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## Environmentalists testify against Boardman coal terminal

By David Sykes

Groups of environmentalists from Hood River, La Grande and The Dalles showed up last Tuesday at a public meeting in Boardman to protest the building

of a coal terminal at the Port of Morrow that would ship coal from mines in the Powder River Basin of Wyoming down the Columbia River to Asia.

The meeting was held by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to hear comments on the proposed terminal, which would eventually handle up to 8.8 million tons of coal per year and mean jobs, tax money and money for schools in Morrow County.

The environmentalists claim the project will pollute the water and air, and want the DEQ to expand its authority to regulate the coal shipping project. Representatives from Friends of the Columbia Gorge and Oregon Rural Action based in supporters to testify against the proposed facility, which would be built by Ambre Energy, an Australian-based company with U.S. subsidiaries.

The public meeting was held in a large meet-



Environmental activists against the proposed Port of Morrow coal terminal pass out red shirts to their members during a public meeting last week in Boardman. —Photo by David Sykes

ing room at the Port and was filled to capacity with about 280 people in atten-

dance. People in favor of —See COAL TERMINAL/ PAGE SIX

HEPPNER

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# Gazette Times

VOL. 131 N.O. 49 8 Pages Wednesday, December 12, 2012 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

## Exiting council members honored at open house

The outgoing mayor and city council members for the City of Heppner were honored at an open house on Monday, Dec. 10, at Heppner City Hall. The current members will hand over the reigns to the newly-elected mayor and councilors at the end of the year.

Les Paustian, 74, is wrapping up his sixth and final year as Heppner's mayor. A long-time resident of Heppner, Paustian and his wife, Jan, moved here from Baker County in 1974 when he took a job at Kinzua Mill. Their daughter, Debbie, is a familiar face at the Bank of Eastern Oregon.

Paustian says his education includes, "A lot of degrees of hard knocks," as well as some college education. He was also on the Heppner City Council for some time prior to his stint as mayor.

Paustian said his greatest challenge as mayor was



Exiting council members (L-R) Cody High, Cindi Doherty, Keith Lewis and Les Paustian display the plaques they received honoring their terms of service with the City of Heppner on Monday. —Photo by David Sykes

"Just keeping things on an even keel." The best part, he says, was working with the people.

To the incoming mayor and councilors, he has this to say: "Carry on. I think we've got everything in place as far as projects going, so they just need to see those through."

Cindi Doherty, 55, has been on the council for 10

years, starting as a councilor mid-term in 2002. Originally from Ione, she moved to Heppner in 1975. She and husband Mike have three children, Chad, Adam and Kylie, and two grandchildren.

Doherty said the biggest and most challenging issues she faced while on

—See COUNCIL MEMBERS/ PAGE FIVE

## Celebrate Heppner Christmas Dec. 20

Celebrate Heppner Christmas will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds Thursday, Dec. 20, at 6 p.m. The evening will feature gifts, raffles and penny boards, as well as the return of the notorious Scrooge.

Pictures with the man in the red suit—Santa Claus—will take place from 6-7 p.m. with photographer Alita Nelson.

Also at 6 p.m., a dinner of ham with honey pineapple glaze, creamy mashed potatoes, Christ-

mas Jell-O salad, dinner rolls, Christmas cookies and warm apple cider will be catered by Alvin Liu of Cornerstone Gallery for \$7 per person. Bucknum's will cater a no-host bar.

Reward Card drawings will begin at 7 p.m.

## City considers locking Hager Park restrooms at night

By David Sykes

The Heppner City Council Monday discussed locking restrooms at Hager Park each night because of theft and vandalism. It has been reported that someone is breaking the holders to steal the toilet paper from the restrooms. Apparently, there has not been a similar problem at the other city park.

After some discussion, the council did not act on the request. Council member Cody High said the city

should hold off on locking restrooms and try and find a better solution, including citizen involvement in keeping an eye on the park, and asking the police to make more patrols in the area. The thefts and vandalism are apparently happening during the night.

In other business, it was reported that the new sidewalk ordinance governing use of city sidewalks for sales and events is almost ready for adoption. City Manager Kim Cutsforth

said she took a draft copy to several Main Street businesses, which made several small changes. The ordinance will be published for public review and then presented to the council at its January meeting.

Cutsforth also reported she is applying for a grant from The Wildhorse Foundation for money to build a partition in city hall. The city received a low bid last month of \$13,308 from JD

—See CITY COUNCIL/PAGE EIGHT

## Local veteran presented with awards display

Local Veteran Billy Adams of Heppner was presented with a display of all his military awards last week by retired U.S. Army Col. Chris Brown.

In making the presentation, Brown said he wished to honor Adams for his military service.

"I've come to know Billy and become friends with him after I left active military duty, thus we have never served together in service. In fact, we served in different wars and times—his was Korea, mine Vietnam—I was a U.S. Army officer and he was an USMC enlisted NCO—but



Retired U.S. Army Col. Chris Brown, left, presents USMC Veteran Bill Adams with a shadow box of all Adams' medals and awards. —Photo by David Sykes

one thing we shared in common even from different age generations was a

commitment to our nation —See VET HONORED/PAGE TWO

## School district discusses 2013-14 budget

By April Sykes

The proposed state education budget was a topic of concern at the Morrow County School District meeting held Monday at the Morrow Education Center

in Irrigon.

The MCSDD budget will be based on the final state education budget, which at the current time is expected to be between \$6.15 billion and \$6.4 billion. MCSDD

Superintendent Dirk Dirksen said that at least a \$6.3 billion figure is needed for districts to "be held harmless." Evaluation and

—See MCSDD BUDGET/PAGE SIX

## Pastors invited to submit Christmas messages

Businesses, individuals also invited to send in Christmas greetings

The Heppner Gazette-Times will publish a Christmas edition next week, on Dec. 19.

The Gazette-Times invites area pastors to submit Christmas messages to be published in the Dec. 19

edition. The deadline is Friday, Dec. 14, at 5 p.m. Messages can be dropped off at the Gazette office, emailed to editor@rapidsolve.net, or faxed to 541-676-9211.

Any businesses or

individuals who would like to have a Christmas greeting in the Dec. 19 Gazette should call 676-9228 or email megan@rapidsolve.net by Friday, Dec. 14, at 5 p.m.

## G-T closed for Christmas, New Year's

The Gazette-Times will be closed Monday, Dec. 24 and Tuesday, Dec. 25, for the Christmas holiday. The news and ad deadline for the Dec. 26 edition will be Friday, Dec. 21 at 5

p.m. Normal business hours will resume Wednesday, Dec. 26.

The Gazette-Times will also be closed Tuesday, Jan. 1, for New Year's Day. The news and ad deadline

for the Jan. 2 edition will be Friday, Dec. 28 at 5 p.m. Normal business hours will resume Wednesday, Jan. 2.

We wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas season.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:  
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

**NAPA TOOLS & EQUIPMENT SALE**  
DECEMBER 12TH - 23RD  
UP TO 40% OFF  
Morrow County Grain Growers  
Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgg.net