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Gazette Times

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St. Patrick's Senior Center receives $861,000 in grants

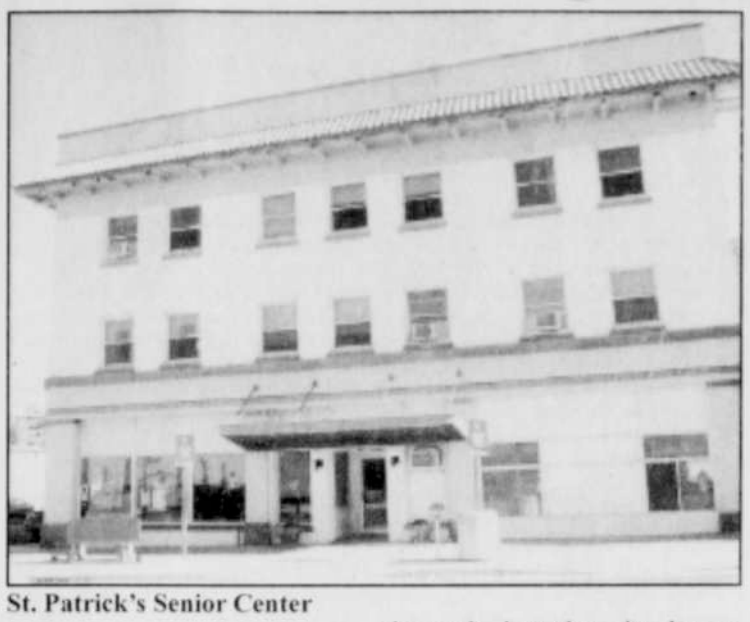
The St. Patrick's Senior Center in Heppner was awarded $861,509 in grants and $290,000 in low interest refinancing, it was announced this week.

The announcement was good news for the center, which has 19 senior citizens apartments and a dining and meeting area on the ground floor. In the past the center has wrestled with increased expenses and not wanting to raise rents too high.

"I'm thrilled," Sr. Center director Judy Buschke said Tuesday. "We've been holding our breath and now we are anxious to get started."

The funding will allow the center to upgrade the living quarters with weatherization, new cabinets, appliances, windows and other improvements. The refinancing will reduce the city's debt interest on loans on the St. Center to about 2 percent for 20 years, said Darlee Rex of Rex Development of Pendleton. Rex was the consultant hired by the city to apply for the grants and financing.

"I'm really excited," she told the Gazette on Tuesday. Rex said the city competed against 29 other applications for funds and that Heppner was one of 15 that was funded. Rex said the city's application was 380 pages.


St. Patrick's Senior Center

Heppner mayor Les Paustian said he was happy that the funding came through, but the city has a lot more work to do. "We have a lot of leg work," he said, adding that city manager Dave DeMayo would be meeting with the grant institutions next week to work out final details.

Heppner resident awarded for mental health work

Shannon Boor of Heppner was recently honored, along with 17 other Oregonians, for her work with mental health. Boor has worked for eight years with Morrow Wheeler Behavioral Health.

DHS: Addictions and Mental Health Division put on the Mental Health Awards for Excellence on Friday, October 19, in Salem. This year's theme was Building Community: Taking Action.

Boor is an office manager at Morrow Wheeler Behavioral Health and was nominated for the award by Kimberly Lindsay, Executive Director of Morrow Wheeler Behavioral Helath.

Boor found out during the first week of October that she would be receiving the award. "I am excited about the award," said Boor. "But I am more excited that people I respect thought to nominate me."

"Shannon's enthusiasm, knowledge, understanding, compassion, advocacy and energetic personality have had a tremendous impact upon our clients, staff and community partners. Shannon believes in the ability of all individuals to be all that they can, and in this manner is a strong supporter of the recovery movement," said Lindsay. "Shannon is an inspiration to many and I feel truly blessed to have her be a member of our staff at MWBH, a member of our community, and a member who takes action daily."

Shannon Boor was recently awarded for her work with mental health.

Morrow Wheeler Behavioral Health provides outpatient care with a primary focus on mental health and substance abuse services.

Ione School District earns 'exceptional' rating

The Ione Community School received an "exceptional" rating from the state of Oregon on the annual school report card, Superintendent Bryn Browning told the school board at their regular meeting October 15.

Browning presented board members t-shirts with "Exceptional" on the front.

The board planned a goal-setting session on October 19 to look at the data from the 2006-07 assessments.

Also at the meeting the board heard a presentation concerning a memorial garden the senior class is creating behind the high school. The board heard the criteria for selection of the first five people to be honored. The seniors asked the board for input regarding future criteria. Board member Joe McElligott voiced his concerns with the upkeep of the garden after this senior class has graduated. Senior class advisor Ryan Rudolf told the board that upkeep of the garden will become the responsibility of each senior class.

The board also learned of several grants awarded to the school from the Ione Education Foundation:

-a $1,320 grant to purchase a technology literacy program entitled "K to the 8th Power," a system that provides lessons, lesson plans, extension activities and simulations for any student registered in the system. It also provides a grade book, a student progress monitoring system, assessments and tech support for the administration and teachers.

-a $1,575 grant to pay for the SMART program, a reading program, for the 2007-08 school year.

-a $622 grant for a crop science field trip, dealing with hop and hazelnut production, to Gresham that occurred October 7-8.

-$700 towards the cost of the memorial garden. The project will give the students a hands-on experience with site preparation, planting trees and rose bushes, laying drip line, red rock, edging and installing plaques, stepping stones and benches.

In other business, the board:

-heard information from the building committee concerning the potential facility improvement list and bond action from the work session. Discussion at the work session included the addition of a classroom or multi-purpose room, new floors and ceiling in the high school and mats under the playground equipment. Board member Anne Morter stressed the importance of the district writing the grant for the football field bleachers and discussed possible grants. The next steps include meeting with the public for input, selecting an architect or project manager, research and creating a plan of action to place the bond on the May ballot.

-heard the following enrollment report as of October 8- 156 students; kindergarten through grade five, 64 students; grades six through eight, 40; and grades nine-12, 52.

-learned from Browning that she submitted the district's application for $49,843 in School Improvement Funds from the Oregon Department of Education. The funds will be used to pay for an elementary teacher for kindergarten through third grade to reduce class size.

-Continued on page two

Valby Lutheran welcomes new pastor

Valby Lutheran Church recently welcomed Katy Anderson as their anew intern pastor. Anderson began on Sunday, October 7.

Anderson is a student at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley. She is enrolled in a special program for people wanting to be a pastor as a second career. The program helps train students for work in rural areas. Anderson will be at Valby until she finishes the program next summer. She will then be eligible to be called as a pastor. She has been in seminary for the past two years.

Anderson has lived in LaGrande since 1986 and works as a custody and parenting time mediator for the court system. Her husband, Bruce works as a lawyer and they have three children. Their oldest, Adam, and his wife Connie just gave the Andersons their first grandchild. Malia is a physical therapy grad student in Boston and Micah is a freshman at Linfield College in McMinnville.

Katy Anderson

Anderson is available in the area Saturday through Monday.

Valby Lutheran Church is a congregation that was founded in 1886 and serves the area between Ione, Condon and Heppner. Valby is a white frame church with red roof that stands by itself in the middle of a wheat field. Approximately 25-30 worshipers gather on Sundays for their 9 a.m. service. The church recently started a Bible study on Friday mornings at 7 a.m. at Collier's Market in Ione. Everyone is welcome.

Heppner Head Start takes field trip

Heppner Head Start took a field trip to the Morrow County Agriculture Museum on Wednesday, October 17. Cliff Green gave the preschool class a tour of the farming equipment.

Don't forget to turn in your ballots

The deadline to have ballots returned to the County Clerk's Office is Tuesday, November 6, at 8 p.m. Postmarks will not be accepted.

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

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