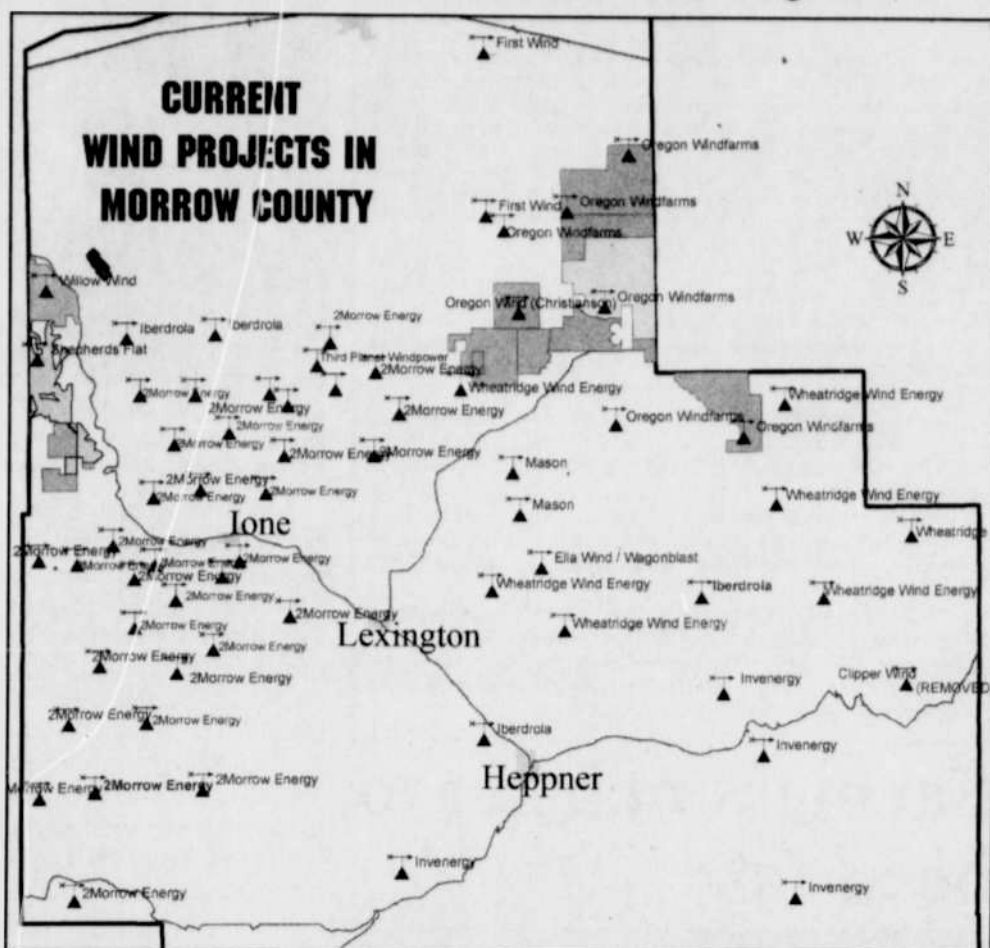


# 62 wind measuring towers now spread across county

Met towers  
precursors to  
wind farms



The above map shows the placement of 62 different meteorological towers, as shown by small triangles, spread across Morrow County to measure wind speed and other weather factors for the possible building of additional wind farms here. —Source: Morrow County Planning Dept.

HEPPNER

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# Gazette imes

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## Western artist lives and loves her art



Artist and rancher Denise Smith captures a moment to work on her latest acrylic painting during a recent farmers market. Smith says she works best without interruption, admitting she is easily distracted by her gift of gab. —Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

"There is nothing that can compare to a good horse and the right rope, but the perfect image might come close!"

That's the philosophy of local artist Denise Smith. If anyone knows about all three—horses, ropes and art—it's Smith.

The 50-something artist and rancher didn't start out on a ranch in eastern Oregon. Rather, her journey started in 1953 in the small coastal town of North Bend, OR. Her love of both art and horses came early, though.

"I was a horse-crazy kid growing up," says Smith. "I drew them, collected them, pretended in play, was a western TV nut."

Like many children, some of her earliest memories include coloring with crayons. Unlike many kids, both the art and horse obsessions stuck.

After her graduation from North Bend High School in 1971, Smith went on to obtain an associate of arts degree from Southwestern Oregon Community College in 1973 and a bachelor of science degree in art education from the University of Oregon in 1986.

It was during college that Smith got her first horse. Her horse-craziness confirmed, she took any horse-related opportunity she could. She participated on the equestrian team in college, was an outrider for

the Oregon racing commission in Salem and worked on the Oxbow Ranch in Prairie City. Ranching life seemed the next step.

She and her husband, Charles "Sambo" Smith, started their married lives on Mann Lake Ranch in Harney County, OR, where she taught art full-time at Lincoln Junior High School in Burns from 1988 to 2003. She left teaching to pursue art and ranching full time when the couple moved to Heppner in the fall of 2003. In 2004, they moved their cattle and horses to Currin Ranches on Little Buttercreek, where they still work for the Currin family.

In Heppner, the Smiths are far from family...28-year-old daughter Cory lives in Drewsey, OR with her family, and 29-year-old son Cliff resides in Williston, ND. Smith says she misses them, as well as her four grandchildren, but that they're a close family despite the miles.

If distance from family is a downside of life in Heppner, one of the best features of the Currin Ranch might be Smith's basement apartment studio, a bright space where she is free to create in any medium that strikes her... pencil, pastels, oils, acrylics

—See WESTERN ARTIST/  
PAGE TWO

## Special fair section included in this week's paper

See inside for special Fair and Rodeo information

A special 24-page Fair and Rodeo section is included in this week's Heppner Gazette-Times. The section contains articles, photos and other information about the upcoming Morrow County Fair and Rodeo.

## Green Dot sweepstakes scam

Attorney General John Kroger is warning Oregonians to not respond to unsolicited "sweepstakes" phone calls. Both the Marion County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Justice's consumer hotline have received reports about suspicious callers who notify consumers that they have won a sweepstakes and then instruct them to purchase a prepaid credit card to cover "taxes" or "fees" associated with collecting their cash prize.

One Oregon resident was contacted on his cell phone earlier this week by a con artist who asked him to purchase three \$1,000 Green Dot MoneyPak credit cards. In order to collect his sweepstakes prize, the man was told he must call an Idaho number and read the serial numbers off the back of the cards. Fortunately, he smelled a rat and called the Marion County Sheriff's Office instead.

Bogus sweepstakes

and lottery offers are among the most common types of scams run by crooks who seek to rip off Oregon consumers. These operations are often run by perpetrators located outside the U.S., making it very difficult for law enforcement agencies to track them down. In 2010, the department received 1,054 complaints about international money schemes, with \$1,999,323 in reported losses...more

—See SWEEPSTAKES SCAM/  
PAGE FIVE

By David Sykes

Morrow County currently has 62 meteorological (met) towers spread throughout the county, measuring wind speed and other atmospheric conditions that may be favorable for the construction of additional wind farms here.

As indicated by the map recently released by the Morrow County Planning Dept., the majority of the towers are located across the mid section of the county; however, there are some located in the northeast.

The towers can range in cost up to \$65,000 apiece, not counting installation. They oftentimes will measure wind speed at various heights, as well as other atmospheric conditions such as pressure. The data is gathered by potential wind-farm investors to determine where to place wind farms and towers that will produce steady enough wind to justify the cost of the wind farm project.

On a related topic, Bruce Sorte, an economist with Oregon State University, recently spoke to

the Morrow County Planning Commission about the economic impact of wind-energy development on rural communities.

Sorte was part of a group that did a 2006 study on wind energy and its economic impact on rural communities. He is currently working on a similar study, which will also look at the effect of wind farms on agricultural businesses such as the family farm.

Many times it is assumed that income from  
—See WIND FARMS/PAGE THREE

## Ione School Board discusses leaking boiler, new HVAC system

By April Sykes

The Ione School Board, at their July 26 meeting, heard from Principal Jerry Archer concerning the school's boiler leak, which has contributed to some moisture detected in the newly installed gym floor. Archer said it is believed that the moisture is coming from the wall by the leaking boiler. He said it was estimated recently that the gym floor near the leak had around 12-15 percent moisture, when the moisture content should only be around nine percent. Archer added that a section that had been warped has already shown some improvement. The board had earlier discussed removing the boiler, and is scheduling a boiler review hearing on Thursday, August 4 from 4-5 p.m. A new heating/ventilating/air conditioning system is under consideration.

"If we get rid of the boiler, that problem should be gone," said Archer. Bids are to be awarded on August 8 at 1 p.m.

In addition to the proposed new HVAC system—estimated at around \$150,000—and boiler removal, the board is considering a new fire alarm system, estimated around \$30,000, and purchase of new Promethean Boards.

Promethean Boards are interactive hand-held computers that students would use in the classrooms. The devices enable anything that can be seen or done on a computer to be projected onto an interactive whiteboard in front of the classroom. Superintendent Mark Mulvihill advised the board to purchase the Promethean Boards now, so that they can be used by students right from the start of this school year. Board member Ann Morter said that the boards could be paid for out of the \$25,000 that had already been budgeted for computer hardware.

Also at the meeting, Archer told the board that he expects to have recommendations for new hires for third- and fourth-grade teaching positions for this school year by August 15. He also recommended that the board hire an assistant junior-high coach for volleyball as well as football.

"I think they should be the same," said Archer. Mulvihill echoed that thought, recommending hiring two coaches each for junior high volleyball and football.

In other business, the board:  
—heard from Archer

concerning the charter update. He said it is still not certain whether the Ione district, as a charter school, will need to have two boards. He said that the Oregon Department of Education says "Yes," however, the Oregon School Board Association says, "Maybe not." Mulvihill also suggested that the board needs to start talking about whether or not they should put a cap on student population.

—heard a brief update from Mulvihill on the current situation with ESDs statewide, especially the ability of certain school districts to withdraw from ESDs. He said in the Inter-Mountain ESD, formerly Umatilla-Morrow ESD before consolidation with Union-Baker ESD to form IMESD, only three districts are allowed to withdraw: Burnt River, Pine Eagle and Baker.

—heard a briefing from Mulvihill on his Eastern Promise plan, which would emphasize a comprehensive education plan for students kindergarten through age 20, rather than the previous K-12 plan, and would coordinate education between area high schools, Blue Mountain Community College, Treasure Valley

—See IONE SCHOOL BOARD/PAGE FOUR

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