

## Ione school year underway



Ione Schools began their school year on Monday, Aug. 25. TJ Patton introduces the kindergarten students on the first day of school at Ione Elementary School. Along with Teacher Brandi Orem, students pictured are: Rosa Aguilar, Hadassah Bolanos, Leonardo Cabrera, Novalee Campbell, William Lehn, Wyatt Licence, William McElligott, Isabelle Ogden, Olivia Ogden, Phegley Padberg, Caylan Proudfoot, Julian Ramirez, Zion Ramos, Jayden Rea, Keltie Rietmann, Tomas Rodriguez-Sheena, and Fernando Serrano. — Contributed photo



Ann Rietmann, Rachel Holland, Oskar Peterson, TJ Patton, Morgan Orem and Daniel Holtz started the year off right with an all-student assembly. — Contributed photo

## BEO promotes Mendoza to Irrigon Branch

"I am pleased to announce Citlali Mendoza has been promoted to Branch Manager in Irrigon," said Jeff Bailey, president & CEO, Bank of Eastern Oregon. Mendoza has been with the bank since 2006, working as teller and most recently operations supervisor in BEO's Boardman



branch. "I am pleased we are able to promote from within the company. Citlali is familiar with the Boardman and Irrigon branches and knows our customers," concluded Bailey. Citlali and her husband, Augustin, live in Boardman, and have three sons.

## County, Port receive ConnectOregon grant funding

After considering input from the public at a hearing in July and reviewing a large volume of written comments, the Oregon Transportation Commission last Friday approved 36 multimodal projects from around the state for \$40,369,189 in funding, provided by the ConnectOregon V program. Among the approved grants were \$17,926,40 to Morrow County for airport improvements and \$6,000,000 to the Port of Morrow for a cold storage facility.

For ConnectOregon V, there were 104 applications requesting a total of \$124,386,927 million. Each application was evaluated and ranked by several stakeholder groups, including modal committees and regional

committees, before going to the final review committee.

ConnectOregon focuses on "improving connections and supporting local economies throughout the state." Dedicated to non-highway projects, ConnectOregon was first approved by the Oregon legislature in 2005 and has funded more than 130 marine/ports, aviation, public transit, and rail projects around the state. For ConnectOregon V, bicycle/pedestrian projects were also eligible to compete for funds.

For more about the program and process, including links to applications, visit the ConnectOregon website, <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/pages/connector.aspx>.

## Free youth pheasant hunts planned

Hunter education youth graduates are eligible to sign up for one of 11 free upland bird hunts being planned across the state in September. Hunts are planned in Baker City, Central Point, Corvallis, Eugene, Irrigon/Umatilla, John Day, Klamath Falls, La Grande, Madras, Portland and The Dalles/Wamic.

Pre-registration is required at most events. Those enrolling must be certified in hunter education and age 17 or younger to participate. Participants need a valid hunting license, available for purchase for \$14.50, and a free Harvest Information Program validation. Youth hunters age 14-17 also need an upland game bird validation, available for \$8.50.

Dates for the hunts are as follows: Baker City Area (private land) - Sept. 27, 28; Central Point (Denman Wildlife Area) - Sept. 20, 21; Corvallis - E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area - Sept. 20, 27, 28; Eugene - Fern Ridge Wildlife Area - Sept. 13, 14 (no advance registration required); Irrigon Wildlife Area (between Irrigon and Umatilla) - Sept. 20, 21, morning and afternoon hunts; John Day area (private land) - Sept. 13, 14; Klamath Falls (Klamath Wildlife Area) - Sept. 13, 14; La Grande - Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area - Sept. 20, 21 (no advance registration required); Madras (Willow Creek area) - Sept. 20, 21; Portland (Sauvie Island Wildlife Area) - Sept. 20, 21; The Dalles/Wamic (White River Wildlife Area) - Sept. 27, 28.

## County prepares to break ground on new administration building

The Morrow County government is preparing to break ground on a new administrative building in Heppner. The project team, consisting of Morrow County Government officials, project manager Wenaha Group, LKV Architects, and W.C. Construction, have completed the planning and design phase, and is preparing to begin construction in October.

The building, which will be two stories and just over 11,200 square feet, will accommodate several existing county departments that are currently in multiple locations throughout Heppner. Having the various departments in a single location will increase departmental efficiencies and improve communication, as well as make a single location for citizens needing to meet with county employees,

said a county spokesperson. Morrow County Public Health Director, Sheree Smith, says she is excited for the improved ADA access to her department.

Morrow County officials working with LKV Architects of Boise, ID and the Wenaha Group met with department managers during the programming phase of design, identifying the department's respective needs, upgrading technology infrastructure, and aligning the department's locations within the building to better serve the residents of Morrow County and allow for a more streamlined county workflow.

Morrow County officials were also very conscientious of the exterior design of the new administrative building, given it will be located immediately north of the historic Morrow County Courthouse; the

Courthouse, constructed in 1903, is one of the oldest continuously used courthouses in the State of Oregon, and recently received a complete renovation of the historic clock tower. The new administrative building's design is intended to complement the courthouse, and incorporates design elements to appeal to the design aesthetic of the courthouse, said the release.

Funding for the project is provided through wind energy income, and not from county taxpayers; this investment in Heppner is an exciting example of how Morrow County is returning the benefits of wind energy installations located throughout the county. "The commissioners have decided that these short lived monies will be used for capital projects, such as this new building. General fund

monies continue to fund the normal operation of the county, but not fund these special projects," according to Morrow County Judge Terry Tallman.

The county has selected W.C. Construction of Elgin, Oregon, as the construction manager/general contractor (CM/GC) for the project, and W.C. Construction is currently in the bidding phase of the project, with plans available at plan centers throughout the Pacific Northwest, including Hermiston, Tri-Cities, Central Oregon, and Clackamas.

An official ribbon cutting ceremony for the project, as well as an official dedication of the renovated Courthouse clock tower, will be held on September 29, with work beginning in October. The administrative building is scheduled for completion by Fall, 2015.

## Wheat commission to meet

The Oregon Wheat Commission will hold a regular board meeting on Monday, September 8, at the SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman, in the boardroom at 10 a.m. Lunch will be provided to all attendees.

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. The ADA prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities. Those attending may request an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities.

For more information, contact the Oregon Wheat Commission office at 503-467-2161.

## St. William's First Communion, and farewell to Father Kumar



Left to right: Fr. Papa Rao Pasala, Fr. Kumar Udagandla, Jackson Coiner, John McElligott, Martin Medina, Ferdinando Ramirez, Alexis Ramirez. — Contributed photo

St. William's Catholic Church in Ione celebrated a First Communion Mass on Friday, Aug. 22. The date was selected to also honor Fr. Kumar Udagandla, who was celebrating the 20-year anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. The first communicants had

prepared all year for this special occasion under the direction of teacher Eileen McElligott.

Students receiving the Holy Eucharist for the first time were Ferdinando Ramirez, Alexis Ramirez, John McElligott, Jackson Coiner and Martin Medina. Fr. Papa Rao

Pasala, St. William's new parish priest, co-celebrated with Fr. Kumar.

A potluck dinner followed Mass to honor the first communicants and say farewell to Fr. Kumar, who has been transferred to St. Mary's Catholic Church in Pendleton.

## Local girl contestant in state spelling bee

Olivia Schmidt of Heppner and Mary Hammond of Boardman will represent Morrow County this year at the Oregon Statewide Spelling Championship.

The spelling championship will take place at the Oregon State Fair in Salem on Saturday, Aug. 30 from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Hart of the Garden, Oregon State Fairgrounds, Salem.

This is the sixth year Oregon Spellers has sponsored the Oregon Statewide Spelling Championship. Oregon Spellers is all-volunteer group that formed in 2009 in response to the Oregon Department of Education's budget-driven decision

to eliminate their state-level spelling contest that they had run for 33 years. Oregon Spellers is funded solely by donations. Debra Gil, from KPTV's "Good Day Oregon," will emcee the Division II and III of the Spelling Championship for her third year.

Oregon Spellers is also hosting "The Bee at the Fair," which is a verbal bee open to all Oregon State Fair patrons on Saturday, Aug. 30. The Junior Division Verbal Bee (12 and under) will start at 2 p.m. and the Teen/Adult Division Bee will begin at 3 p.m. on the stage in the Jackson-Long Building.

For more information, contact [oregonspellers@kaynor.net](mailto:oregonspellers@kaynor.net).

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## Medicare class coming to Ione Sept. 4

A Medicare 101 class is coming to Ione next month. The class will be held on Thursday, Sept. 4, at 6 p.m. at the Ione Library.

Medicare 101 will be offered to anyone in the Morrow County community who wants to understand about Medicare health insurance benefits and choices. This is an opportunity to become informed prior to the annual fall Medicare enrollment period coming up Oct. 15 to Dec. 7. For the more than 1,700 Medicare beneficiaries and all individuals turning 65 in 2014 or 2015 residing in Morrow County, this is a once-a-year event for people to get their questions answered by unbiased, objective OID Medicare trainers.

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