

HEPPNER

50¢

Gazette times

VOL. 133 N.O. 9 10 Pages Wednesday, February 26, 2014 Morrow County, Heppner.

Cardinals fly into state playoffs this week

Ione takes second in districts



The Ione Cardinals took second place in the recent Big Sky district tournament, earning them a slot in the first round playoffs in the 1A state championship tournament. -Photo by Paula Emmel. -See full story PAGE SIX

Health district to welcome new doctor

By April Sykes

The Morrow County Health District Board approved Dr. Daniel Hambleton's credentialing and his appointment to the medical staff at their meeting Monday night in Ione.

CEO Dan Grigg said that Dr. Hambleton will begin working for the district on Tuesday, March 11, and is expected to work two days per week at Pioneer Memorial Clinic in Heppner and two at the Irrigon Medical Clinic. Grigg said that the district plans to host a "meet and greet" to welcome Dr. Hambleton to the community.

Grigg said that the district also plans to host a public open house for Dr. Ed Berretta, who will be retiring.

"Given his many years of service to the health district and the community, we would like to give the public an opportunity to thank him and to wish him well," said Grigg.

Board Chair Larry Mills

named several members of the communities served by the district to be appointed to a Political Action Committee to work toward passage of a supplemental tax levy. If passed, the new levy will replace the current levy which expires. Board Chair Larry Mills stressed that the levy will not increase, but will remain at the .39 cents per thousand assessed valuation as in previous levies. He reiterated that the levy will ensure that the district can continue to provide existing services for emergency services, Home Health and Hospice.

Morrow County voters first passed a three-year supplemental levy for the district eight years ago and, then, after a gap, passed the current five-year supplemental levy.

As a result of the last levy, the district accomplished remodeling of the Irrigon Clinic, purchased an ambulance for Irrigon and continued to staff Irrigon and

Boardman with full-time paramedics, in addition to maintaining services. With passage of a new levy, the district hopes to be able to replace ambulances for the communities of Boardman and Heppner.

The district heard good financial news this month, with a \$240,737 profit for January. Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney told the board that a \$100,200 payment from Medicaid for electronic health records cost reimbursement, the second payment in a three-year phase, aided the bottom line, as did over \$75,000 in community service fees from wind farms in lieu of taxes.

January's financials showed \$669,014 in gross patient revenue, a small increase over December's \$668,410, \$43,393 in total revenue deductions for \$625,620 in net patient revenue, \$127,629 in tax revenue and \$116,002 in other operating revenue, which includes the Medicaid payment, \$714,051 in operating expenses and \$85,536 in a non-operating

gain, which includes the wind farm payments.

In other business, the board:

-learned from Grigg that the search for an executive director of primary care to manage the clinics and develop primary care service is still ongoing. He said the district brought one candidate to the district the previous week for interviews. Grigg said that it was more important to find the right candidate than to be in a rush to hire.

-discussed the possibility of using the county annex building near Pioneer Memorial Clinic for either physical therapy or for health district administrative offices. The annex building is currently used for Morrow County financial department offices, which will be relocated when the new county annex building is completed. The Gilliam-Bisbee building, which currently houses the Morrow County Health Department and Community Counseling Solutions offices, was also

-See HEALTH DISTRICT/ PAGE TEN

Governor appoints Kelsie McDaniel as Union County DA

Salem, OR—Governor Kitzhaber last week announced the appointment of Kelsie Davis McDaniel as Union County District Attorney to fill the vacancy created by Tim Thompson's retirement.

"Kelsie Davis McDaniel's broad experience in the public safety community will serve her well as she leads the Union County District Attorney's Office," said Kitzhaber. "Her commitment to bringing together people and collaborating across the public safety spectrum, from law enforcement to community corrections to mental health and human service professionals, will help keep our communities safe and reduce victimization."

McDaniel received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Washington and a Juris Doctorate from Gonzaga University School of Law.

She began her legal career in the Morrow County District Attorney's Office. She is married to Heppner native Kyle McDaniel, a 2001 Heppner High graduate, and the son of Scott and Joan (Christman) McDaniel of Heppner and grandson of Betty Christman of Lexington. Kyle works for the U.S Forest Service.

After Morrow County, McDaniel served as deputy district attorney in the Union County District Attorney's Office, where she handled a wide range of cases from minor thefts to homicides. She has served on the board of the Mt. Emily Safe Center, volunteered with the Classroom Law Project and the Oregon State Bar New Lawyer Mentoring Program Committee, and presented to various community groups, including the La Grande Police Youth Public Safety Academy and the Center for Human Development.

CREZ to deal direct with communities on housing programs

By David Sykes

The Columbia River Enterprise Zone (CREZ) will forego any alliance with Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation (GEODC), and instead deal directly with communities and community groups over housing programs, the CREZ said at its meeting Monday morning.

Last October the CREZ committed \$150,000 towards a housing program aimed both at increasing the number of workers buying homes in the county and stimulating the creation of rental units, both identified as problems in Morrow County.

The CREZ had contacted GEODC about formulating and running the program. However, after several meetings, a draft plan and a public forum on housing, the CREZ decided not to move forward with a GEODC partnership.

The CREZ did not make a formal announcement about the change of direction; however, several members felt the public forum was the wrong way

to proceed with formulating a plan to deal with the county's housing issues. Most board members also felt the GEODC-sponsored forum focused too much on "livability issues" of Boardman and not enough on the immediate housing problems at hand.

About 20 people, including property owners, bankers, city officials and the media, attended the Feb. 4 forum at the Riverfront Center in Boardman to discuss challenges and solutions to developing new housing in Morrow County.

The forum was led by Phil Nachbar, project manager with GEODC. Most of the discussion was about Boardman and how to keep more Port employees living in the community.

It is estimated that 800 of the 1,400 employees at the Port of Morrow live outside Boardman, and with the Port of Morrow and the Enterprise Zone having great success in locating businesses here, jobs and employment are only expected to grow over

the coming years. ConAgra is in the middle of adding a new processing facility that will employ over 100 workers, Tillamook Cheese is adding a new facility and Vadata, which is associated with Amazon.com, is building new server farms at the Port.

All of these new facilities, plus others, are locating within the Enterprise Zone and are paying fees instead of taxes to the CREZ, which is expected to take in at least \$23 million in fees over the next 15 years. The CREZ is using the money to mitigate the impact of the expansion on effected communities and taxing districts.

At the public forum several developers voiced a negative impressions of Boardman over its lack of retail and entertainment choices, and Boardman Community Director Barry Beyeler was even quoted as saying "demand isn't the issue, livability is."

About a week after the forum an Op-Ed piece by Pendleton real estate

broker Calvin Garton appeared in the East Oregonian addressing the forum and criticizing the city of Boardman for what he said were past and present planning mistakes. Garton's article ended by saying "only major changes in Boardman's city government and city employees can turn around these negative perceptions."

Focusing the forum on Boardman's livability and bringing out past disputes, instead of dealing with immediate housing issues, went against the CREZ board's desires, and they decided not to proceed with the GEODC partnership.

In other business at the meeting the board heard a financial report from its fiscal agent, and also received an updated lease purchase agreement from Marc Rogelstad of the Boardman Rural Fire District. The CREZ had earlier committed funds and authorized Rogelstad to move forward with purchase of a new fire truck for the district.

Remembrance walk/run to benefit area ambulances

Coordinators of the annual Remembrance Walk/5K Run have announced that this year's proceeds will go to purchase HoverMatts for both Heppner-based ambulances.

In the spirit of keeping donations local and benefitting local healthcare and the elderly, Friends Helping Friends committee members approached staff at Pioneer Memorial Hospital earlier this year and asked if the hospital needed any equipment that the annual fundraiser could help obtain. When staff members put their heads together over the question, the HoverMatt became the answer.

According to PMH Director of Nursing Molly Rhea, the HoverMatt is, simply put, an inflatable air mattress transfer system.

"The HoverMatt is positioned on the gurney, so when the patient needs to be transferred from the ambulance gurney, we will be able to inflate the mattress using a portable air compressor and actually float him or her on a cushion of air onto the emergency

room gurney, or directly onto a x-ray or CT table," Rhea said.

Currently, when the ambulance brings someone to the local emergency department, Rhea said it takes five to six people to simply transfer the patient from the ambulance gurney to the emergency room gurney. The HoverMatt allows two to three caregivers to safely and comfortably transfer patients, even those weighing well over 500 pounds.

"More often than not, patients coming in by ambulance are in pain and unable to transfer themselves from gurney to gurney," said Rhea.

"When we move patients from our ambulance stretchers onto our ER stretchers, it can be very difficult for the patient, very painful for the patient," added EMT Intermediate Pennie Miller.

"For the patient, the HoverMatt makes these transfers much more comfortable, and safer. For the Emergency Medical -See FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS/PAGE TWO

Mustang Wrestlers

Head to State

See Pages 5 & 6



ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:

MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

AT MCGG SHOP IN LEXINGTON

Doing Auto Repairs & Service. Call Lewis for an Appointment 541-989-8221



GENERAL REPAIRS

Morrow County Grain Growers
Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcggs.net