

## 'Surfin USA' theme for school dance



Pictured Left to Right: Kami Holtz, Nicole Myers and Jordan Sweeney are Hanging 10 with their surf board.

Heppner Elementary School families will "Hang 10" on April 18 during the school's annual school dance. "Surfin' USA" is the theme and Mrs. Gentry has been busy teaching students great beach dances like The Twist, The Freddie, and The Swim. Desert Sounds Music will provide the tunes from 7-9 p.m. Snacks will be served and items will be raffled, including a Mini iPad. The dance will be held at the school gym and hosted by the Parent Teacher Club and is free of charge.

## Power from wind farm will tie into the BPA substation

Comment period on project ends Monday

By Patty Nance

When farmers see 10 miles of wide open space they might think of grain or hay. When hunters see the same 10 miles, they no doubt think of game birds, mule deer and even cougars.

But when Andrew O'Connell, president of Wheatridge Energy looks at the very same land he sees hundreds of wind towers and miles and miles of power transmission lines.

The Wheatridge Wind Energy project, located in both Morrow and Umatilla counties, covers over

59,000 acres and comes to within two miles of Willow Creek Country Club and two and one-half miles of Lexington.

O'Connell, who is no stranger to wind development projects in Oregon, says the company is in the early stages of project's development. A Notice of Intent was filed in mid-March by the company with the Oregon Dept. of Energy and the comment period for that first step of the project ends Monday, April 15.

O'Connell said the maps for the project that would include turbine and power line placements are

in the development stage but there are no layouts yet.

He did say the 10 miles of power transmission lines, which connect Wheatridge West and Wheatridge East, will go into the BPA substation located North of Stanfield.

Public comments are due by April 15 and must be submitted in writing by mail, e-mail, hand delivery or fax. Please send comments to: Andrea Goodwin, Siting Analyst, Oregon Department of Energy, 395 E. Highland Ave., Hermiston, OR 97838. E-mail: andrea.goodwin@state.or.us.

## Health district board interviews CEO candidates

The Morrow County Health District Board interviewed eight candidates for the district's CEO's position at their meeting held April 3.

Following the interview of the eight using Skype in executive session, the board narrowed the field down to two or possibly three candidates for personal interviews. Human Resources Director Patti Allstott said that the district originally received over 50 applications for the job.

The new administrator will take the spot left vacant by former CEO Michael Blauer who left the district to take an administrative position in Seaside. Former CEO Victor Vander Does has agreed to fill the position in the interim.

Also at the meeting, the board approved a resolution which will enable the district to borrow up to \$95,000 from the Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation.

Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney released the profit/loss statement for the month of February which showed a \$106,147 gain for the district, with \$725,712 in gross patient revenue, less \$20,436 in bad debts and \$102,540 in contractual and other adjustments for a total of

\$122,977 in revenue deductions; \$116,118 in tax revenue and \$38,895 in other operating revenue for \$757,748 in total operating revenue; \$644,360 in total operating expenses, and a \$12,758 non-operating gain.

Mahoney reported that the financial office has gotten the accounts receivable down to less than 50 days, which was somewhat of an accomplishment.

Interim CEO Vander Does commented on the state of the district, saying, "Things look pretty good. The plant looks pretty good. There are some infrastructure things." "It's interesting how little things change in four years," he added. Vander Does left the district four years ago, but served as administrator for 10 years prior to that. Blauer was CEO for four years.

The board briefly discussed district goals, commenting that quality care and patient safety were the most important issues for the district.

Mahoney told the board that the Irrigon Clinic remodeling project is now complete. The board plans to schedule a grand opening in the near future.

In other business board Chair Larry Mills commented that the board needs

to commence discussion about the proposed levy.

Also at the meeting, the board:

-received the following report: Pioneer Memorial Hospital had six admissions for February, five swing bed admissions, nine admitted for observation, one swing nursing facility admission, 425 outpatients, 54 total emergency room encounters, 1,432 lab tests, 106 x-ray procedures, 21 CT scans, 22 EKG tests, one treadmill procedure, seven colonoscopy procedures, two endoscopy procedures, one colon/endoscopy procedure, 127 respiratory therapy procedures; Home Health had 96 patient visits; Hospice had two admissions; pharmacy had 1,832 drug doses for \$104,268 in revenue; Pioneer Memorial Clinic had 412 patient visits, 26 new patients, 28 seen by a nurse and 11 no-shows; Irrigon Medical Clinic had 181 patient visits, 21 new patients, 54 seen by a nurse and five no-shows; Heppner Ambulance had 22 total page-outs with 17 transports for \$22,478 in revenue, Boardman Ambulance had 21 page-outs with 10 transports for \$12,847 in revenue and Irrigon Ambulance had 19 page-outs with 17 transports for \$19,711 in revenue; there were two flights.

## Justice Court Report

Morrow County Justice of the Peace Ann Spicer has released the following Justice Court Report.

- Gary A. Liesegang, 46, Estacada, OR, wildlife violation reduced to violation, pleads no contest, \$454 fine, \$250 restitution. Hunting privileges suspended for one year.

- Justin R Howey, 19, Heppner, littering, \$454 fine.

- Richard G. Peck, 78, Lexington, permit unlawful operation of vehicle, \$260 fine.

- Trent Cannon, 19, Heppner, fail to obey traffic control device, \$260 fine.

## Farmer's market organizational meeting set



Willow Creek Farmer's Market will soon return to Heppner for a fifth season. File Photo

Spring is in the air and it's time for gardeners, crafters and other interested in participating in the Willow Creek Farmer's Market to begin planning for season.

An organizational meeting will be held April 18 at Heppner City Hall at 5 p.m. A discussion will be held about location, day, times and other related topics.

For more information contact Margaret Flaherty at 541-676-5972.

## Despite risks, more Oregonians discover the joy of beekeeping

Beekeepers nationwide have seen record losses in their hives in recent years, and Oregon is no exception. That has not discouraged newcomers from giving it a try, however, either as hobbyists or with an eye on making it a business.

This weekend in southwest Oregon, more than 60 people attended "Beginners Bee School," where members of the Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association shared their knowledge. Carl Lorenz, a member of Bee School sponsor Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association (SOBA), said the benefits of beekeeping outweigh the challenges.

"I'm finding that most of the people have heard about the hive collapse and the problems with bees, and they want to give it a shot themselves," he said. "They want to have pollinators for their own garden - maybe

have more cucumbers, you know. It does increase your cucumbers and a number of different crops strongly, if you have bees."

Lorenz said renting out hives to farmers for crop pollination can also be profitable. However, the list of possible hazards for bees includes pesticides and bacterial infections, wildfires and drought - and not all cities allow hives in neighborhoods.

Steve Ellis is part of a national lawsuit claiming the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is not doing enough to keep bee-toxic pesticides off the market.

Ellis said he has lost nearly two-thirds of his hives and didn't have enough to fulfill this year's pollination contracts with almond growers in California. There is definitely room for more beekeepers on the West Coast, he said.

"Almonds alone require 1.5 million hives of bees," Ellis said. "In the United States on a good day, we only have two million hives - and we haven't had a 'good day' for quite a while."

Beekeepers in Colorado, Florida and New York, and several environmental

groups, are also plaintiffs in the lawsuit. Last year, beekeepers across the country reported losses of 40 percent to 50 percent of their hives.

Lorenz said Oregon beekeepers are concerned about another hot, dry summer, and he suggested something anyone can do now to help their local bees survive.

"Drought has a horrible effect on bees," Lorenz said. "When there's a drought, it's really important that you plant bee-friendly flowers around your house and keep them irrigated. It's really landscaping that causes bees to survive hard times like that."

More information is available on the Oregon State Beekeepers Association website, www.orsba.org. Click on "Beekeeping Schools and Events."

## Rep. Smith welcomes Heppner High to Capitol

Today, about 40 students from Heppner High School enjoyed a tour of the Capitol, the Oregon Supreme Court, and members of the choir sang during the Opening Ceremonies of the Oregon House of Representatives. Rep. Smith also spent an hour with the students explaining exactly how the legislative process works.

During the Opening Ceremonies of the House of Representatives, choir members led by Mr. Richard Drake sang music entitled, "Al ShloshaD'varim." The translation of this is: The World is Sustained by Three Things: Truth, Justice and Peace.

Patrick Collins, a student from Heppner High School said, "It was a great

visit. We learned about our history and the opportunity to sing in the House of Representatives was awesome."

Mr. Drake, the Heppner High School K-12 Music Director said, "We appreciate Representative Smith rolling out the red carpet for us. This is an opportunity of a lifetime to both sing and see our gov-

ernment in action."

"It was a pleasure to meet with these young people from Heppner High School. They represented their community very well. I believe they left with a better understanding of their responsibilities and rights as citizens of Oregon," said Representative Smith.

**If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, help is available and that help is FREE of charge.**

If YOU have a family member who suffers from gambling addiction, YOU can also receive FREE treatment even if the gambler is not receiving treatment.

If you are a resident of Morrow County and you wish to take advantage of the services above or desire more information, Please call any of the following numbers to set up a LOCAL appointment or just to talk:

Bobby Harris @ 541-676-9925 or 541-256-0175  
Community Counseling Solutions (CCS) @ 541-676-9161  
OR 1-877-695-4648 (1-888-MYLIMIT)

Have a news story or photo for the Gazette?  
e-mail editor@rapidsolve.net, call 541-676-9228 or stop by  
the office on Willow Street, Heppner  
DEADLINE- MONDAY AT 5:00 pm