act together," DeMayo told the council.

Councilmember Glenn Baker said he would like to find another garbage collection franchiser. "I would drop him in a moment, but there are no alternatives (for garbage pickup)," he said. "If we can find a local person to do it I would be in favor of doing that," he added.

Outgoing councilmember Tom Wolff

when there were problems last year with the garbage service, there was a local person who wanted to take it over, but Wolff said he was told by several townspeople to back off. Hermiston Sanitary has expressed interest in taking over the Heppner business, but Wolff said he would like to see the business stay local. "I don't want our cash flow going to Hermiston."

The council voted to send "a strongly stated letter" and a copy of the ordinance, to which Heppner Garbage then has 20 days to respond.

In other business the council heard from local contractor Dave Allstott and Craig Gutierrez of the Heppner Little League, about problems they have run into in building a concessions stand at the little league field.

Heppner Little League was earlier this year awarded \$10,000 in grants from the county Tipping Fee fund to construct 2 concessions stands at the ball parks. Allstott and Gutierrez have begun planning for construction of the stands and ran into problems with the flood way. It is no know at this time if the structure has to be built up 1 ft above base flood level, which would put it 2.5 feet above the ground, causing a problem for people to be able to use the concession stand. Allstott asked the council if they could help with the problem. Council said it was Federal Emergency Management Agency which made the rules and was not the jurisdiction of the city council or planning dept. City Manager DeMayo said he would help if he could.

Allstott said the buildings are going to be made of cement blocks and be "very well built".

The council also talked about the financial problems facing the St. Patrick's Senior Center in Heppner.

continued page 2

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