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School district to grade based on proficiency, not behavior

New food standards also set in place

By April Sykes

The Morrow County School Board, at its August 12 meeting in Heppner, voted to put policy in place that student grading will be on a proficiency basis, not taking into account student misbehavior or absences. In other words, if a student can pass the proficiency tests, regardless of his behavior or number of absences, then he will pass.

Also at the meeting, Superintendent Dirk Dirksen swore in new board member Rhonda Hamby. *-See MCSD SETS GRADING STANDARDS/PAGE SEVEN*



New Morrow County School Board member Rhonda Hamby (left) and returning members Thad Killingbeck (second from left) and Barney Lindsay (right) were sworn in at the last MCSD meeting in Heppner. Also on the board is Becky Kindle (second from right). *-Photo by April Sykes*

Hermiston business owner the 'ticket' to a night out for Morrow Ag youth

By Andrea Di Salvo

Morrow County 4-H and FFA members will get a night at the rodeo this year, thanks to an area business owner.

Lou Lyons—who gave his age as “just old”—is the owner of Elmer’s Irrigation & Supplies in Hermiston. He said he has purchased 200 tickets to Friday evening’s performance of the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo in Heppner, to be handed out to 4-H and FFA members who are showing or exhibiting in the Morrow County Fair this year. He said it doesn’t matter whether they show livestock or home ec projects; what matters is giving these hard-working kids a night off.

“I’ve been involved with FFA and 4-H for years and they tie in together with the rodeo and them being at the fair,” said Lyons. “It just gives them a break, with them being there all week. Gives them an opportunity to do something.”

It’s a project Lyons has undertaken for more than a decade in Umatilla County.

He said he was approached by the rodeo there in 2000; he began buying tickets for the Umatilla County youth that year and has been doing so ever since, to the tune of around 400 tickets per year.

He said he provides this for the FFA and 4-H kids specifically because he believes in the programs. “The programs are

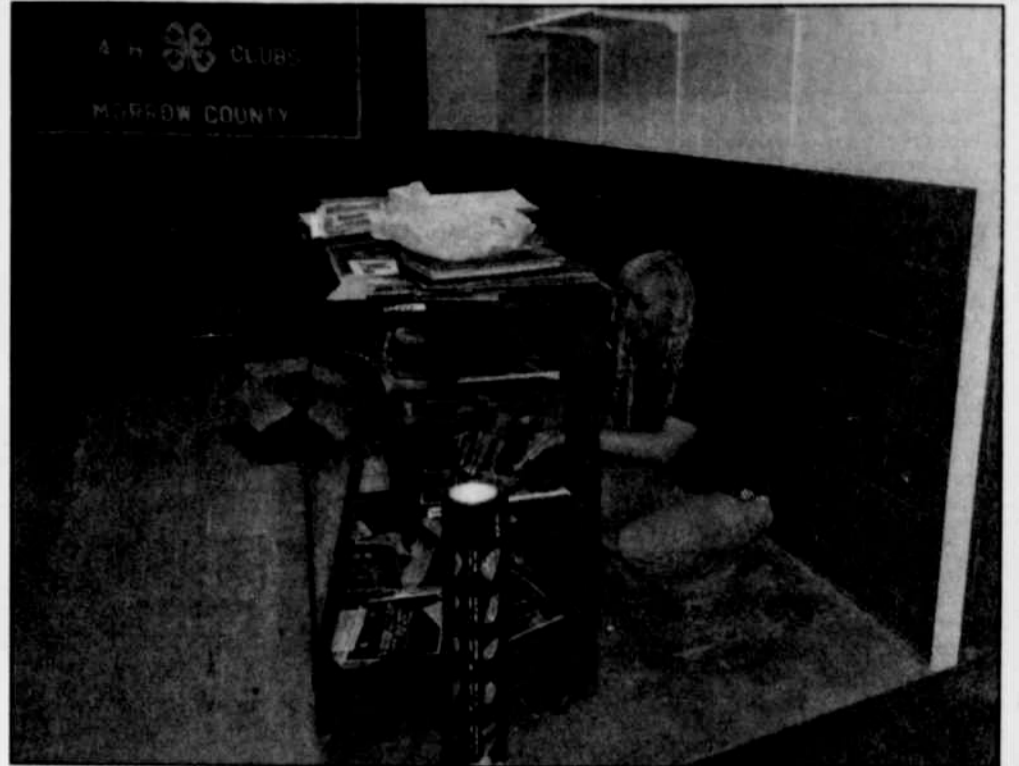
great. It gives the kids the opportunity to do something positive,” said Lyons.

In Umatilla County, the Farm City Pro Rodeo holds a “Youth and Ag Night” every year. Not only are tickets given for 4-H and FFA youth to attend the rodeo, but Elmer’s Irrigation sponsors a “calf dressing” contest in which calves are turned loose in the arena and the youth have to chase them down, put t-shirts on them and bring them back to the circle.

“It’s a fun event. Basically we’re trying to acknowledge the children who are doing the FFA and 4-H,” said Lyons.

Just this year, Lyons said, he started to wonder

Getting ready to celebrate the centennial



4-H Ambassador Stacey Halvorsen of Ione puts some finishing touches on a display in the 4-H Annex on Monday in preparation for the Morrow County Fair in Heppner. Morrow County’s centennial fair takes place this week, Aug. 14-17. *-Photo by Andrea Di Salvo*

OHV Peeping Tom pled on ‘attempted’ invasion of privacy

Confession suppressed based on technicalities

By Andrea Di Salvo

It has been a little more than a year since the Morrow County Sheriff’s Office arrested Morrow/Grant OHV Park host John Earl McBride, 55, on multiple counts of Invasion of Privacy and Criminal Mischief II. What happened after that could be termed a legal tap-dance, with the lawyers maneuvering over McBride’s fate.

For those unfamiliar with the case, early in July 2012, MCSO Reserve Deputy Todd Siex was contacted by individuals who were using the park showers; the men reported to Siex that they had located holes in the shower stalls. More investigation revealed that the holes were drilled so an observer standing on the other side of the wall, in

the maintenance area of the bathroom/shower facilities, could see into the shower stalls.

In addition, a woman observed McBride entering the maintenance area after individuals went into the showers and exiting again after the people were finished in the shower area.

McBride, of Pilot Rock, was a contract vendor acting as the camp host at the Morrow/Grant OHV Park. He had had that position as a contract vendor for the past two seasons.

Based on the information gathered by Siex, Reserve Deputy Keri Jarmer was assigned to check into the park and use the bathroom shower,

though she was to remain fully clothed. Meanwhile, Detective Karen Dike observed from a distance.

She saw McBride entering the maintenance space; Dike then opened the door and caught McBride in the act of peeping through one of the drilled holes. Dike arrested McBride on the scene.

That was when things got sticky.

Dike cuffed McBride and, according to court records, escorted him to the office, not yet having advised him of his Miranda rights. On the way, McBride started to talk, confessing, police said, not only to his

-See OHV PEEPING TOM/ PAGE FOUR



John Earl McBride

Electric rates to increase Oct. 1

Bonneville Power Administration has announced a 9 percent wholesale power rate increase and an 11 percent transmission rate increase effective Oct. 1, 2013. BPA says it needs the rate increase to support improvements to the federal hydropower and transmission systems.

“I recognize the rate increase will be challenging for customers,” said Elliot Mainzer, BPA Acting Administrator, “but the increases are necessary so that we can preserve the long-term value of the federal hydro-generation system and the high voltage transmission lines that serve the Pacific Northwest.”

The power rate increase stems from higher cost to operate and maintain the

hydro system, higher long-term fish and wildlife costs, and reduced revenues from surplus power sales due to lower surplus market prices.

For transmission customers, the rate increase stems from a growing construction program driven by the need to repair and replace aging transmission facilities and increased spending on government and security requirements.

Jerry Healy, Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative Manager, said, “The Board of Directors will carefully review the increased power and transmission cost from BPA and allocate these costs based on a

-See ELECTRIC RATE INCREASE/PAGE THREE

Buchholz leaving ranger district for Coos Bay

Todd Buchholz, Umatilla National Forest Heppner District Ranger, will be leaving his post next month. Buchholz has accepted a position with the Bureau of Land Management in Coos Bay as Umpqua Area Field Manager, effective Sept. 9.

Buchholz, 57, moved to Heppner in his role as district ranger in May of 2010. He expects his last

day to be Sept. 5, though he says putting out fires in the district—literally—will keep him working until the very end.

He and his wife, Jean, are moving to Coos Bay mainly to be closer to family. Buchholz said, though he looks forward to being closer to “the wet.” He added that another incentive is that Jean may be able to return to teaching college-level math at the local

community college there. She, like her husband, is active in the community, starting and leading a local yoga group, volunteering time working with gifted and talented math students at Heppner High School, and playing saxophone in the pep band.

“Heppner was my first ranger gig, and it’s been wonderful,” Buchholz said. “People in town have been very welcoming, friendly

-See RANGER LEAVING/ PAGE TWO

Heppner announces upcoming construction schedule

The city of Heppner has announced that construction will be halted on Elder and Quaid streets in Heppner Thursday, Aug. 15, and Friday, Aug. 16, to

allow for through traffic on these streets during fair and rodeo.

The sidewalk at Baltimore from Main Street to the grade school

will continue to be closed in preparation for new sidewalks and retaining walls.

-See HEPPNER CONSTRUCTION/PAGE SEVEN

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