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After 55 years, Heppner TV to flip off the switch

Discounts offered to sign up with satellite

By David Sykes

After 55 years of continuous cable television service, Heppner TV will be closing down September 30, General Manager Pat Lauritsen announced Tuesday morning.

"With deep regret we are announcing that we are closing down the Heppner TV side of our business, the press release said. Heppner TV is owned by WindWave Communications which will continue in business.

"After 55 years of service to the community our equipment is old and failing, replacement parts have become unavailable. We felt it was in the best interest of the community that we provide a controlled shut down instead of waiting until we have a complete failure of the system. This will give the residents of Heppner, Lexington and Ione time to make the change to satellite TV," the release said.

Direct TV technician Justin Lim was working in the Heppner TV office Tuesday morning and he said people need to call Heppner TV office to get a special discount for new satellite hookups. Lim said signing up locally will be good for the community and he also mentioned Direct TV is looking for a local person to train as a satellite installer.

"To help the community through this transition Heppner TV has negotiated with DirecTV and Dish TV for a discounted monthly rate and a discounted installation fee for our customers that sign up by September 10th 2010. If you sign up with DirecTV or Dish TV in any other way than through our office the discounted rates will not be available," the news release said.

"Our staff, Sandy Matthews and Tammi Lien will be happy to help you with the transition to your new TV services. We have information about the offered packages and the signup sheets at our office for your convenience. DirecTV will be looking to train a local technician. We would like that person to live in Heppner area so you have better support for the transition. Please contact them if you would like to train for this position," the news release said.

The first television membership was sold to W.C. and Virginia Rosewall on February 1, 1955, Matthews said, for $150. The second was to Amanda Duvall and the third to L.E. Dick. Claude Graham gave a lifelong easement for $1 on which to place a TV tower when the company first formed, said Matthews.

Direct TV technician Justin Lim shows office worker Tammi Lien how to hook up a monitor at the Heppner TV office Tuesday. After 55 years Heppner TV is shutting its doors. Special discounts will be given to those who sign up for satellite TV by September 10. *-Photo by David Sykes*

Dudley's message: 'It's not working'

By David Sykes

Oregon gubernatorial candidate Chris Dudley made a campaign stop in Heppner last week. His message to the voters was, "What we are doing now is not working, and Oregon can do better," the 6'10" former Trail Blazer Basketball player told a group of about 120 gathered at the Heppner City Park last Wednesday.

Dudley, a Republican running against Democrat John Kitzhaber, said his vision of Oregon is one of economic growth with strong businesses providing family wage jobs to its citizens. He wants state government to live within its means, and for us to have a world class education system.

Dudley pointed out that the last 20 years of Democrat rule has seen a slide in the state's fortunes to the point where Oregon is above the United State's average unemployment rate at 10.4 percent unemployment, and only 66 percent of Oregon students are now graduating from high school on time. There were 700,000 people receiving food stamps in Oregon last month, he said. "This is unacceptable."

"Oregon is ranked number 47 in economic activity among all states, and it is my opponent that set the table for our current problems," Dudley told the crowd. Kitzhaber was governor of Oregon from 1995 to 2003 and Democrats have controlled the governorship since 1987 when Neil Goldschmidt won the seat. "A leopard cannot change its spots," he said of his opponent Kitzhaber.

"And to make matters worse the state is facing a budget shortfall of $2.7 billion over the next eight years," Dudley said.

He said, if elected, his number one priority is to create jobs. "Jobs in the private sector are what we need. We need to reverse this anti-business attitude we have in Salem." He said one thing he would do is reduce the capital gains tax."

Dudley's second priority would be to "reset" the size of state government. "It has gotten too big," he said. He said we cannot afford automatic increases in the state budget every year.

Dudley said he is not against state workers like teachers. They did not design the Public Employees Retirement (PERs) system, he says, pointing out that his mother and sister are both teachers. "But we have to look at what we can afford for each employee. A 13 to 15 percent increase in labor is unsustainable," he says. "Fifty five percent of people in the private sector have lost jobs or taken cuts in pay. If they (state agencies) ask for an 11 percent increase and they only get a four percent, that is not a seven percent cut," Dudley said of the way government budgets are portrayed to the people. "We simply cannot afford the way we are going."

Dudley's third priority would be education. He said we need to have a "world class" system that trains our young people for the jobs of the future.

His fourth goal would be to restore trust in government. "Your voices have not been heard in Salem," he said of Eastern Oregon and other parts of the state. He said that visiting all the counties in Oregon once per year shouldn't be unreasonable. The current governor, Democrat Ted Kulongoski, has failed at listening to all the people of Oregon, Dudley said.

Another thing he would like to see done is to remove the conflict of interest between those who implement and manage PERS, which, if it continues as is, will break the state of Oregon. "The governor, legislature and judges should not be under the same system they administer," he said. He said there is nothing that can be done about current government employee retirement plans, but the system has to change or the state will go broke. He advocated establishing a rainy day fund to put money aside while things are going well, to be used later when the economy goes in a slump.

Dudley says he is not a politician, not having run for public office previously, "But I do care deeply about this state and we can turn this thing around. We must change our direction," he says.

Local business man Joe Miller told Dudley that it has become harder and harder to conduct businesses in Oregon. He said his fees have doubled and measures 66 and 67 increased taxes on business. "I don't think we should litigate measures 66 and 67," Dudley said of the two measures that were recently passed by voters which raise taxes on businesses and people making over $250,000 per year. He said Oregon needs to improve its business climate by removing red tape and regulations that hinder growth. He also said that in his travels around the state talking to small businesses, the comment he hears most is not what can government do for us. "Most of the time it isn't what government can do for small business, but what can we do to get them out of our business," Dudley said.

On a question about the many windmills coming into the state and to Morrow County, Dudley said he believes Oregon needs to develop different energy sources, but he criticized Business Energy Tax Credit which helps establish the windmill farms as being too generous. "We need to make sure the state is taking in more money than it is giving out," he said.

"We can turn this around," he said in closing about the state of Oregon. "But we need each of you to talk to people and get the word out. Your vote can count," he said.

Governor candidate Chris Dudley poses for a picture with (l-r) Janet Dezellem, Rhonda Winters and Shelli Britt during a campaign stop in Heppner last Wednesday. *-Photo by David Sykes*

Boardman says goodbye to councilor and seeks to fill vacancy

Tuesday night, August 17, the Boardman City Council said goodbye to Councilor Jerry Johnson.

Johnson submitted a letter of resignation explaining he plans to retire to the central Oregon area. In his letter he said it has been a privilege to serve the citizens of Boardman and has been a pleasure to work with all the council. He encouraged the council to work as a team and to never give up the dream of seeing Boardman grow and prosper. Boardman Mayor Chet Phillips presented Mr. Johnson with a Certificate of Appreciation for serving on the council since January of 2009.

Councilor Johnson's resignation leaves the City Council with a vacancy to fill. This term ends December 31, 2012. Those wishing to serve on the Boardman City Council must currently reside within the City limits of Boardman , must have resided within the city limits for at least a year, and be a registered voter. Letters of interest should be addressed to City Manager Karen Pettigrew at Boardman City Hall, P. O. Box 229, Boardman, Oregon 97818.

In other city business, the council approved spending up to $4,000 to widen a driveway to the Shell station along the newly completed South Main Street project to allow better access for semi-trucks. The council also declared two police cars, a pick up, and a lawn mower as excess property for sale.

The next meeting of the Boardman City Council will be Tuesday, September 7, at 7 p.m.

Heppner Gazette-Times closed for Labor Day

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed on Monday, September 6, in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

The deadline for news and advertisements for the September 8 edition of the newspaper is Friday, September 3, at 5 p.m.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:

MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Stop by to have your picture taken, drop off photos, or email them to editor@rapidserve.net.

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