

## InterMountain ESD hires new special education director

PENDLETON, OR—The InterMountain Education Service District has hired a new special education director. Leigh Nolte started as the Special Education Director for the Far West Zone on July 1. She replaces Sarah Crane-Simpson, who announced in April she would resign from IMESD to become the lone School District superintendent.

Nolte, who is from Cove, will serve the Morrow County, Ione, and Umatilla School Districts in her capacity as Special Education Director of the Far West Zone. Her primary

department responsibilities lie within school psychology/behavioral sciences, long-term care and treatment, and nursing.

She comes to IMESD from the Union School District, where she was a special education teacher. Nolte has primarily taught in small, K-12 rural school districts throughout her education career.

"I'm really excited about supporting adults who work in special education," Nolte said. "I've always worked directly

with kids, but I know how important a sense of support can be to those working in the classrooms and with the kids."



Leigh Nolte

Nolte has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Eastern Oregon State College (La Grande), and a Special Education Licensure from Southern Oregon State College (Ashland). In addition, Nolte also possesses an Initial Administrator's License and master's degree in educational leadership from Lewis & Clark College (Portland).

## NEW PASTOR

Continued from PAGE ONE mento in 1999.

What most people wouldn't realize right away is that Sharma has been partly deaf since age five. She is considered "post-lingually" deaf, which means she lost her hearing after she learned to speak her first language (English). It was during college that she felt drawn to ministry with the deaf community and others who are disabled. She says that, while great strides have been made in education, those disabilities, like the deaf, are often underserved in the area of their faith.

"I saw a great need for the church to open it's doors a little wider," says Sharma, adding that that has been the theme of her ministry ever since—opening the doors of the church to the whole community, not just a segment.

She went on to live out that call, and received her master's degree in divinity from Wesley Theological Seminary in 2003.

That led first to service at Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf in Baltimore, MD in 2003.

She stayed there for a year before taking a three-point call to Gooding, Shoshone and Richfield United Methodist churches in Idaho in 2004.

In 2006, she received a call to Brooklyn United Methodist Church and Jacksonville United Methodist Deaf Faith Community Church, in Jacksonville, IL,

where she remained until her call to Heppner.

With her on this journey are her husband, Aditya, and son, eight-year-old Ashwin. It was while in college in D.C. that her then-rommate introduced her to Aditya Sharma, a native of New Delhi, India, who was in the country on a student visa.

They "hit it off really well," she says, and started dating. They later became engaged but hit a hurdle when Aditya's family asked him to return to India after 9/11, fearing for his safety in the U.S. Though the logistics of planning a wedding internationally were difficult, they did eventually get married in India in 2004, with festivities that went until 5 a.m.

"They have long weddings in India," she says. "It was unusual for me but normal for them."

Aditya is also deaf, but is an avid sportsman despite that. He especially enjoys table tennis, in which he was the national deaf champion in India in 1999. He currently teaches math and driver's education, as well as coaches, at the School for the Deaf in Gooding, ID.

Sharma says she loves reading and creative writing. She also loves camping, hiking, bicycling, cross country skiing, ice skating and inline skating. She says she has walked three 5k runs in the past year and is looking for her next one.

She and Aditya enjoy motorcycleing, hosting small

dinner parties—Aditya cooks gourmet Indian and Asian-style food—and traveling both in the U.S. and internationally for mission projects and for leisure.

Sharma says she has been to Mexico, Nicaragua, Kenya, Zimbabwe and India, and has traveled through many other countries en route to these. She travels regularly to India to visit with her in-laws, and she has dreams of returning for further mission work in Kenya and Zimbabwe someday soon.

The family has only been in Heppner since Saturday, but Sharma says it has been great so far.

"So far everybody has been friendly, welcoming and helpful," she says, adding that there were around a dozen people on hand to help them move in when they arrived last weekend. She says a man who happened to be jogging by—not even a member of the Methodist church—stopped and offered to carry a few boxes into the house.

The town also gets a thumbs-up from son, Ashwin, who is excited about the pool, the park, the library, and the new friends he has already made.

A community meet-and-greet ice-cream social is planned for Sunday, July 21, at 12:30 p.m. at Hager Park in Heppner for Heppner Methodist church members and the greater Heppner community to get to know Pastor Elke. All are invited.

## July yard of the month announced

By Kay Proctor

Heppner Volunteers presented July's Yard of the Month honors to Joan Dieter and the late Mel Dieter at 215 N. Gale.

The Dieters purchased the property in 2010 and started right away putting their personal improvements to the yard and the home. Sadly, Mel was only able to enjoy their place until September, 2012.

Joan and Mel began their married life in the Salem countryside and later lived outside of Stanfield. They moved to Heppner for Joan's work as staff accountant at Columbia Basin Electric Co-operative.

While the couple worked together on projects, Mel was able to devote lots of time to their home, since he was retired from work as a welder/fabricator. With a blended family of 10 children, 26 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren, family would pitch in, too.

Originally from Texas, Mel did things big and did things well. Posts in the horseshoe pits he built were anchored in five-gallon buckets of cement, and have wooden backboards and framed screens to protect the sand. The shoes hang nearby on the solid-wood fence he built. A wood shelf covers the shoes and provides a handy place to set drinks while pitching shoes.

Rows of long-established hedges had to be pulled out with a pick-up and the lawn reseeded. An old fence was removed. Three pickup loads of river rock were hauled off, than compost and mulch were hauled in for flower beds. Mel edged the beds with a miniature white picket fence he designed and created. The front porch and sidewalk were spruced up



Horseshoes hang on the solid-wood fence Mel Dieter built, ready for a game in the carefully-crafted horseshoe pits. —Photo by Kay Proctor



Joan Dieter with a picture of her late husband Mel Dieter (inset). —Photo by Kay Proctor

and Mel added an iron railing he made. The house's exterior had gutters installed and older windows replaced.

Mel's favorite part of the yard was the generous back patio they put in, where he enjoyed his coffee every morning. Custom built with no steps, a canopy was added so they could both use their grill and barbecue year round. Mel specialized in brisket, beef ribs and beef bacon; no pork. When smoking beef, he used an apple/pecan wood-chip mixer, more often, mesquite chips. No surprise for a man who farmed and ranched in Texas. And, of course, the Lone Star state flag still flies along with Old Glory by the front porch. An iron welcome sign by Mel hangs on the front gate while an iron Lone Star is on the side gate. A Texas license plate is on the door of his shop.

Calling it a "work-in-progress," Joan who is originally from central Washington, "enjoys getting her hands dirty" working in the yard. She especially likes the pear tree and snowball shrub they planted. A healthy, but trimmed back, Marionberry that started on

their Salem farm produces enough fruit to remind her of western Oregon. Although her home is in town now, Joan states that Heppner "is peaceful" and "is like living in the country."

Preparing for an upcoming family wedding, selling Mary Kay products, working full-time and doing yard work (with help from a couple of neighbors) have kept Joan busy since last September. Over Memorial Day weekend, a gathering of 63 friends and family members met in her yard to honor Mel. She has reminders of his woodworking skills with furniture and gunstocks, and mentions how her husband liked to "keep moving." Joan shares that few people knew Mel did not have the use of his left hand, the results of a neck and back injury. She says she feels their Yard of the Month recognition is a tribute to her husband's hard work. That seems appropriate; hard work is appreciated by all those who recognize it.

Yard of the Month is co-sponsored by MCGG-Green Feed, the City of Heppner and the Heppner Volunteers.

## CREZ MAKES A LIST

Zone's list of county's charitable organizations is growing, says Zone manager

Continued from PAGE ONE

When businesses locate in the CREZ, they negotiate deals with the board and pay fees in lieu of property taxes, which will be lower than property taxes would be if they had not located in the enterprise zone. The zone consists mainly of a 12-square-mile area at the Port of Morrow in Boardman.

Companies will pay these negotiated fees over three to 15 years to the CREZ, which will in turn distribute the funds to tax districts affected by the location of the businesses there. If they choose, however, businesses may donate

part of those fees to charitable organizations that may include anything from chambers of commerce to museums, and any other organization not politically or religiously oriented, the board has said.

As an example, Pioneer Memorial Hospital Foundation, Morrow County Museum, OHV Park, 4-H, ICABO, Heppner Chamber of Commerce and the South Morrow Neighborhood Center are just some of the organizations that have contacted McLane to be included on the list.

CREZ board members said Monday they want the list to be as inclusive as

possible and it will be limited only to organizations located in Morrow County. Anyone who wants their organization included can email McLane at [cmclane@co.morrow.or.us](mailto:cmclane@co.morrow.or.us), or call her office at 541-922-4624.

"I think we are going to end up with a nice long list," McLane said.

"Just because you are on the list doesn't mean you are going to get something," said acting CREZ Board Chairman Don Russell. "We want to make it as all-inclusive as possible but it's up to the businesses who they give their money to."

So far the CREZ has deals lined up over the next 15 years that will bring in over \$21 million, with more businesses and money to come. Distribution of the majority of the funds will be decided by the CREZ board and given to taxing

districts deemed by the board to be most affected by the businesses locating in the Boardman area...for example, fire and police services.

In other business, the board discussed fees of \$45,000 that have been received by the CREZ but were deposited in Morrow County government accounts. The board learned that it may lose this money as it did not get the money transferred to its new fiscal agent, the City of Boardman, before the end of the county fiscal year. The money may roll over into the county's new budget year and therefore not be transferrable to CREZ. Some on the board suggested that the money could be counted as reimbursement for time McLane spent as CREZ manager; McLane is an employee of Morrow County as county

planner.

The board also briefly discussed a meeting planned on July 25 at 7 p.m. at the Port of Morrow Wells Springs room. The recreation district has invited all the taxing districts in the Columbia River Enterprise Zone II to "...begin a conversation regarding Enterprise Zone negotiations," according to a meeting notice from the recreation district.

The CREZ board is made up two members each from Morrow County, City of Boardman and the Port of Morrow. These members will decide how the money will be spent, and at least one tax district has asked for more input into the process of how the funds will be disbursed.

A new board member will be named soon, as county assessor Greg

Sweek has announced his resignation. Since he is also a board member of CREZ, his resignation will cause a vacancy on the board. At this time, Morrow County Commissioner Leann Rea and Sweek represent Morrow County on the CREZ board. County Judge Terry Tallman and Ken Grieb are alternates on the board and the county court will name a new board member. Mike Gorman has been named the replacement for Sweek as county assessor, and he will be giving technical taxing advice to the CREZ board during future negotiations with businesses.

The board set its next meeting for July 15 at 10 a.m. at the Port of Morrow. McLane said anyone wishing to be notified of future meetings should contact her and they would be added to the email notification list.

**PROPANE appliance and tank sets**

**July 10% DISCOUNT on installs**

**Call for quotes. Restrictions apply**

**Morrow County Grain Growers Inc.**



**Phone: 541-989-8221**

**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)

## County parks meeting postponed

The Morrow County Parks quarterly meeting set for July 16 will be postponed until Tuesday, October 22, at 1 p.m., location to be determined. Anyone with questions or concerns, notify Betty Gray, Morrow County Parks Chairman, at 541-989-8214 or [bgray@co.morrow.or.us](mailto:bgray@co.morrow.or.us). Meetings are open to the public; anyone with suggestions or concerns regarding county parks is invited to attend.