

Corps approves Willow Creek Reservoir irrigation proposal

The decision to allow for the long-term withdrawal of irrigation water from Willow Creek Reservoir near Heppner was announced today by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

After thorough evaluation, the Corps' final decision rested on a determination that the impacts of the proposed action do not rise to the level of "significant" as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Documents detailing the basis for the Corps' decision and the Final Environmental Assessment that evaluates the impacts of the action can be viewed online at https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/pm/e/en_plan_assess.asp.

Irrigators in the Heppner area presented the proposal to the Corps, asking the agency to provide up to 2,500 acre-feet of stored water from Willow Creek Reservoir each year, instead of having to make annual requests based on drought declarations. The irrigation proposal was based on the irrigators' need for a reliable, supplemental water source throughout the growing season, which would help provide farm-based economic stability, and allow for the conservation of groundwater.

The irrigation withdrawals could begin each year as early as April 15 and continue through Sept. 30. However, before any irrigation withdrawals can begin, the downstream irrigators must formally establish an irrigation district and initiate a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation for use of and payment for stored water from Willow Creek Reservoir. Additionally, a secondary water rights permit must be secured through the Oregon Water Resources Department.

Releasing water for irrigation means an earlier and lower drawdown of the reservoir, which will impact some recreational opportunities and the composition of the warm water fishery. No fish or wildlife listed under the Endangered Species Act will be affected.

The Corps issued a draft Environmental Assessment on Oct. 31, 2007 for a 30-day public and agency review. The comment period was extended, by public request, to 45 days. Based on requests during the initial public comment period, a public information meeting was held in Heppner on Feb. 19, 2008 and the public comment period was extended to March 5, 2008. A total of 87 letters were received during the comment period.

The Willow Creek Project's primary purposes are flood damage reduction and irrigation. Recreation, fish and wildlife, and sedimentation (trapping of sediment from upstream sources) are secondary uses of storage space and stored water. In managing the reservoir, the Corps is required to make every effort to fulfill and balance all authorized project purposes while taking into account other legal mandates, such as the Endangered Species Act.

Pioneer Memorial Hospice holding basket raffle



Bank of Eastern Oregon employee Cindy Kennedy shows a basket to be raffled which is displayed at the Bank of Eastern Oregon. The basket is to be raffled off to benefit "Sad is not Bad," a program designed by Pioneer Memorial Hospice staff and offered to all the grade schools in Morrow and Gilliam counties. The program offers instruction for teachers on how children grieve. Books are donated to the schools that can be gifted to a child who has recently suffered a loss. For more information on the program, call Pioneer Memorial Hospice at 676-2946. To see the basket or purchase tickets, stop by the Bank of Eastern Oregon. Tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20.00. The winner will be drawn on May 9. Photo by David Sykes

BEO Bancorp earnings grow

BEO Bancorp, parent company of Bank of Eastern Oregon, announced earnings of \$623,000 for the first quarter of 2008, compared to earnings of \$455,000 in the first quarter of 2007, a 36.9% increase. Earnings per share improved from \$0.52 to \$0.71.

Total assets increased 11.4% year over year to \$209,793,000. Total loans grew 29.1% to \$152,355,000 and total deposits increased to \$174,012,000, a 5.3% increase.

"We registered a solid start to 2008 in the first quarter," said President and CEO,

E. George Koffler. "The continued growth of good quality loans and the reduction of our cost of funds were the primary drivers of these good results," Koffler added.

"We think 2008 will be a challenging year to maintain the excellent earnings we delivered recently. The aggressive reduction of rates by the Fed will make it difficult for financial institutions to maintain net interest margin levels of the past three years. The slowdown in the housing market will affect fee income generation and credit quality is always a concern when values decline as we have seen in parts of the state," concluded Koffler.

Detailed financial exhibits are available on the bank's website at www.beobank.com.

The next Morrow County Fair Board meeting will be held on Monday, May 5, at 6 p.m. at the fairgrounds in the fair office.

The Heppner Daycare/Preschool looks forward to seeing contenders again this fall for an evening of fun.

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Irrigon Elementary School sixth grade teacher publishes book

On Thursday, April 17th, Anne Osterlund's first book, "Aurelia," went on sale. "Aurelia," published by Penguin Books, is a young adult fantasy about a princess who should not be a princess, revolving around an assassination



Ann Osterlund

Anne has always been interested in writing and according to her, "has a plethora of stories in my head". She wrote the beginning draft of "Aurelia" several years ago setting it aside until 2002, when she

decided to finish it. She completed the first draft in 2004, taking a year off teaching to revise and begin the submission process.

The exciting news of official acceptance by Penguin Publishing came in March 2005. Anne's second book, "Academy 7," is already in the works. She expects it to be published in April 2009.

Anne has worked for Morrow County School District since 2006 teaching sixth grade at Irrigon Elementary School. One of her students commented, "It's really cool to have an author for a teacher." Interested readers should visit Anne's author website: <http://www.annesterlund.com>.

BEO Brainiacs take trivia win

Once again, congratulations to the BEO Brainiacs. The Brainiacs took first place in the Mr. Bill's Trivia contest held by the Heppner Daycare/Preschool on Saturday, April 26.

Do you think calling yourself "brainy" has anything to do with success or are they just smart? Let's all work on our trivia skills and see if we can challenge them in the fall.

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MC Fair Board meeting to be held

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Bristow and partner win Oregon State doubles handball tournament

Jerry Bristow, a graduate of Ione High School and Eastern Oregon University, started playing handball when he was 26 years of age. A fellow teacher introduced him to the game that he has enjoyed ever since.

Bristow is in the Eastern Oregon Athletic Hall of Fame and the NAIA District 2 Hall of Fame for football and baseball. He has added another feat to his love of athletics by winning the Oregon State Doubles Handball Championship in his age group. This is actually his sixth Oregon State Handball Championship.

In the recent state tournament in Corvallis, Bristow and his partner, Butch Roper of Roseburg, never lost a game on their way to the title.

Handball is the total workout, as it combines strength and conditioning along with hand-eye coordination. Bristow and fellow Tillamook handball players meet from three to four days a week and play two to three hours.

Handball is played



Jerry Bristow (right) and his partner Butch Roper won the 70+ division of the Oregon State Doubles Handball Tournament. -Contributed Photo

on the same size court as racquetball, with a similar premise. Instead of rackets, players, wearing gloves, use both their hands to hit the ball of the wall surrounding the court. The ball can bounce once before having to be returned. A match consists of three sets, with the first two games going to 21 points and the third an 11 point tie breaker.

Bristow loves the game and the competition. He stated that the tournament that he is most proud of is a second place win in the YMCA National Tournament in Chicago, IL in 1996.

Bristow stated that the only reason he got beat in the finals was because the other player was better than him. He played against handball players that entered from all over the United States. On two occasions he entered tournaments in Hawaii and also won second place. Bristow plans to continue the competition in handball by entering the Northwest Championships in Vancouver, WA in May 2008.

Another competitive handball player from Ione is Billy Gates, playing out of Pacific University.

BMCC to hold grant workshop

Blue Mountain Community College will hold a one day workshop entitled "Getting a Grant: An Introduction to the Basics" on Monday, May 21, at the Morrow County Extension Office in Heppner. The class will run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participants should bring their own lunch. The cost is \$21 and pre-registration is required.

Susan Plass, Blue Mountain Community College's director of grants will present the workshop. Plass has over 20 years experience in the field of grants and proposals.


Pre-registration is required and may be done by contacting Anne Morter, BMCC coordinator for Morrow County, at 422-7040.

Heppner Daycare/Preschool to hold registration

On May 14 the Heppner Daycare/Preschool will be open from 5-6:30 p.m. for fall preschool registration for three and four year olds. Kids will do a craft and have fun playing while parents fill out paperwork.

Parents are asked to bring immunization records to the registration.

Merry Chandler and the board members will be available to answer questions and take suggestions.



Real Estate

By DAVID SYKES

REALTOR

BEST AND WORSE SCENARIOS

All lenders must now meet disclosure requirements for adjustable rate mortgages (ARMS). Among these are: an historical example of how the requested loan would have worked during the last 15 years; how to convert that example to the borrower's own situation, and a worst-case illustration of how the loan could perform if rates go up through the roof.

To show how the loan will perform under the worst possible circumstances, the example starts at the initial rate

and moves rapidly up to the top interest rate and payment possible. Lenders must also explain how the index is adjusted and how future interest rates and payments will be determined.

As you know, interest rates can change either upward or downward with an adjustable loan. It's nice to know how these rate changes (in either direction) will affect your future monthly payments. That's what the disclosure will tell you.



Property listings are available at www.sykesrealestate.net

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E-mail: david@sykesrealestate.net

McCabes celebrate 60th anniversary

The children of Ernie and Mary Jean McCabe treated their parents to a prime rib dinner in honor of their 60th wedding anniversary. Dinner was served in the McCabe's home with all four of their children present. Several grandchildren, who live in Oregon, also attended.

The McCabes were married in Ione on April 18, 1948. One fun memory of their wedding day is that as Mary Jean's young brothers, Donald and Jerry Bristow, about 12 and 13 years old, were walking to the church, a carload of older boys drove by and yelled at them "are you going to Ernie's wedding?" to which they yelled back "no, his funeral." Hosts were Pam and Jim Doherty of Wilsonville, John and Sonja McCabe of Heppner, Joe and Lisa Gifford of Hermiston and Laurie and Dan Wilson of Newberg.

JOHN'S PLACE

Heppner

"Almost" Cinco de Mayo Mexican Buffet

plus Margarita Madness

Saturday, May 3rd 5 - 8 p.m.

JOHN'S PLACE
Main Street, Heppner

Wedding Tables

Jodie Carlson & Ryan Matteson
Wedding - Saturday, May 10, 2008

Amy Drake & Derek Gunderson
Wedding - Saturday, July 5, 2008



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