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Ballots to go out Friday, due May 19

Morrow County ballots will be sent out this Friday, May 1. Ballots are due back at the courthouse by Tuesday, May 19. Ballots must have been mailed or dropped off to reach the clerk's office by 5 p.m. that day. Ballots that are postmarked May 19, but have not reached the clerk's office by that day will not be counted.

Voters will decide the fate of a Morrow County School District serial levy intended to fill in a funding gap created by the state funding shortfall. If the levy passes the district will impose a three-year levy of $1 per $1,000 assessed value beginning in 2009-10 for school operations. The serial levy will generate approximately $560,000 per year for three years for classroom instruction "in an effort to maintain current level of programs and/or class size to offset declining state revenue."

The total amount of taxes collected from the three-year local option tax will be approximately $1,680,000. The levy will cost the owner of a $100,000 home approximately $70 per year for three years.

Numerous board member spots are also up for election as follows:

Morrow County School District: Position 2-William T. "Thad" Killingbeck, Boardman; Position 6-Barney Lindsay, Lexington; Position 7-Dagoberto "Berto" Hernandez, Boardman; all four-year terms.

Ione School District: Position 3-William R. Jepsen; Position 4-Anne Morter; Position 5-Lisa Rietmann, all Ione, four-year terms.

Morrow County Health District: Position 1-John Gochnauer, Heppner; Position 2-John Murray, Heppner; Position 3-LeAnn Rea, Boardman, all four-year terms.

Willow Creek Park District: two Directors at large, four-year terms-Betty Gray, Ione.

Morrow County Unified Recreation District: Zone 1-Robert "Bob" Byrd, Irrigon, Zone 2-Terry Tallman, Boardman, both four-year terms.

Oregon Trail Library District: Position 3-Allice Y. Ellis, Boardman; Position 4-Barbara Huwe, Irrigon; Position 5-Annetta Spicer, Heppner, all four-year terms.

Port of Morrow: Position 1-Don Russell, Boardman; Position 2-Joe Taylor, Boardman; Position 3-Jerry Healy, Heppner, all four-year terms.

Heppner Rural Fire Protection District: three directors at large, four year terms-Lyle Peck and Mike Mahoney, both Heppner.

Ione Rural Fire Protection District: three directors at large, four-year terms-Stephen Hill, Lexington; Wayne Vester Hams, Ione; Wayne Rietmann, Ione.

Boardman Rural Fire Protection District: three directors at large, three four-year terms, one two-year term-Randall Eugene Yates, Ricky Lane Sandlin, Don Russell, Jerry Johnson, all Boardman.

Irrigon Rural Fire Protection District: Position 3-Mark Calbick, Irrigon; Position 4-William H. Cooley; Position 5-Burrel Cooley, all four-year terms.

Heppner Cemetery Maintenance District: two Directors at large, both four-year terms-Albert Riney, Heppner, Christopher George, Heppner.

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Retiring a lot easier said than done for Robinson

By Autumn Morgan

Dean Robinson thought it would be easy to just turn in his retirement form and "head out." But he is discovering, as the school year is quickly coming to an end, that it is a lot easier said than done.

Robinson has been teaching for 26 years, 22 of those years at Ione Community School and four at Sherman County.

Robinson was born and raised in Heppner. His father, Creston, was raised on a ranch and in World War II was on the Pacific Front, later coming back and marrying Robinson's mother, Kay Kelly. His grandmother, Lena, taught at Madison School House in Eight-Mile and taught in one-room school houses in Morrow County until they were consolidated. She then taught at Heppner Elementary School where she was his fourth grade teacher. "She was my inspiration for teaching," said Robinson.

Dean Robinson

Robinson graduated in 1965 from Heppner High School. He then went on to Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario to play football, but ended up rodeoing instead. During his time at Treasure Valley CC, Robinson wanted to go into Ag business, but began to lean more and more toward education. He dropped out of Treasure Valley before making a decision.

In 1967 he married Florene Kyger from Adrian. The couple moved to La Grande where Robinson worked a rotating shift at a plywood mill in Elgin while attending Eastern Oregon University. In 1971 he received an education degree. He went to work at Sherman County where he taught for four years before taking off 13 years to farm.

"While at Sherman County the principal told me one day that I was staring out the window more than the kids," said Robinson. "He told me that if I wanted to be a good teacher I needed to take a couple of years off and 'get it out of your system.' I'm sure he didn't think it would be for 13 years."

During those 13 years he farmed with Frank Anderson in Heppner and Arlington before going back into the education field.

In 1987 he began working at Ione Community School. Throughout his career he has taught mostly middle school language arts, reading, PE and careers.

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Ione students count their chicks after they hatch

Top Photo: Ione Community School kindergartners and preschoolers enjoyed a day spent with baby chicks. The kindergartners hatched the eggs and are enjoying watching them grow.
Bottom Photo: Hailey Heideman and Taylor Rollins hold baby chicks. *–Contributed Photos*

OSEA makes donation Yes for Kids campaign

Oregon School Employee's Association recently donated $2,500 to the Yes for Kids campaign. Picture left to right are Barney Lindsay and Bill Kuhn, Morrow County School District board members; Mark Burrows, Morrow County School District superintendent; Lisanne Currin, treasurer for the Yes for Kids campaign; and Kelly Wright and Mike Doherty, co-presidents of the OSEA. Wright is a special ed assistant at A.C. Houghton Elementary School and Mike Doherty is the head custodian at Heppner High School. *–Photo by Andrew Sykes*

Strange to retire after 30 years in education

By Autumn Morgan

After 30 years of teaching art and PE in Morrow County, Jean Strange will officially retire on June 12.

Born and raised in Chatfield, MN, Strange graduated from college with the original intent of becoming a safety specialist for the Red Cross. "I took a job as a secretary to get my foot in the door," said Strange. "There was a woman for whom I taught swimming lessons to her kids who had a job bulletin from Washington State University advertising an art and PE job at Heppner Elementary." And that job is what brought Strange to Morrow County.

Jean Strange

Strange holds an AA in arts degree from Rochester Community College in Rochester, MN, a BS degree from the University of Wisconsin in La-Crosse, and a master's from Winona State University in Minnesota.

Strange has taught 21 years at Heppner Elementary School, four years at Columbia Middle School, two years in Boardman at Sam Boardman Elementary and Windy River Elementary, two years just at Windy River, and this current year at HES and Heppner High School. She taught PE and art for first 14 years, just PE for the last seven years, and is currently teaching high school art and grade school PE.

"You can't have a better job than teaching grade school PE and teaching kids art," said Strange. "I love teaching PE. My favorite age is third grade." She likes teaching 3rd-6th grades the best.

Strange's favorite memory involves a special ed student she once had who was in a reclined wheelchair. The student could only communicate by blinking and laughing. When playing flag football, the last play every time would be to hand the football to the student, whose wheelchair was covered in flags, and she would

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State budget meeting to be held in Ione with Rep. Greg Smith

There will be an informative town hall style meeting in Ione on Friday evening, May 1, at 6 p.m. at the Ione School cafeteria.

State Representative Greg Smith from Heppner will talk on the budgeting process in Salem. He will also give an update on the school funding situation.

This presentation will be targeted to Ione High School students, but the entire community is invited to attend. Come prepared to ask questions and learn more about what is going on in the state legislature.

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

At the MCGG GREEN FEED STORE in Heppner:
Mother's Day is May 10th!
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