

Local woman 'enormously happy' city to put in driveway entrance

By David Sykes

A local woman says she is "enormously happy" the city has decided to put in a driveway opening in front of her house in Heppner, thus allowing her vehicle

access to her property.

Carolyn McDaniel had originally been told that it was her problem that no driveway entrance had been installed to her property during the recently completed street, sidewalk and gutter upgrade on Water Street, and she would just have to live with it. However, after attending Monday's council meeting to discuss the problem, an engineer showed up at her door the next morning and told her the problem would be fixed and the driveway would, in fact, be installed.

"Mitch Ferguson came and he had a couple of people with him and they spray painted the curb," McDaniel said. "My health is deteriorating and I did not think I would be able to get on and off my property with a motorized scooter or other vehicle," said the 72-year-old McDaniel, who has cancer and PTSD.

"My health is going to do nothing but deteriorate," she pointed out. "I need that access."

Before the Water Street upgrade there were no curbs



Carolyn McDaniel stands in front of her house where fresh spray paint marks the spot where a driveway will be added for her property. McDaniel says she especially needs the access because of her deteriorating health. -Photo by David Sykes

or gutters on Water Street, so the sidewalks and all the properties were level with the street.

Ferguson Engineering did the engineering work and had added driveways on all the other homes on Water Street but somehow missed McDaniel's home. Construction of sidewalks, curbs, gutters and paving was completed without her having any vehicle access included to her property.

At Monday's council meeting McDaniel said she was not in good health and

on top of that did not know anything about engineering a street, so did not feel it was her job to have to find a way around the mistake.

"I can't get a wheelchair, motorized cart or auto onto my property," she told the council, and said it was the city's and the engineers' duty to correct the problem. McDaniel said she had called Ferguson Engineering about the mistake, but no one had called her back.

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HEPPNER

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VOL. 132 N.O. 41 8 Pages Wednesday, October 16, 2013 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Heppner plans a 'haunted' Halloween



Children from Heppner Day Care visit the Gazette-Times for a little trick-or-treating during the Halloween season. Miniature goblins and ghouls, princesses and superheroes like these are expected to be out and about for Haunted Heppner this Halloween, Oct. 31, from 3:30-5 p.m., when area businesses have committed to participate in a "trick or treat" social. -File photo

Heppner downtown will be haunted this Halloween...haunted with costumed children throughout the town's businesses.

Most of the city's businesses have committed to participate in a trick or treat social from 3:30-5 p.m. Halloween evening.

These businesses will offer treats to costumed children who come by the stores, banks and offices.

The participating storefronts will display an orange sign that says "Welcome to trick or treat."

At least 17 businesses will display signs.

Ione hires new teacher

Aaron Josephson has been hired as a temporary elementary teacher at Ione Community School.

Josephson, a graduate of Southern Oregon University, holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and master's in elementary and early

childhood education. He will teach second grade in the mornings and fifth grade in the afternoons.



Aaron Josephson

School district hears report on student, school success

By April Sykes

Irrigon High School teacher Andrew Johnson made a presentation at the Morrow County School Board meeting Monday night concerning the new Success 101 program implemented in Morrow County high schools this year.

The program, required for all high school freshmen, is designed to aid students in formulating a vision and a plan, not only for their high school experience, but for college and beyond. The course helps students to realize who they are, what they like, what they want to achieve in life and how to get to their goal. The curriculum runs the gamut from exploring personality types to budgeting, realistic money planning, selecting colleges and planning for careers and family.

Success 101 is eligible for college credits through the Eastern Promise program. Eastern Promise enables students to obtain college credits while they are still in high school at certain colleges, Blue Mountain Community College, Treasure Valley Community College and Eastern Oregon University.

The program was well received and superintendent Dirk Dirksen was asked if the program could be expanded to include sophomores as well. The

probability of offering the class to other students is not as likely, but would be determined by scheduling and staffing capabilities.

At the meeting, the board also viewed a presentation on the district's state report card. Heppner Junior/Senior High School, A.C. Houghton, Heppner Elementary and Windy River Elementary all received a score of 4. Riverside Junior/Senior High, Sam Boardman Elementary, Irrigon Junior/Senior High all received a score of 3 and Irrigon Elementary received a 2.

Oregon report card scoring has been changed and is now on a new five-point scale.

According to state data, the majority of schools in Oregon received scores of 2, 3 or 4, with only 114 schools earning the top ranking of 5 and only 60 schools receiving a 1, the lowest ranking. Level 1 schools were ranked in the

fifth percentile or under of all schools in Oregon; level 2 schools were ranked between the sixth and 15th percentile; level 3 schools were ranked between the 15th and 43rd percentile; level 4 were ranked between the 44th and 90th percentile; and only the top 10 percent of schools received a level 5 ranking.

Elementary school report cards are based 75 percent on student growth and 25 percent on the percentage of students passing state tests. High schools were graded 50 percent on graduation rates, 30 percent on student growth and 20 percent on passing state tests.

In addition HHS, ACH, WRE, RJSH, SBE and IJSH all received "above average" notations compared to other schools, while HES and IES received "below average" notations.

While a school, such as Heppner Elementary School, may obtain a level

4 ranking, for example, the school might still receive a "below average" notation. That occurs when a school has already achieved more 90 percent in a certain category such as student growth, for example, and cannot achieve much more in that area. So that school is, in effect, being penalized more than a school that is ranked lower but has shown growth.

Also at the meeting, Dirksen told the board that the district has lost 52 students over the previous year "pretty well district-wide," but primarily in kindergarten. He said, however, that the district would still be able to maintain the district's present school calendar and staffing. He added that PERS (Public Employees Retirement System) reform "would save us money." However, he said it would depend if proposed PERS

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Judge throws out Ralls Corp's lawsuit against Obama

Republished from North American Windpower, <http://www.nawindpower.com>.

(Last) Wednesday, U.S. District Court Judge Amy Jackson closed the case on Ralls Corp.'s legal actions against the U.S. government and President Barack Obama, dismissing the company's remaining claim.

Ralls is owned by two executives at Chinese manufacturer Sany Group, and it says its focus is to invest in and operate U.S. wind farms using Sany wind turbines.

Last year, Ralls sued the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) and Obama after the president blocked Ralls' acquisition and ownership of four wind projects.

The wind farms were being developed near a U.S. navel facility in Oregon that has restricted airspace.

According to a Reuters report, Jackson ruled against a majority of Ralls' claims in February.

On Wednesday, the judge dismissed the remaining claim—that

Obama's order ignored due process afforded in the U.S. Constitution—ruling that Ralls "received sufficient process" and failed to file for government approval prior to the wind farm acquisitions.

Recently, Ralls acquired the development rights to the Pleasant Hill wind farm, a 20 MW project in Texas slated to come online in March 2014.

At the time, a company spokesperson told NAW that Ralls had voluntarily filed that acquisition with the CFIUS.

Boo!



There's nothing scary about this cheerful scarecrow enjoying some sun in front of the senior center in Heppner Tuesday as the town gears up for Halloween. -Photo by Mallorie Jones

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