

Vander Does prepares to turn over health district's reins to new administrator

By April Sykes

Outgoing Morrow County Health District CEO Victor Vander Does introduced new administrator Michael Blauer at the board meeting Monday night in Irrigon.

Vander Does said he expects to be on the

job for around six to seven more days to assist Blauer with the transition.

Vander Does, who has been MCHD administrator for the past 10 years, has been credited with bringing the district back from the precipice of financial collapse and closure. The board expressed their appreciation to Vander Does and his wife Nancy for the work they have done to get the district back to solvency and respect. "Things were tough and they jumped in," said board member Linda LaRue.



Victor Vander Does

Nancy Vander Does assisted the district in a variety of ways and Vander Does had even remodeled the district-owned administrator's home. Board Chair Larry Mills said at the meeting that he had only three short words to say to Vander Does, "Job well done."

"Nancy and I are both proud of everything we've done," said Vander Does. It's been a lot of fun, a lot of friends, almost family.

The board also approved an amended contract with Dr. Betsy Anderson which includes an increase in paid vacation time from 16 to 20 days in exchange for reduced paid sick leave time from 12 to six days. The board also approved an automotive three-year renewal in Dr. Anderson's contract.

The board approved an increase from 20 to 25 days of paid vacation for mid-level provider Sheridan Tarnasky, PA, based on longevity with the district. Tarnasky has served the district in a variety of capacities, including as a nurse, director of nursing and physician's assistant. The board also increased her continuing education allowance to \$2,000, increased her on-call pay to \$35 per hour and approved an automatic three-year contract renewal. They also authorized payment of time and a half to Tarnasky to travel to the Irrigon Clinic.

In other business Vander Does told the board that he has encountered difficulty in recruiting a mid-level provider for the Irrigon Clinic, since both mid-level providers there had resigned to accept positions elsewhere. "I think we'll have to start looking at other recruiting firms," he said. Vander Does said they had to close the clinic a "couple days," but coverage will continue to be provided by a combination of doctors and the PA.



Michael Blauer

Also at the meeting: -the board learned that the Bend clinic has informed the district that they will not be sending a cardiologist to MCHD any longer. Dr. Hanlon had previously provided that service, but, according to reports, is no longer affiliated with the Bend clinic. LaRue expressed her regret at the district's loss of Dr. Hanlon.

-approved a resolution to change check writing signatures from Vander Does to Blauer. Authorized signers besides Blauer will include chief financial officer Nicole Mahoney, director of nursing Molly Rhea and board Chair Larry Mills.

-approved surplus-ing a riding lawn mower that is currently not operating.

-adopted the 2009-2010 budget for the total of \$8,163,752 with \$5,007,157 for personal services, \$1,924,106 in materials and supplies; \$933,055 for revenue deductions and bad debt; \$75,000 for capital building reserve; \$62,800 for capital purchases; and \$161,634 for capital lease and loan reduction.

-imposed the tax rate of \$.6050 per \$1,000 assessed valuation for operations; and \$.3900 per thousand of assessed valuation for the local option tax for operations.

-approved credentialing for Dr. Ken Wenberg, Dr. Russell Nichols,

Sheridan Tarnasky, P.A., and Dr. Ed Berretta. Dr. Betsy Anderson's was completed earlier.

-received the following financial report for May: 605,732 in gross patient revenue and \$65,970 in total revenue deductions for \$539,762 in net patient revenue, plus \$56,802 in tax revenue and \$2,993 in other operating revenue for \$599,557 in total operating revenue. The district had \$565,573 in total operating expenses, a \$33,983 gain from operations and a \$9,590 non-operating gain for a \$43,574 gain for the month and an average \$16,690 monthly year-to-date loss. In April, the district had a gain of \$14,168.

CFO Nicole Mahoney told the board not to anticipate as high a gross patient revenue in June. But she said that the new fiscal year will begin in July and the district will see local option tax bond revenues come in.

-approved authorization for investment of money held by the country treasurer.

-received the following report: Pioneer Memorial Clinic had 416 patient visits with 31 new patients, 43 seen by a nurse and 12 no shows; Irrigon Clinic had 195 patient visits, 24 new patients, 55 seen by a nurse and 21 no shows; Pioneer Memorial Hospital had six admissions in May; five swing bed admissions; eight admitted for observation; two swing nursing facility admissions; 497 total outpatients; 70 total emergency room encounters; 1839 lab tests; 120 x-ray procedures; 41 CT scans; 33 EKG tests; seven colonoscopies; three endoscopy procedures; 69 respiratory therapy procedures; Boardman Ambulance had 29 page-outs and 21 transports for \$24,288 in revenue; Heppner Ambulance had 26 page-outs and 21 transports for \$22,712 in revenue; Irrigon Ambulance had 16 page-outs and 10 transports for \$10,426 in revenue; Home Health had 138 patient visits; Hospice had six admissions; pharmacy had 2301 drug doses for \$79,024 in revenue.

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Farmer's Market open for business



Ginger Keithley shows Sheryll Bates and Chris Bailey items for sale at her table at the Farmer's Market. The market will be open every Friday through September 25 from 3-7 p.m. -Photo by Sandy Matthews

Articles wanted for annual fair edition

The annual Morrow County Fair is fast approaching. Once again this year the Heppner Gazette-Times will be putting together a special fair edition. Anyone interested in writing any fair related articles are asked to turn in those articles by Friday, July 15. Articles can be dropped off at the Heppner Gazette-Times or emailed to editor@rapidsolve.net.

Community meeting to be held for Strategic Plan

With the assistance of Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) and Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation (GEODC), the City of Heppner will be updating its Strategic Plan in 2009. A community meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 7, at 7 p.m. at City Hall. A committee will be formed

to complete the planning process. Future committee meetings will be Tuesday, July 28, and Wednesday, August 12, both at 6 p.m. at City Hall.

The Strategic Plan provides the framework for community and economic growth for years to come. Public input into the process is needed in order to reflect the needs of the community.

The update of the Strategic Plans for Heppner, Ione and Lexington is funded, in part with funds received from Morrow County.

For additional information, please contact Karen Kendall/GEODC, project facilitator at 541-276-6745 or Sheryll Bates/WCVEDG project coordinator at 541-676-5536.

Rietmann named 4th of July grand marshal

The 4th of July committee selected Bill Rietmann to lead the Ione celebration this Independence Day as grand marshal.

Bill's grandparents came to Morrow County from Illinois in the late 1800s. They first worked in Walla Walla and then came to Morrow County to homestead just outside of Ione. Vera Engleman and Victor Rietmann were parents to Bill, Bob, and Ruby Ann (Rhode). Bill was born October 8, 1928, grew up attended school in Ione and graduating in 1947. He worked on the family farm until he was drafted in the Army in 1953, his training was done at Fort Lewis in Washington and also Camp Roberts in California. After finishing his Army duty he



Bill Rietmann

returned home to work on the family farm.

On September 18, 1955 he married Marilyn Hurst of Arlington and honeymooned at Disneyland. They had three children Mark, Brian, and Gregg. Mark is married to Tami (Anderson) and have two daughters Shelley and Shanna. Brian is married to Sharon (Crowell) and they have four boys and one daughter. Gregg is married to Shelley (Turner) and they have two boys and one daughter. Bill worked on the family farm for 48 years. He and Marilyn were very active in the Ione Community, supporting school and church activities. Bill continues to be involved after Marilyn passed away.

Bill served on the Ione City Council for 32 years, when he retired from that job he was on the board of the Ione Fire Department for 20 years. He is a life member of the Oregon Wheat League, Heppner Elks 358, Ione Community Church and the South Morrow Scholarship Trust Board. He and Marilyn traveled to Germany, Washington D.C., Disneyland several times, and to St. Louis.

Every community should be so fortunate to have a Bill Rietmann and family in their community. Bill is supportive to grandchildren, Ione Schools, Ione Community Church, and any project that needs to be done in a caring and loving community. The parade will begin at 1 p.m. on July 4th on Main Street.

City of Heppner mails water report

The City of Heppner's 2008 Water Quality Report has been mailed to residents.

The report de-

scribes the quality of the city's drinking water and explains health information, monitoring data, and the sources of water.

Anyone who did not receive a copy of the report in the mail can pick one up at City Hall or call 676-9618 to receive one.

Holiday closures announced

Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner and Irrigon Medical Clinic will both be closed on Friday, July 3, for the July Fourth holiday. Pioneer Memorial Hospital's Laboratory and Radiology Departments will also be closed for non-emergent services.

Babe Ruth season winding down



Cam Day puts out his rival during a recent game between the two Heppner Babe Ruth teams. -Photo by Sandy Matthews

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

We will be closed July 3 & 4
All MCGG stores and facilities
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