

Morrow County School District considers changes in sick leave policy

The Morrow County School Board, upon protests from Morrow County Education Association president Marilyn Post, tabled until next month a policy which would put restrictions on employees' sick leave.

Post said that the

major concern with the policy, which was in its second reading, is that the superintendent or supervisor may request a physician's verification as to an employee's claimed reason for absence if the supervisor believes that no valid grounds exist for the absence. Post said, for example, if a teacher wakes up with the flu and calls in sick then he or she may be required to go to a doctor's office and sit for hours just to get a slip of paper saying they were sick.

Post also expressed concern over a section of the policy which included not only regular school work hours, but also "non-attendance at required meetings and failure to perform duties at school-sponsored activities."

Burrows emphasized that the problem is not with 99.9 percent of district employees, but the few who abuse the system.

The issue will come before the board at the April meeting.

Also at the meeting Burrows announced

that Heppner High School is joining the pilot program "Eastern Promise," which has been proposed by Umatilla-Morrow ESD (Intermountain ESD) Superintendent Mark Mulvihill.

The program, involving Blue Mountain Community College, Eastern Oregon University, Treasure Valley Community College and six eastern

Oregon high schools, will enable students attending HHS to receive college credits if they pass certain proficiency tests. HHS Principal Daye Stone told the board that parents whose children opt in will pay \$10 per credit hour for the classes. As a result students who

-See **SCHOOL DISTRICT SICK LEAVE POLICY/**
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Leprechauns prepare for St. Pat's activities



Two leprechauns were found working on their boxing skills in preparation for Friday's Irish Boxing Smoker. The smoker is just one of many St. Patrick's Celebration events that will be held throughout Heppner this weekend. -Photo by Autumn Morgan

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VOL. 130 NO. 11 10 Pages Wednesday, March 16, 2011 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

29th annual Wee Bit O'Ireland Schedule March 17-20, 2011

Thursday, March 17,

7:30 p.m.: "St. Oliver Plunkett" at St. Patrick's Catholic Parish Hall, 560 NW Jones. Play written by Father O'Condon, with original music by Joe Lindsay.
9 a.m. Fri-Sun: Lind's Concession - Featuring corn dogs, elephant ears, funnel cakes, nachos, beer battered onion rings, cotton candy, caramel apples. Located in parking lot of Heppner Family Foods.
10 a.m. Fri-Sat: Rolling Thunder BBQ - Featuring barbecue sandwiches (tri-tip; pulled pork, pulled chicken; BBQ nachos). Set up in front of Heppner Family Foods on Main Street
11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sat: Kessler's Catering O'BBQ - Chicken and ribs on the corner of Main and Center Streets

Friday, March 18

9 a.m.-5 p.m.: Friends of the Library - Annual book sale to benefit the Heppner Library - at City Hall
10 a.m.-5 p.m.: Oregon Trail Library District/Heppner Branch - Story hour "Lucky Day" at 10:30 a.m.; the movie "Darby O'Gill and the Little People" will be shown at 2 p.m.
10 a.m. - 6 p.m.: Morrow County Creative Arts & Crafts show at Les Schwab Tire Center
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.: "Wee Bit O' Western Fine Art Photography" by Denise Smith and Celia Moyer at City Park
Vendor's Square: Enjoy crafts, food, and other treasures from local and visiting vendors. All day Friday and Saturday at the Neighborhood Center on Main Street across from the Library/Museum/City Park. Contact: 541-676-5024
1-5 p.m.: Morrow County Heritage and Agricultural Museums
5-7 p.m.: Mrs. O'Leary's Stew Feed - St. Patrick's Senior Center, 190 N. Main Street, prepared by the Heppner United Methodist Church members. Adult - \$6; Children 6-12 - \$2, children under 6 - free
6:15 p.m.: Shuttle bus to Irish Boxing Smoker event. Meet at sign in front of Heppner Family Foods
8 p.m.: Irish Boxing Smoker Event will be held at Heppner High School Gymnasium; sponsored by Heppner Chamber of Commerce/Y102 Haystack Broadcasting. Gates open at 6:30 p.m., Admission - \$10 (Adult-12 years of age); \$5 (11-8 years of age) 7-under free. For information call Chamber office at 541-676-5536. Drawing for \$100 Pot O'Gold

Saturday, March 19

Daylight to dark: Sheep Dog Trials will be held at Thompson's Ranch, three miles northwest of Heppner on Bunker Hill Rd. off Hwy. 74, between mileposts 41 and 42
7-10 a.m.: Heppner Elementary School sponsored O'Breakfast at St. Patrick's Senior Center; \$6-adult \$3-12 and under.
All day: Vendor's Square at the Neighborhood Center across the street from Library/Museum/City Park; Rummage Sale 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
8 a.m.-5 p.m.: "Wee Bit O' Western Fine Art Photography" by Denise Smith and Celia Moyer at City Park
8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.: Morrow County Creative Arts & Crafts show and sale at Les Schwab Tire Center
9 a.m.: St. Paddy's Arena Cross (Sign up from 7-8:30 a.m.). Sponsored by Morrow County Fair and ClearView Auto Glass. \$5 admission. Ages 5 and under are free. Contact Jeff Botevuh at 541-314-2876
9 a.m.-3 p.m.: Friends of the Library - Annual book sale to benefit the Heppner Library - City Hall
9:30 p.m.: Remembrance Walk and 5K Run - Meet at All Saints Episcopal Church; coffee at 8:30 a.m.
9:30 a.m.: Iron Leprechaun Bike Ride - Meet at Shamrock on Main Street (sponsored by Scotts Cycle & Sports)
10 a.m.-3 p.m.: Face Painting/your name written in Chinese at Cornerstone Gallery
10 a.m.-3 p.m.: Cruz-in vehicles will be parked and displayed on "Willow Street" between Heppner Family Foods and St. Patrick's Senior Center.
10 a.m.: "WellyToss" - Team Toss 10-12:30; Children's and individual toss from 1:30-3. Playoffs to follow. Held on Willow Street (between Murray's and Artisan Village) Ages two to adult are welcome.
10 a.m.: KUMA Coffee Hour upstairs at the Elks Club. Come hear music, stories, and blarney. Enter the Irish Brogue Contest and win cash prizes
10 a.m.-2 p.m.: Live Mannequin Show by HHS Drama Club in window of Sweet Productions Ice Cream Parlour
10 a.m.-5 p.m.: Morrow County Heritage and Agricultural Museums
11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Heppner Daycare's craft booth with face painting; craft - \$3 and face painting \$1. BEO parking lot.
11 a.m.-3 p.m.: Oregon Trail Library District/Heppner Branch
11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.: O'Senior Center Lunch - Chili/cornbread and dessert; \$6 adults; 12 and under \$3. Catered by Heppner Elementary School, served in Senior Center Dining Room.
11:30 a.m.: Leprechaun Run for grades K-6; meet at 11:15 a.m. at the steps of the library/museum
1 p.m.: The Great Green Parade downtown Main Street.
Immediately Following Parade: O'Kiddie Tricycle Races for 2-5 year olds. Event to take place at BEO drive-thru. Tricycles will be provided. The event is free and sponsored by the Heppner Daycare & Pre-school
2-4 p.m.: CEILI upstairs at the Elks. Irish entertainment featuring John Doherty & the Irish Singers and more. Drawing for \$100 Pot O'Gold.
2 p.m.: Ewe-Do-Bingo - Live sheep activity between BEO/AmeriTitle. Sponsored by HHS Cheerleaders; \$5 per square, winner wins \$300. Bingo squares sold until full or at 2 p.m.
3 p.m.: O'Ducky Race - starts at the bridge in front of the Morrow County Courthouse. Adopt a duck to win a prize of \$10 to \$100 -ducks can be "adopted" at table in front of Bucknum's. Sponsored by Colt Football Program
4-7 p.m.: St. Pat's Ham Dinner and Homemade Pies at St. Patrick's Catholic Parish Hall, 560 NW Jones Street. Live musical entertainment on stage. \$9 adult; \$5- 4-12 years of age; 3 and under free.
6-9 p.m.: Elks Irish Buffet Dinner - Corn beef and cabbage with live music
8-11:30 p.m.: Teen Disco Club Night for ages 14-19 years. Music, dancing, snack and specialty drink menu - \$2 charge. Location - Sweet Productions Ice Cream Parlour & Diner
6:30 p.m.: Entertainment with "Old Time Fiddlers Show at the Fairgrounds Dance Hall. No admission charge, funded by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District.
7-9:30 p.m.: Entertainment with "Tiller's Folly and intermission by "The NeverCanEvers" at Heppner Elementary Gymnasium. No admission charge, funded by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District.
9 p.m.-2 a.m.: Wee Hours O' The Mornin' Breakfast at the firehall; sponsored by HHS boys' baseball team.

Sunday, March 20

All Day: Sheep Dog Trials at Thompson's Ranch. See Saturday for location
Visit Local Churches: Attend the church of your choice - All visitor's welcome
1:30 p.m.: Road Bowling at Balm Fork Road. Get your team of up to four people ready to play. Meet at 1 p.m. Park on Balm Ford Road and follow shamrock's to starting line
For more information about St. Patrick's Celebration events visit www.heppnerchamber.com, visit the Facebook site at "St. Patrick's Celebration Heppner Oregon USA", or call 541-676-5536.

Speaker says state budget has \$2 billion savings Urges privatization, reduced tax credits, and compensation reform

By David Sykes

A rural issues expert from a Portland-based think tank told a Heppner crowd recently that the state could save up to \$2 billion by, among other things, privatizing liquor distribution and motor vehicle registration in Oregon, cutting back on energy tax credits, and aligning state employee compensation more with the private sector.

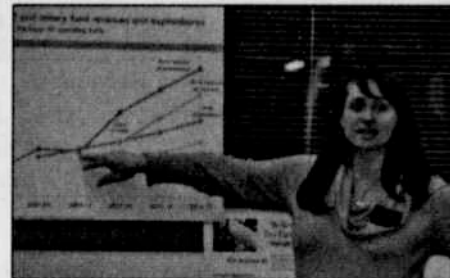
"They are talking about school consolidation (in Salem) to save money,"

rural issues

expert Karla Edwards says, "but we don't have to do that. First we must stop talking about a shortfall. We don't have a deficit. We spend what we have, not what we don't have. We have to live within our means."

Edwards says the

-See **STATE BUDGET SAVINGS/**Page TEN



Karla Edwards of the Portland-based Cascade Policy Institute, spoke about rural topics, including the budget, wolves and forest rules, at a recent public meeting in Heppner. -Photo by David Sykes

Biggest wind farm 'in the world' gearing up near Lone Shepherds Flat on the move, ICABO told

By David Sykes

It was wind, wind and more wind discussed at the annual meeting of the Lone Community Agri-Business Organization's annual meeting last Wednesday.

First up at the local economic development group's meeting was speaker Darin Neuschwander, site manager of Blattner Energy, which is putting in the \$1.4 billion in wind turbines that will produce 845 megawatts of electricity on the "biggest wind farm in the world" called Shepherds Flat and located on 30 square miles of farmland west of Lone.

"There will be a crew of 255 people putting in 338 turbines," Neuschwander said of the one-and-one-half-year project to complete the wind farm. Presently the biggest operating wind farm in the work is the 781-megawatt farm near Roscoe, Texas. Oregon ranks fifth among states in existing wind projects, following Texas, Iowa, California and Minnesota, the American Wind Energy Association says. Oregon has been aggressively pursuing renewable-energy firms with a 50 percent tax credit to offset capital costs.

In addition to supplying 338 wind turbines, the General Electric Company will provide 10 years of operational and maintenance services to the project. The Shepherds Flat farm project is owned by New York-based Caithness Energy. Although located in

Oregon, Shepherds Flat will supply energy to California's Southern California Edison utility, which will secure 33 percent of its power from renewable sources by 2020.

Last week Neuschwander said to expect 4,000 trucks bringing in the turbines, which, as anyone who has traveled -See **SHEPHERDS FLAT/**Page NINE

McCurry receives Purple Heart



Parwan Province, Afghanistan - 1st Sgt. David McCurry (left) of Heppner, Company B, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment, a National Guard unit from Oregon attached to Task Force Tigershark, receives the Purple Heart medal from Maj. Gen. John Campbell, Combined Joint Task Force - 101 commander, on March 8 at Bagram Airfield for injuries sustained from an indirect fire attack at Forward Operating Base Salerno on February 15. - Photo by Staff Sgt. Todd Pouliot, TF Falcon

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