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Gazette Times

VOL. 130 NO. 33 8 Pages Wednesday, August 24, 2011 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Ground breaking held for new Fairgrounds picnic shelter

Left to right: Rod Taylor, Boardman Mayor Chet Phillips, Bryce Fowler, Heppner Mayor Les Paustian, Hanna Lovgren, Zech Hintz, Rhonda Hamby, Heppner Chamber Director Sheryll Bates, Karen Pettigrew, Boardman Chamber Director Diane Wolfe

The Morrow County Ford Leadership program held a ground breaking for the new picnic shelter at the Fairgrounds last week.

Since the inception of the Leadership program in 2003 more than 2500 residents of rural Oregon and Siskiyou County, California from ages 13-86 have completed the class.

The ultimate purpose of the program is to help "enhance the vitality of ruralcommunities". Twenty nine people from Irrigon, Boardman and Heppner participated in the five month program.

Each class that completes the course must select a class project to complete the requirements. The local group selected a covered picnic shelter at the Morrow County Fairgrounds. "Since we have participants from throughout Morrow County we wanted to select a project that would benefit all of us. We have received a grant from the Ford Foundation — now we must raise the matching funds," said a program spokesperson.

The 30x40 covered picnic shelter, with a concrete floor and electricity, is expected to be completed by spring of 2012.

Pedal Power

Orem family represented at the 2011 RDO Tractor Pull during fair & rodeo

Back to school Monday for Ione and Heppner students

School starts on Monday, August 29, for all students in Morrow County.

Heppner: Student registration is scheduled for Heppner Jr./Sr. High School Wednesday and Thursday, August 24-25. Student fees are as follows: student body fee-$15, computer lab fee-$5, towel fee-$2, yearbook (optional)-$40. Meal prices for seventh-12th grade are: breakfast-$1.25, lunch-$2.35.

Student photos will be taken on Sept. 14.

The first HHS football game will be September 2 at Culver. Football Labor Day practice will be at 6 p.m. on Sept. 5. Football sports photos are September 13. Volleyball sports photos will be Sept. 14 for high school and Sept. 26 for junior high.

Ione: A band rental meeting will be held on Aug. 31 at 6:30 p.m.

The first Ione volleyball game will be held on Sept. 2, starting at 4 p.m. at home. Volleyball games are planned for Sept. 9 at Joseph and Sept. 10 at the Summit Springs Tournament at Condon at 10 a.m.

The first football game will be held Sept. 2 vs Liberty Christian at Hanford High School, Richland, WA. Football games will be held on Sept. 9 at Joseph and Sept. 16 vs. Dayville at Ione.

Local FFA group receives $200 from Pfizer

The local chapter of Future Farmers of America was presented with a $200 check during fair week. The money is given out to local FFA groups by the Pfizer Animal Health Company as a percentage of what local farmers buy in Pfizer products. The local Pfizer dealer is Dr. Dick Temple who owns the veterinarian clinic in Lexington, and presented the check to chapter President Zech Hintz Saturday during Fair.

Pictured above receiving the funds are left to right: Beth Dickenson, FFA advisor, members Kyle Harrison, Zach Yocom, Micha Hintz, Makenzie Correa, Zech Hintz and Dick Temple, veterinarian.

"This is a really good program and I am glad to be able to bring some of this money back to our local FFA program," said Temple in presenting the check.

$22 million facility that turns cow manure into electricity getting close to operation

Three Mile Canyon Farms near Boardman now installing generators that will burn methane gas produced from 23,000 dairy cows

By David Sykes

Three Mile Canyon Farms, which operates a 23,000 head dairy near Boardman, is entering the final phase to build a facility which uses manure to produce methane gas and run electrical generators.

The facility has been in the planning stages for some time, but last month the Morrow County Planning Commission approved a permit for the power generation facility that will allow final construction to move forward. A permit for the digester to process the manure had been issued to the company some time ago.

TMF Biofuels LLC, the company that will develop the facility, hopes to have generating facilities installed and start producing electricity in April of 2012. Both Three Mile Canyon farms and TMF are affiliates of the R.D. Offutt Company, a national diversified agricultural business and the largest potato producer in the United States.

When completed, the facility will process manure and other agriculture residues in anaerobic digesters and burn the resulting methane in three 1.6 MW Caterpillar engine generators. The power will be sold exclusively to Pacific Power. As a by product, bedding for the dairy cows will also be produced.

Three mile Canyon Farms operates a dairy with 23,000 milking cows, a 21,000 heifer facility, and a 4,000 head nursery. In addition the farm operates 30,000 acres of irrigated crops and a potato storage facility in the area. The facility represents 20 percent of the dairy manure produced in Oregon each year. The Three Mile cows reportedly produce over 1,000 cubic yards of manure daily.

The manure will first be placed in large storage buildings with a bladder type material over the top. As the manure gets warm, using heat from the generators, it will put off methane gas that will be collected and piped to the generators. The process is similar to the facility at Finley Buttes Landfill in Morrow County. Finley collects methane from underground in the decaying garbage, which in turn powers electrical generators. The Three Mile facility will be operated by the same company that runs the Finley operation.

Construction of the Three Mile facility is very capital intensive, costing over $22 million to build but relatively inexpensive to operate after construction.

Much of the money to build the plant comes from tax incentives and government grants. The company received $5,600,000 in stimulus funds from the federal government, which was in lieu of investment tax credits that would have been available to the company. Also used was $1,515,391 in Oregon BETC tax credits (Business Energy Tax Credit) which have in the past been used extensively on windmill projects. The credit can be up to 50 percent credit on the cost of the project. Also used was an available bonus depreciation tax write off of 50 percent of eligible capital costs.

According to the minutes of the Renewable Advisory Council Meeting held June 22, 2011, construction of this facility will be completed by Andgar Corp. located in Ferndale, Washington. Andgar is a full-service construction and project management firm that has constructed seven GHD digesters operating in the northwest. They also provide operations services for two projects.

Day to day operation and maintenance of the power production facility will be provided through a contract with G. Friesen and Associates (GFA). The contract includes all power production costs including monitoring digester operation, regular engine maintenance and annual accruals for overhauls. GFA's primary business focus is designing landfills and operating landfill gas to energy projects. GFA presently operates the Finley Buttes Bioenergy facility.

Operation of the manure handling equipment and effluent from the digester will be provided by Three Mile Canyon Farms.

The project will be owned and operated by a special purpose entity, TCF Biofuels, LLC, an affiliate of R. D. Offutt Company. R.D. Offutt is the largest potato grower in the United States with over 50,000 acres of potatoes grown annually for the frozen processing and fresh markets. R.D. Offutt Company is also involved in 11 potato processing facilities in four

-See THREE MILE CANYON FARMS page FIVE

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HARVEST HOURS END AUGUST 26TH
7AM -5PM MONDAY-FRIDAY
7AM-12PM SATURDAY
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