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Local saddle maker to take work to Cowboy Arts Association

By David Sykes

A local saddle maker will be taking one his saddles before the Traditional Cowboy Arts Association and hopes to become one of only 23 members to be good enough to have saddles accepted by the foundation.

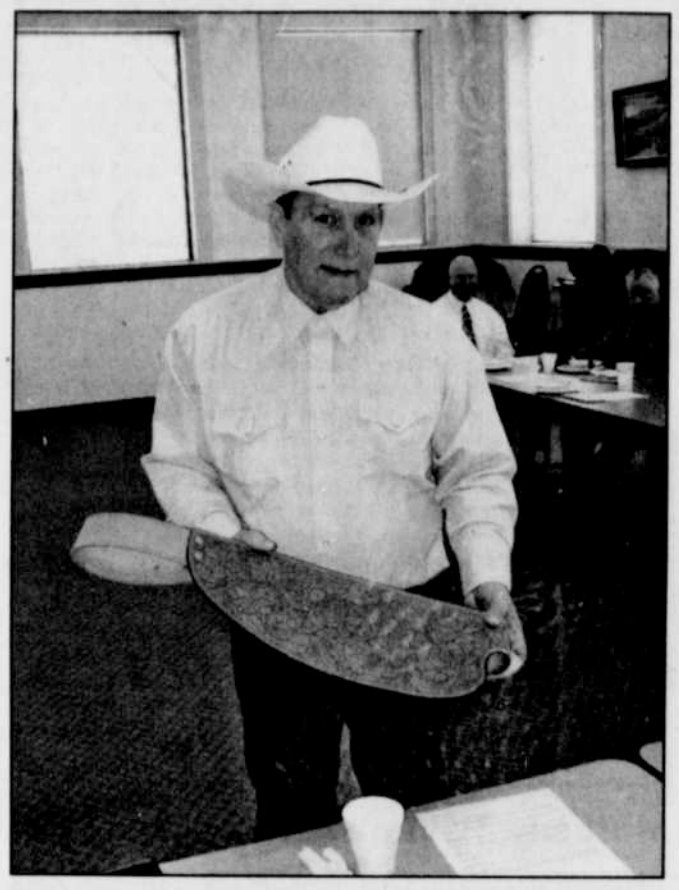
Tod Frusetta of Heppner has been in the cattle business his whole life and has been making fine quality saddles since 1963. Last Thursday he talked to the Heppner Chamber of Commerce about his leather work and his life as a cowboy.

"I have worked with some very good saddle makers, and I take pride in my work," he told members of the chamber. "I am working on a saddle now for the Cowboy Arts Association at the Oklahoma City Convention."

He says saddles accepted by the foundation can bring premium prices on the market when sold. He is trying for membership in the association, which currently has only 22 members.

Some of his other notable work includes a set of chaps he made for Bobby Mote of Culver, OR who won four world titles in bareback riding. Frusetta said it made him feel "pretty good" to see Mote wearing his chaps while riding in the National Finals Rodeo.

Frusetta has also been involved with rodeo, as he was a rodeo clown for 20 years, and has been to the national finals himself as a saddle bronc rider.



Local saddle maker Tod Frusetta shows a sample of his tooling work to members of the Heppner Chamber of Commerce. He was the featured speaker, talking about his life as a cowboy and saddle maker. *-Photo by David Sykes*

He said it takes about two weeks to make a saddle. He puts a lot of effort into the tooling, a sample of which he showed chamber members. He said all his saddles are made to order and that the cost of materials has gone up considerably in the past several years, with leather costing up to $250 for a side (it takes two sides to make a saddle) and trees going for up to $600, an item he can remember going for $26. He buys his trees out of Alberta, Canada; there are only 10 to 12 tree makers left in the United States. All

-See SADDLEMAKER/ PAGE FOUR

HEPPNER 50¢ Gazette Times

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Local family physician assumes position on state academy board

Betsy Anderson, MD

Local physician, Betsy Anderson, MD, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the Oregon Academy of Family Physicians. Anderson was elected for a three-year term at the Academy's annual business meeting held at the Skamania Lodge on April 9.

Anderson, who has worked for the Morrow County Health District since 2007, received her medical degree from OHSU in 1997 and completed her residency in family practice at OHSU in 2000. She worked at Samaritan Family Medicine in Corvallis from 200 until she moved to Heppner in 2007.

As an Affiliate Assistant Professor for OHSU, Dr. Anderson also teaches first through third year medical students and has been active in presenting the Tar Wars anti-tobacco education program to Heppner-area elementary schools.

The Oregon Academy of Family Physicians is the largest medical specialty society in Oregon and represents more than 1,400 family physicians, residents and medical students throughout the state. The mission of the OAFP is to advocate for family physicians and assist them in providing for the health of their patients and communities.

BEO Bancorp reports first quarter earnings

Heppner, OR BEO Bancorp and its subsidiary, Bank of Eastern Oregon, announced first quarter 2011 consolidated net income of $501,000, or $0.54 per share. That's compared to $444,000, or $0.49 per share for first quarter 2010. Total assets were $249.7 million, up 4.7% year over year. Net loans of $191.1 million were up 9.0% from the same period in 2010, while deposits were at $221.2 million, up 7.2% year over year.

BEO Bancorp is the holding company for Bank of Eastern Oregon, which operates 12 branches and two loan production offices in nine eastern Oregon counties.

"Our first quarter results come on the heels of a strong 2010. We are pleased that our efforts to control expenses and tackle remaining problem assets are paying off in the form of good earnings," said president and CEO, Jeff Bailey.

Jeff Baily

Chief Financial Officer, Mark Lemmon said, "Return on Average Assets is 0.80% and Return on Average Equity is 12.60% compared to 0.74% and 11.96%, respectively, year over year." Lemmon went on to say, "We are able to leverage a low cost of funds and decent core earnings into profits."

Chief Operations Officer, Gary Propheter said, "We continue to be impressed with our growth of deposits. Even in this low rate environment we see strong growth. We attribute this to the excellent customer service provided by our experienced banking staff and the confidence our customers have in the safety and soundness of our bank."

"The strength in the farm economy continues to bode well for our agricultural loan portfolio. The lasting effects of the housing crisis are waning and our non-performing assets are at a much more manageable level than a year ago," said EVP and Chief Credit Officer, E. George Koffler.

-See BEO EARNINGS/ PAGE FOUR

Health district board approves nearly $10 million proposed budget

By April Sykes

The Morrow County Health District approved a proposed $9,943,705 budget for the district's 2011-12 fiscal year at their regular meeting Monday night at the Lakeview Heights Secure Residential Treatment Facility in Heppner.

Out of that amount, only $1,131,502 is anticipated in property taxes, including the local option levy.

MCHD Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney said that the proposed budget will see five percent rate increases for all departments, except the swing bed nursing facility. She also said that Morrow County Assessor Greg Sweek projected three to six percent less in property taxes for the district.

Board Chair Larry Mills remarked that the budget appeared to be a conservative one.

The budget includes a $100,000 donation to the Columbia River Community Health Services toward their new clinic facility in Boardman, which was made on Monday. MCHD CEO Michael Blauer and MCHD Board member Leann Rea attended the groundbreaking held Monday morning. Another $50,000 of the 2011-12 budget is earmarked for the Boardman clinic operations.

Proposed expenditures are as follows:

Pioneer Memorial Hospital, Heppner-$4,988,198; Home Health and Hospice-$598,370; Boardman Ambulance-$272,445; Irrigon Ambulance-$122,021; Pioneer Memorial Clinic, Heppner-$936,205; Irrigon Clinic-$329,969; Emergency Medical Services (Lexington and Ione)-$15,063; Boardman Clinic Operating/Capital Donations-$50,000; Revenue Reductions and Bad Debt-$1,077,964; Capital Purchases-$664,587; Capital Lease Principal Reduction-$115,000; Long and Short Term Debt Principal Reducation-$524,396; Total Expenditures-$9,694,217; Net Increase in Cash-$249,488.

Projected Resources include:

Pioneer Memorial Hospital-$5,223,527; Home Health and Hospice-$464,824; Boardman Ambulance-$232,468; Irrigon Ambulance-$171,224; Pioneer Memorial Clinic, Heppner-$927,233; Irrigon Clinic-$407,976; Other Revenue-$114,464; Donations and Grants-$69,000; Interest Income-$45,322; Capital Leases-$390,000; Operating Capital, Long & Short Term Loans-$328,687; Community Service Fees-$78,528; Electronic Health Record Reimbursements-$358,950; Total Resources Except Taxes-$8,812,203; Property Taxes (Including Local Option Levy if applicable)-$1,131,502; Total Resources-$9,943,705.

Also at the meeting, Mahoney presented the March profit/loss statement, which showed a $58,325 profit for the month of March. She said that the gross patient revenue for March was more than $139,000 above the previous month. Total operating revenue was $66,835. Operating expenses were $623,770.

In other business, the board:

-learned from Blauer that he has spoken to Oregon Health Sciences University concerning cardiology outreach to Heppner via OHSU's clinic in The Dalles. Dr. Tim Hanlon, who previously had held

-See HEALTH DISTRICT BUDGET/PAGE TEN

Swashbuckling good time planned at dinner theatre

Cara Arbogast (L) and Diana Healy (R) prepare for Pirate Island Dinner Theatre to be held this weekend. The dinner theatre, which is presented by the Heppner High School and Community Drama Group, will take place April 29 and 30 in the HHS cafeteria. Both shows start at 6 p.m. The evening will feature pre-show hors d'oeuvres, dinner and show, with a tropical dance party to follow. Adult tickets are $15 and children are $12. Those interested in attending can call 541-676-8022 or visit Sweet Productions for tickets. *–Photo by David Sykes*

Umatilla National Forest to begin invasive plant treatments

The Umatilla National Forest will soon begin an integrated approach of prevention, manual, mechanical, herbicide, biological control and cultural treatments to reduce the risk of invasive species expanding on the forest. This work will be implemented under the 2010 decision for the Invasive Species Treatment Project.

Treatment on the forest is scheduled to begin in May and is expected to continue through October. "The majority of herbicide treatments will be spot application to individual invasive plants using backpack sprayers and ATVs," said Joan Frazee, forest botanist. Some broadcast application is also planned along a small subset of roadsides.

Herbicides to be used include clopyralid, picloram, glyphosate, metsulfuron methyl and chlorsulfuron. "Manual and mechanical treatments are planned for a number of small infestations, some of which have been treated for over a decade and are subsequently much reduced in size," noted Frazee. Herbicide treatments will be carried out following the project design features of the Record of Decision for the Invasive Plants Treatment Project.

Invasive species have been shown to reduce biodiversity including wildlife habitat, wildlife and domestic livestock forage and streamside vegetation. Invasive plants targeted for treatment include yellow starthistle, leafy spurge, spotted and diffuse knapweed, rush skeleton weed, Scotch thistle, sulphur cinquefoil, dalmation toadflax and houndstongue.

Funding includes appropriated dollars and grant money from Title II projects, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Blue Mountain Elk Initiative Challenge Cost Share projects.

Treatment sites are located across the Umatilla National Forest and

-See UMATILLA NATIONAL FOREST/ PAGE FOUR

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