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Ione Education Foundation to hold 5th annual fundraising dinner

The Ione Education Foundation annual meeting and fundraising dinner is scheduled for Saturday, September 22, at the Ione American Legion Hall. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will be followed by a 6 p.m. social hour and dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are available at the Bank of Eastern Oregon in Ione or at the door and cost $25 for adults, $10 for children 7-12, and free for children six and under.

The dinner menu consists of prime rib, crab, shrimp, and all the trimmings including dessert and beverages. An auction will follow the dinner and will include Ione School memorabilia as well as items that the shop and entrepreneur class have built, including a playhouse, Adirondack type chairs, picnic table, and other hand-crafted items. A special feature this year is the auctioning of a 1950 Model C International Harvester Farmall row crop tractor. This tractor was brought from the corn and soybean country of southern Indiana to Ione for restoring.

Raffle tickets will be available on items including a spa package from Adrian Swanson of Ooh-La-La Salon in Pendleton, a GPS, and a gift certificate for a "Taste of Perfection" at Hotel Condon Steakhouse & Lounge.

This year, the Ione Education Foundation is providing a grant of $60,000 to fund a new elementary teacher at the Ione Community School. This grant is funded primarily from the dinner and auction proceeds. The foundation also uses dues paid to fund Tier II grants that provide classroom globes, walkman players for CD stories and tape, a field trip to OMSI, Artist in Residence – International Folk Dance, Robotics Team Program-Mindstorm, Camp 5 – theme oriented enhanced learning classes, history class field trip to Whitman Mission and Fort Walla Walla, and Entrepreneur and Shop class supplies which helped to build many of this year's auction items.

For more information about the Ione Education Foundation, call 541-422-7435.

Steve Schaber's junior high Entrepreneur class, consisting of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders, built this playhouse to be auctioned off at the Ione Education Foundation fundraising dinner. The class began building the playhouse at the beginning of 2007 and it took approximately four months to complete. The Foundation fronted the $1,000 that it cost to build the playhouse and the shingles were donated. Schaber's goal is to form a partnership between the class and the Foundation so that he will be able to teach more techniques and continue building items that could be used to raise money for the Foundation.

Ione School Board approves employee pre-tax benefit

The Ione School Board, at their regular meeting Monday night, approved a fringe benefit plan with American Fidelity Assurance Company which would allow Ione School District employees to deduct medical, dental and day care costs from their paychecks before taxes.

Also at the meeting Superintendent Bryn Browning reported that the school's enrollment as of September 10 was 66 students in kindergarten through grade five; 40 in grades six through eight; and 52 in grades nine through 12. Browning said the latest enrollment figures show an increase of seven students from last year and the school has 15 new faces this year. The school's Hispanic population is now 23 students, an increase of eight students from 2006-07. Browning said that the Hispanic population now comprises 14.5 percent of the total school population.

In other business, the board:

-learned that the district's Title funds will be reduced to $5,042.29 for 2007-08, a decrease of $11,414.91 from last year. The board heard that Title funds were reduced for many districts.

-learned that the district received basic school support totaling $116,268, which will be the standard monthly payment. The district also received $1,974 in property taxes.

-learned that the district is receiving an interest rate of 5.28 percent on its money invested with the state and received $3,392 in interest for the month of August.

-learned that the district received a $9,750 Northwest Textbook refund.

-learned that the cost center for the elementary school is over budget with the addition of a new elementary teacher, according to Denyce Kelly of the ESD, however "the district's instruction function remains in a strong position at this time."

-learned that the high school's heating and air conditioning system is running, due to work by Loyal Burns and Eclipse. Browning said Burns helped trouble-shoot electrical issues.

-learned that repairs and maintenance have been completed on the main boiler system.

-learned that Kayla LaRue has fixed the pool chlorinator, which is expected to get the district through the end of the pool season.

-learned that Bob Nairns of the Morrow County Road Department has been contacted to paint the crosswalk over the Ione-Gooseberry Road. The work was expected to be completed by the week of September 10, but had not been done by September 17.

-learned that the lights in the gyms must be replaced because the lights could cause burning of the eyes. Browning said it could cost the district at least $6,000 to replace the bulbs. However, the board learned that ESD has been ordering new lighting for many of the smaller school districts that still use the lights and may be able to get them at a reduced cost.

-learned that the middle school and elementary school are using the pool for three hours a day during PE, the teachers have a swim hour in the afternoons and both the volleyball and football teams use the pool after practice. Kayla LaRue has returned to act as lifeguard and the district is also using student lifeguards and classroom teachers to supervise. An elementary family swim night is planned September 27. The pool is being heated with the boiler during the week, but the heat is shut off on weekends.

-learned that Browning is hosting a trivia contest for middle and high school students each week and the elementary teachers are hosting a geography question each week. Two winners from the middle school and high school will be announced each week. Prizes are donated by area businesses.

-learned that in the school's first fire drill on September 10, students and staff were out of the building in less that one minute and at their designated spots on the football field in one minute and 29 seconds. However, the security company had not called the fire station to warn them of the drill and the fire station alarm sounded.

-accepted the resignation of Dean Robinson as athletic director as of June 2008.

-approved the following staff recommendation: Erin Heideman, middle school girls' basketball coach.

-approved a co-op agreement with Heppner for speech and debate for 2007-08.

-heard the following announcements: Ione Education Foundation auction, Saturday, September 22; board goal-setting session, Friday, September 28, 8 a.m.; Oregon School Board Association, fall meeting, Thursday, October 4; October board meeting, Monday, October 15; OSBA annual conference, November 9-11, Portland.

MCGG manger says market good, but might not last

Morrow County Grain Growers Manager John Ripple says he does not expect the strong white wheat market to last, but while it is here it is good for the local economy.

Ripple was speaking to the Heppner Chamber of Commerce last week when he said this years 8$ to $9 bushel white wheat price was giving growers in the county some breathing room after years of low prices, but that there would be several factors that might come in and drive prices down.

Ripple said there was a drought in Australia and some cut back in production in the United States that was helping to drive prices up, but higher prices might draw more growers back into production "and ruin this market," he said. He also said that hedge funds were also driving the price in the higher market.

Ripple said many growers were selling off their crop at production and that caused up to one half the co-op's grain storage to be filled with Idaho wheat this year.

Ripple also said that as far as total wheat production Morrow County had an "average" year. There was a hot May and then the rain in June "saved a train wreck", he added.

St. Jude's Bike-a-thon to be held

The St. Jude's Bike-a-thon is set for Sunday, Sept. 23. Bicyclists can ride from Ruggs to Ione or just ride laps around the block at the City of Ione. The event is expected to be an afternoon of family fund.

There will be prizes and refreshments will also be served.

Pledge sheets may be picked up at Hair I Am, Murray's, Heppner Family Foods, Ione Community School, or by contacting Lynn Dee Ramos at 422-7559.

Anyone needing a ride should meet at the Ione or Heppner parks.

For more information contact Judy Davis at 676-9256.

Spivey joins Ione School staff

Stefanie Spivey

Stefanie Spivey joined the Ione Community School's staff this year as a second grade teacher.

Spivey graduated magna cum laude from Eastern Oregon University with a major in multidisciplinary studies and a minor in elementary education. She was a substitute teacher at Heppner Elementary School and fulfilled her student training under Jannie Allen. This is her first year teaching.

Spivey, a Heppner resident, moved to Heppner with her family when she was in 8th grade. She and her husband, Brian, have a daughter, Katie, who is eight months old.

Garrett takes first buck

Mercedes Garrett, has been archery hunting for the last three years and finally got her first buck this year. She has taken a doe every year in the Columbia Basin Unit. Mercedes is the only one in her family that archery hunts for deer. The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals. Send photos and information to david@heppner.net.

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MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

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