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Morrow County School Board calls for pay freeze

In meetings with classified employee representatives on April 22 and teacher representatives on April 28, the Morrow County School Board has asked their two largest employee groups to accept pay freezes.

The board's plan to keep salary and benefits at 2008-09 levels applies to all District employees and is directly related to the economic recession and the cutback in school funding

in Oregon. Superintendent Mark Burrows said school funding may be reduced state-wide to \$5.4 billion, a 14 percent cut. "That's a million and a half dollars to us," Burrows said.

School Board member Bill Kuhn, referring to the wage freeze said, "This is the only way we are going to keep our programs together for kids. The superintendent has already stepped forward. The administrators are not getting raises." Burrows confirmed this, indicating that he did not accept

a merit raise offered at his December evaluation and, additionally, will not accept the 2 percent increase in his contract scheduled for June 30, 2009.

The District also is implementing \$800,000 in budgets cuts for next year. These include less maintenance, staffing reductions, not purchasing textbooks, and furloughing staff for two non-student contact days. The District also is seeking voter approval of a serial levy that would raise \$560,000 for each of the

next three years. "This will not fill the void of a \$1.5 million cut, but it will keep the worst wolves from the door," Burrows said. "Even with the worst-case scenario from state funding, a successful local levy would allow us to keep our schools open for the full calendar year."

For additional information regarding Morrow County School District news and the serial levy, please visit www.morrow.k12.or.us.

Community Bank to open Heppner branch

Community Bank recently announced that it will officially open its doors at 127 North Main Street in Heppner on Monday, May 18. The bank has hired three local people to run branch operations.

Meghan Bailey has been named branch manager. Bailey comes to Community Bank from the Snack Alliance in Hermiston where she worked as a purchasing agent. She grew up in Heppner and graduated from Heppner High School. After high school she earned her degree from Eastern Oregon University, where she majored in agricultural business management. Bailey's family is very involved in community affairs and she hopes to follow in their footsteps as Community Bank branch manager.

Rosemary Burns has been named personal banker. Burns has lived in Heppner for over 10 years and has prior banking experience working for Klamath First Bank and Bank of Eastern Oregon. She is a member of the Willow Creek Country Club.

Brooke Sweeney has been hired as a teller. Brooke comes to Community Bank from the Physical Therapy Center at Pioneer Memorial Hospital. She is also a life-



Pictured left to right are Rosemary Burns, personal banker; Meghan Bailey, branch manager; and Brooke Sweeney, teller. -Contributed Photo

long Heppner resident and graduate of Heppner High School.

Hermiston commercial loan officer John Hays will also spend time in Heppner.

"We are very excited to get started in the new branch," state Bailey. "Our main goal is to provide excellent customer service and competitive products. We look forward to getting to work with familiar faces since we are all from Heppner. Please stop in and see how we can help you achieve your financial goals."

The bank funded a major renovation of the branch building and exterior facade, and also added an

ATM to Main Street. Members from Community Bank executive management will be on hand May 18 to open the branch, and a group of experienced bankers from other markets will be on hand for the first month to support the new staff.

In regards to the branch opening, Community Bank CEO Tom Moran stated "The Community Bank team is excited to become a part of the Heppner community, and have been encouraged by the warm welcome. Not only are we committed to providing competitive financial services, but we also pride ourselves on being an active member of the community."

NOAA issues monthly climate summary for Heppner

According to preliminary data received by NOAA's National Weather Service in Pendleton, temperatures at Heppner averaged slightly colder than normal during the month of April.

The average temperature was 47.5 degrees which was 1.6 degrees below normal. High temperatures averaged 59.1 degrees, which was 2.0 degrees below normal. The highest was 81 degrees on the 22nd. Low temperatures averaged 35.8 degrees, which was 1.3 degrees below normal. The lowest was 26 degrees, on the 4th.

There were seven

days with the low temperature below 32 degrees.

Precipitation totaled 1.11 inches during April, which was 0.29 inches below normal. Measurable precipitation -at least .01 inch- was received on seven days with the heaviest, 0.42 inches reported on the 15th.

Precipitation this year has reached 4.96 inches, which is 0.73 inches below normal. Since October, the water year precipitation at Heppner has been 8.58 inches, which is 1.32 inches below normal.

Snowfall totaled 0.5 inches. The heaviest snow-

fall was 0.5 inches reported on the 15th. The greatest depth of snow on the ground was one inch on the 15th.

The outlook for May from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for near normal temperatures and near normal precipitation. Normal highs for Heppner during May are 69.1 degrees and normal lows are 43.0 degrees. The 30 year normal precipitation is 1.67 inches.

The National Weather Service is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

Stefani entering diversion program

According to Morrow County District Attorney Elizabeth Ballard, Dennis Stefani of Ione has entered into a diversion agreement. As part of the agreement, Stefani must abide by several conditions in exchange for the dismissal of the charges.

Stefani was charged with assault, harassment and interfering with making a report.

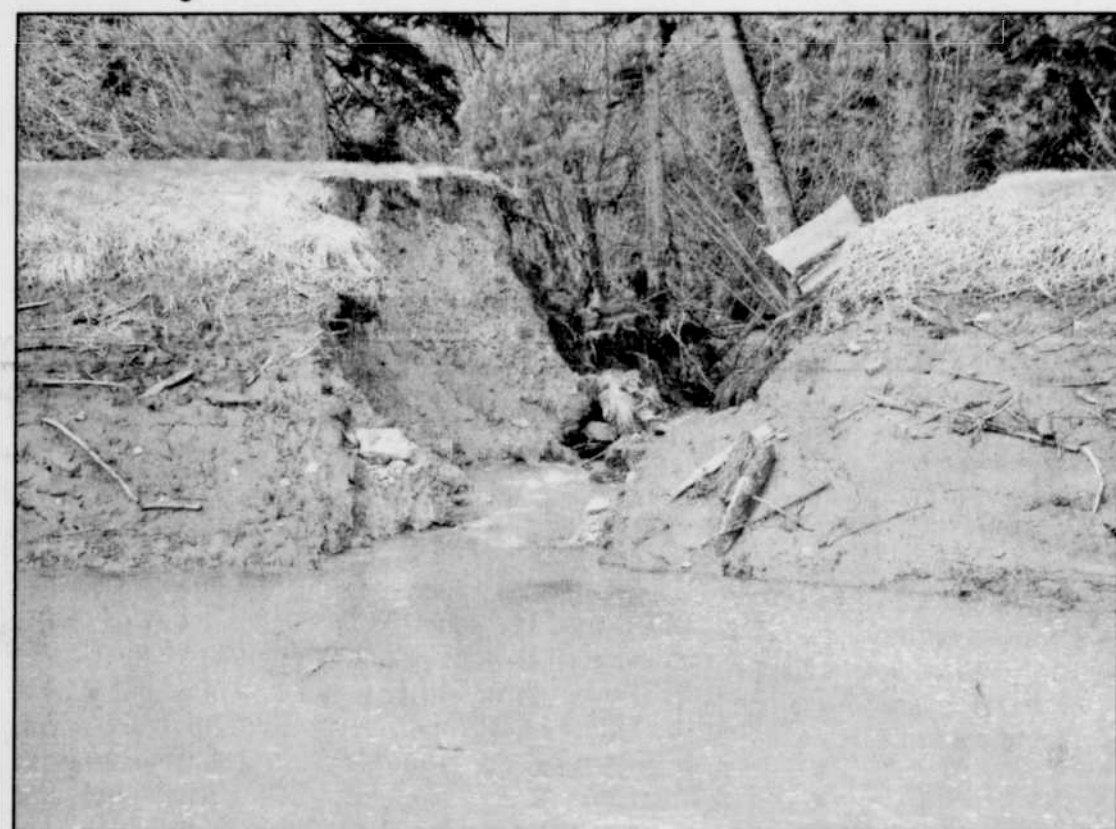
Stefani is a coach at Ione Community School.

City council to consider gaming ordinance

Heppner City Council will meet on Monday, May 11. A continuation of the hearing on the gaming ordinance is on the agenda, as well animal permit hearings. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

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Heavy rains breach Cutsforth Pond



According to Kirsti Cason at the Morrow County Public Works and Park Office, unforeseen weather conditions caused a leak in the dam at the pond at Cutsforth Park, resulting in most of the water leaking out. Cason stated that the damage was discovered sometime last week. MC Public Works and Park Office has filed for permits for repairs though there is no expected date of repair as of yet. -Photo by Andrew Sykes

Riverside science teacher honored as 'Inspirational'

Riverside High School science teacher Tim Beatty has been nominated by a former student to receive an Inspirational Teacher Award from Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

First-year honor students from EOU who maintained Dean's List standings

during the fall term of school were given the opportunity to nominate a teacher who influenced them on their road to higher education and academic excellence. Recipients include educators from Oregon, Washington and Idaho. EOU presents the Inspirational Teacher Awards annually in recognition of

outstanding teachers who encourage and represent the importance of higher education to their students.

Beatty was nominated for the award by Dan Hansen, a 2008 graduate of Riverside High School and son of Kent and Paula Hansen.

Ballots due May 19

Ballots are due back to the Morrow County Clerk's Office by Tuesday, May 19. If anyone has not received their ballot they should call 676-5604.

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