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Gazette Times

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Molly Rhea steps down as Home Health and Hospice director; Robanai Disque to assume duties

By April Sykes

Morrow County Health District CEO Michael Blauer announced Monday night that Molly Rhea, director of nursing services, Home Health and Hospice for the district, has elected to step down as Home Health and Hospice director. Blauer said that the move would enable Rhea to concentrate more fully on her duties as director of nursing services at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner.

Molly Rhea

Robanai Disque

Rhea, 51, has been director of nursing services, Home Health and Hospice for the past five years. She has been with the district since 1977, when she started at Pioneer Memorial as a nursing assistant. She has been Home Health director since 1986 and Hospice director since 2002.

Blauer said that Robanai Disque, 53, who has been a nurse with Home Health and Hospice for the last 26 years, has agreed to become the director. "She is very well qualified," said Rhea.

Changes were effective Tuesday.

The board learned from Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney that the district had a $61,658 profit for the month of October. The district saw $621,118 in gross patient revenue for the month, $83,312 in total revenue deductions, $95,521 in tax revenues and $24,787 in other operating revenue for $658,114 in total operating revenue. On the expense side, the district had $607,326 in total operating expenses, a $50,788 profit from operations and a $10,870 non-operating profit. Mahoney said the average monthly year-to-date profit was $238.51.

Also at the meeting, the board also discussed the importance of offering Medicare Part D counseling to the public. Last year the district offered Medicare Part D counseling sessions around the county free of charge and open to the public. Board member John Murray said that the sessions were vital because of the complexity of the sign-up process. He explained that different Medicare Part D plans cover different prescriptions, so if people's medications change, their plans may need to change as well. He added that pharmacists are not allowed to select plans for patients, which is why the district has offered the information as a public service. Deadline for signup for Medicare Part D is December 31.

The district plans to offer Medicare Part D counseling two days in Heppner, One day in Ione and Irrigon and by appointment in Boardman. The board also discussed outreach in Wheeler County.

In other business, the board:

-heard from Blauer that he has been in touch with Dr. Hanlon, who previously offered cardiology services through the district. However, he said, purchasing equipment and hiring a tech would most likely be required. He said he also spoke with a cardiologist from The Dalles.

-heard from Mahoney that the district's contract with the current auditors is expiring and she plans to put out requests for auditors.

-learned from Rhea that two nurses have been hired to fill previously vacant positions, which will cut down on employment of temp nurses.

-learned from Blauer that they are making progress on the punch list for the earlier construction project. Mahoney said there has been a problem with the quality of the flooring in the patient rooms. She said that the flooring installed during the construction project was not designed for the weight that it must bear.

-discussed the impact of the recent power outage, which affected operations to a greater extent than in the past. Rhea said that previously operations were "seamless" during an outage. During the last outage, the kitchen had no power at all. Blauer said that the generators now only power certain operations during an outage, but he was not sure why this had changed and said he would check into the issue.

-briefly discussed the tax receipts that the district will receive from the windmill projects located in the district. An amount has not officially been determined, however board member LeAnn Rea provided estimates.

-approved the following board meeting 2010 calendar: January 25 at the Ione Community Church; March 1 at the Port of Morrow in Boardman; March 29 at the Home Health office in Heppner; April 26 at the Lexington School District office; May 24 at the Home Health office; June 28 at the Morrow County Annex in Irrigon; July 26 at the Ione Community Church; August 30 at the Home Health office; September 27 at the Port of Morrow; October 25 at the school district office; November 29 at Home Health; and December 27 in Irrigon. All meetings will be held at 7 p.m.

-heard the following report for October:

*Pioneer Memorial Hospital had two admissions, three swing bed admissions, 22 admitted for observation, one admitted for hospital respite, 497 outpatients, 87 total emergency room encounters, 1622 lab tests, 117 x-ray procedures, 27 CT scans, 17 EKG tests, six colonoscopy procedures, one endoscopy procedure and 145 respiratory therapy procedures.

*Home Health had 131 patient visits.

*Hospice had five admissions.

*Pharmacy had 1791 drug doses for $67,818 in revenue.

* Heppner Ambulance had 18 total page-outs with 15 transports for $16,234 in revenue; Boardman Ambulance had 24 page-outs with 12 transports for $14,566 in revenue; Irrigon Ambulance had 37 page-outs with 15 transports for $14,377 in revenue; there was one flight.

*Pioneer Memorial Clinic had 527 patient visits with 52 new patients, 76 seen by a nurse and three "no-shows"; Irrigon Clinic had 252 patient visits with 23 new patients, 78 seen by a nurse and 17 no-shows.

Health department to begin public H1N1 vaccinations for high risk populations

The Morrow County Health Department will begin giving H1N1 flu shots to the general public that fall into the high risk priority groups starting on Thursday, December 3. The health department will also have seasonal flu shots on hand. The shots will be offered at each of the regularly scheduled clinics on Monday and Tuesday in Boardman and Thursday in Heppner each week.

Following is the high risk population that can receive the vaccine:

-Pregnant women

-Household members and caregivers of infants less than 6 months of age.

-Anyone 6 months through 24 years of age.

-Persons age 25-64 years who have health conditions associated with higher risk of complications from influenza.

-Healthcare workers and law enforcement.

The health department anticipates being able to offer H1N1 vaccination to the entire population within the next several weeks.

So far 1,269 doses have been given in the schools. Below are the totals given out so far:

H1N1 School Clinics 2009

School	Date	School Pop	# Doses Given
Ione School Dist.	11/12/2009	165	99
Heppner Elementary	11/12/2009	196	95
AC Houghton	11/13/2009	265	195
Sam Boardman	11/13/2009	324	186
Irrigon Elementary	11/18/2009	198	108
Morrow Education Center (EC)	11/18/2009	70	43
Windy River	11/18 & 24/2009	218	157
Heppner High School	11/23/2009	224	78
Irrigon High School	11/24/2009	336	108
Riverside High School	11/24/2009	428	157
Total		**2424**	**1226**
DayCare, Preschool, Head Start			
Creative Day Care	11/12/2009		
Heppener Day Care	11/12/2009		
Irrigon Head Start	11/13/2009		
Sam Boardman Head Start	11/13/2009		
Boardman Head Start	11/13/2009		
Boardman Early Head Start	11/13/2009		
Total (Not Divided by Facility)			**43**
			1269

Time change announced for Light Parade

The 13th annual Light Parade, sponsored by Columbia Basin, will light up Main Street in Heppner starting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 3. Local merchants will hold open houses and special activities.

At 5 p.m., there will be a special tree lighting ceremony at the tree outside the post office. Heppner Daycare and Heppner Elementary School students have their homemade ornaments hung on the tree. There will be caroling and extended store hours throughout the evening. The parade will begin at 5:30 p.m.

Through Thursday, December 17, rewards cards can be collected for the Celebrated Heppner Christmas Event to be held at 6 p.m. at the Elks Lodge. A list donation items will be available at a later dater.

Celebrate Heppner Christmas Event to be held Dec. 17

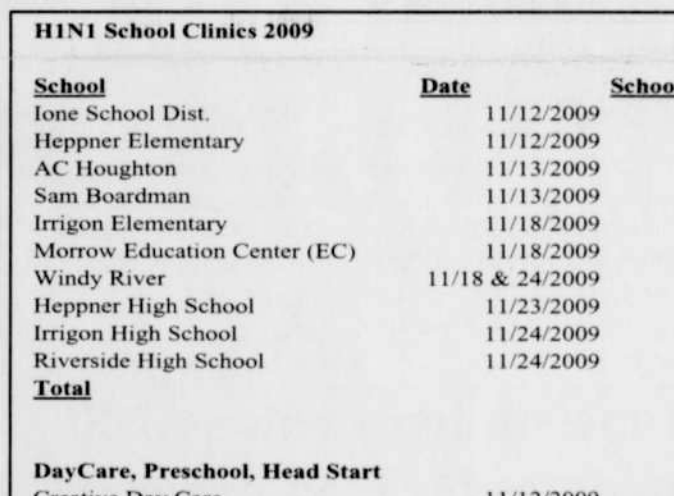
The Chamber Raffle Baskets are currently on display in the window at Heppner TV. Raffle tickets are available for sale at one for $1 and six for $5 and can be purchased at Community Bank, Heppner Chamber and Heppner TV through Thursday, December 17. The winner of each basket will be drawn during the Celebrate Heppner Christmas Event at the Elks Lodge on December 17.

The Elks will be serving lasagna, green salad and garlic bread. The cost for dinner will be $9 for adults and $5 for children 12 and under. Those who purchase a dinner will be given a $10 Rewards Card for each meal, up to $50 for a family.

Santa will be available to take pictures ($5 per picture) from 6-7:30 p.m.

The drawing for prizes will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Red for reading


Ione Elementary School student Austin Carter applies red dye to Principal Karl Ostheller's beard while teacher Linda Neiffer and other students look on. Ostheller agreed to go red if the students read 150 books by Thanksgiving. They met their goal, and their principal was happy to mark the event on his hair. *–Contributed Photo*

Roy Collins Medical Fund set up at BEO

A medical fund has been set up at Bank of Eastern Oregon to help the Collins family pay for their son, Roy's, medical bills.

Roy, a first grader at Heppner Elementary School, was hospitalized for pneumonia. He was transferred Monday from Kadlec Medical Center in Richland, WA to Doernbecher Children's Hospital in Portland.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the fund can do so at Bank of Eastern Oregon, or send the donation to: The Roy Collins Medical Fund c/o BEO, P. O. Box 39, Heppner, OR 97836.

Area pastors invited to submit Christmas messages

The Heppner Gazette-Times invites area pastors to submit Christmas messages to be published in the December 23 edition. The deadline is Friday, December 18, at 5 p.m.

Messages can be dropped off at the Gazette office, emailed to editor@rapidserve.net, or faxed to 676-9211.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:

MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

Kerosene Forced Air Heaters

- Thermostat heat control
- Multi-fuel compatible
- Fully enclosed air over motor

70,000 BTU HEAT OUTPUT
$274.00

175,00 BTU HEAT OUTPUT
$529.00

125,00 BTU HEAT OUTPUT
$464.00

Morrow County Grain Growers
Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgg.net