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Courthouse renovations begin

The Morrow County Courthouse in Heppner is in the early stages of its face 'lift.' After careful evaluation by engineers, it was determined that the bell tower of the courthouse has deteriorated and needs to be repaired in the near future. The original bid was

for a helicopter to lift the bell tower but, after careful review, the helicopter companies were concerned that the structure "...would disintegrate in the prop wash." A second bid was released for a crane to lift the bell tower.

Northwest Crane Service was the successful bidder for the crane operation, with a bid amount of \$13,720 for lifting the bell tower and replacing the bell tower. They will bring in a 225-ton crane, which will be set up in the lower parking lot behind the courthouse.

The target date for the actual lift will be during the week of July 22-26. A more specific date will be selected in the next week, subject to weather.

Preliminary work has begun in the clock tower. The clock is being dismantled and removed. Residents may notice in the near future that the bell will not be striking on the hour.

Preparations of the pad in the lower parking lot will begin, still allowing for access to the courthouse for those with DMV Disabled Parking Permits.

The estimated cost to hire a crane and remove the clock tower, prepare for the crane, repair the clock tower, and then replace the bell tower is over \$300,000 and will require closing the courthouse for at least one



The long-anticipated lift that will begin the renovation of the Morrow County Courthouse clock tower (pictured in detail below) is scheduled for the middle of this month, with a date to be release later. -Contributed photos

day for the lift and one day for the replacement.

The dome, which is estimated to weigh over 7,000 pounds, will be lifted by crane and placed on a trailer and will be taken off-site for renovations.

The courthouse bell, which weighs over 3,000 pounds, will be removed in a second 'lift' and taken off-site for renovations as well. After renovations are complete, the process will be reversed.

While it will be necessary to close the courthouse for the safety of the employees, the public and the contractor, the closures will be kept to a minimum in order to provide services to the public.

Safety zones will be established around the courthouse and will be enforced. The public is encouraged to watch the process from



a safe distance. There are many places in town that will provide a good view of the action while also being outside of the safety zones.

As updates become available, they will be provided in the Heppner Gazette-Times, on the Morrow County website at <http://morrowcountyoregon.com/clock-tower-updates/>, and on the new 'Morrow County Clock Tower Renovation' Facebook page.

HEPPNER

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G-Tazette Times

VOL. 132 N.O. 27 8 Pages Wednesday, July 3, 2013 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Summer school program gives kids academic boost

By Andrea Di Salvo

Students recently got a boost in their academics thanks to the summer school programs at Heppner schools.

The programs have been in operation for several years at Heppner schools; this year they ran from 8-11 a.m. June 19-27 at both Heppner Elementary School and Heppner Jr./Sr. High School. Reasons for summer school attendance ranged from credit retrieval—making up necessary classes that were failed or missed for some reason—to a little extra tutoring to meet rigorous state benchmarks or prepare for the next grade level.

According to Heppner principal Matt Combe, participation in summer school



HES teacher Melissa Coiner, a main coordinator for the summer school program at the elementary school, tutors a pair of first-graders during this year's session. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

was not an open invitation to all students, but was based on need. School staff looked at certain strand da-

ta—that is, different strands of learning in different subjects. -See SUMMER SCHOOL/PAGE FIVE

G-T closed for Fourth of July

The Gazette-Times office will be closed on Thursday, July 4, in observance of the holiday. We wish everyone a happy and safe Independence Day.

Ione Red, White & Blues 2013

- Wednesday, July 3**
 Golf Tournament—Willow Creek Country Club...9 a.m.
 Topic Club Book Sale—Ione Legion Hall...9 a.m.-6 p.m.
 Blast Zone Paintball—Stefani Lot (concessions on site)...10 a.m.-dark
 Talent Show—Ione City Park...6 p.m.
 Music by Frank Carlson—Ione City Park...Following
- Thursday, July 4**
 Fireman's Breakfast—Ione Fire Hall...7 a.m.-10 a.m.
 5k Walk/Run—Lady Cardinal Basketball/Wounded Warrior project, \$10 fee...7 a.m.
 2013 Craft Fair—Ione Legion Hall...9 a.m.-6 p.m.
 Food Vendors, Information Booths/Raffle Tickets—Ione City Park
 Park Entertainment by Local Artists
 Blues Cruise Car Show—Ione City Park...10:30 a.m.
 Fish Pond, Frog Jump, Bike Raffle—Ione Fire Hall/City Park...11 a.m.
 Altar Society Pie Sale—Ione Fire Hall...11 a.m.
 Red, White & Blues Parade—Grand Marshals Jim & Monica Swanson...1 p.m.
 Park Activities Begin...1 p.m.
 Ken Turner Memorial Horseshoe Tournament—Horseshoe Pits
 Petting Zoo—Ione City Park
 Blast Zone Paintball—Stefani Lot (concessions on site)...10 a.m.-dark
 American Legion Bingo—Ione Legion Hall...2 p.m.
 Music by Corey Peterson—On Stage...after parade until 3 p.m.
 Blues Bands—On Stage/Ione Amphitheater...3-10 p.m.
 Hi Fi Mojo...3-4:15 p.m. Billy D and the Hoodoos...4:45-6 p.m.
 Tommy Tutone...6:30-8 p.m. The Sonny Hess & Vicki Stevens Band...8:30-10 p.m.
 Legion Auxiliary Baskets (silent auction @ Ione Deli)...4:30 p.m.
 Boat Trip Auction—On Stage/Ione Amphitheater...6:15 p.m.
 Raffle Drawings—On Stage/Ione Amphitheater...6:30 p.m.
 Fireworks Display...dusk (about 10 p.m.)
- Friday, July 5**
 Whispering Pines Equestrian Patriot Trail Ride—Three miles north of OHV Park...
 Sign-up begins at 10 a.m. for three-day event
 Ione's Fourth of July celebration is sponsored in part by Morrow County Unified Recreation District.

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

Morrow County assessor announces retirement

At the June 26 meeting of the Morrow County Court, Greg Sweek, county assessor and tax collector, announced that he has decided to retire effective September 3 of this year.

He said it was "...a bittersweet moment for me. I am very much looking forward to retirement, but I am going to miss those people I have worked closely with."

Greg has worked in the assessor's office since July 11, 1977 and was appointed as assessor in 1979.

There have been many changes in the assessor's office since then.

The assessor's office and the tax collector's office were merged in 2001 as a cost-saving measure. Technology also has changed dramatically during Greg's tenure with the county; there have been several hardware and software improvements over the years, each with their own challenges.

Greg's retirement fol-

lows the decision by another long-term assessor's office employee, Becky Doherty, who has announced her retirement.



Greg Sweek

With the prospect of losing two people with a great deal of knowledge about assessment and tax, the court moved forward with appointing a replacement assessor, Mike Gorman. Mike has worked in the assessor's office since August of 2002.

Ione School District receives \$118,000 in local grants

By April Sykes

The Ione School Board learned at their June 25 regular meeting that the district has received \$118,000 in local grants.

Ione School Principal Jerry Archer announced that the district received \$118,000 from ICABO (Ione Community Agri-Business Organization) and the Ione Education Foundation to fund projects and increased programs at the Ione School.

Ione Education, through ICABO, gave the district \$49,000 for 80 iPads to be used by virtually all the students at the school.

The Ione Education Foundation grant, through ICABO, paid for the iPads, at \$479 each, along with Otterbox Defender Series at \$90 each, Lightspeed at \$20 each and apps at \$1,880.

According to Archer, the purchase of 80 iPads would expand the program to include each middle-school student, as well as

high-school students, and would allow a lab in each elementary school classroom.

The breakdown would include 16 to go with the 16 the district is already

using with seniors for the projected 32 ninth-graders; 36 to go with the six they already have for grades six-eight; 22 to go with

-See IONE SCHOOL GRANTS/PAGE EIGHT

Heppner remembers



Three local ladies traveled to New York last week and placed a rock at the Tree of Life (above), the only surviving tree of the 9/11 attack, at Ground Zero. The rock will remain there for a short period and then be placed in the museum currently being built at Ground Zero. -Contributed photo

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