

## New fire hall depends on voter approval

Both city and rural district need voter approval for \$975,000 facility

By David Sykes

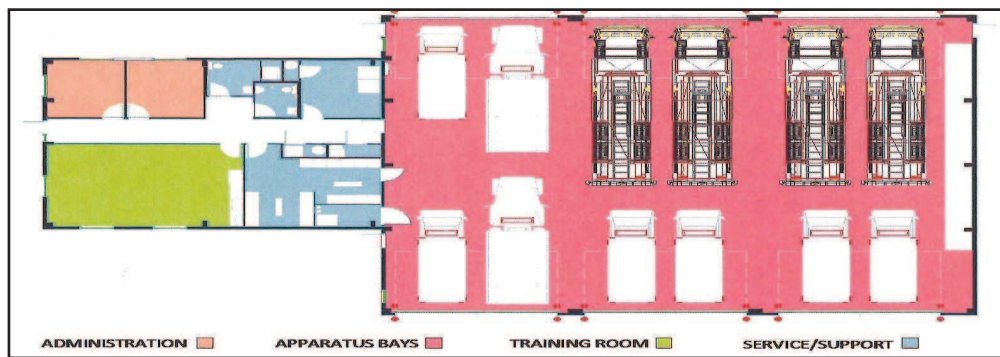
The planning is completed, the land obtained, permits approved and now all that's standing in the way of construction of a new \$975,000 fire hall is voter approval. And voters in both the city of Heppner and the Heppner Rural Fire Protection District need to pass their respective bond measures in order for it to begin.

City voters will be asked to fund 60 percent, or \$585,000 of the facility, and the rural district the other 40 percent at \$390,000. Voters should be receiving their ballots in the mail this week. Deadline to return the



Fireman Andrew Johnson explains details of the proposed new fire hall to (L-R) Vern Keithley, Ginger Keithley and Deanna Koerner. Ballots will be mailed out soon to both the city and rural fire district voters for approval. —Photo by David Sykes

Hwy. 74 and Riverside Street at Fuller Canyon Rd. It would feature administration offices, ap-



An artist's sketch of the proposed new fire hall.

ballots is Nov. 2.

The proposed new hall would be built between

right at the edge of the city limits on land donated by the Morrow County Grain

paratus bays, training room and space to park multiple fire trucks and vehicles.

The new hall is needed, city officials say, because the current building on Willow Street in downtown Heppner is outdated and too small, hampering safety and response times. There is also no room for training, says Fire Chief Rusty Estes.

Some people have questioned the need for such a large new building, to which the city responds by saying space is needed because of the increased size of today's fire trucks.

They also say the current fire hall does not leave room for firefighters to safely get in and out, and they do not have room for maintenance and repairs of equipment.

The bond levy would be for 21 years and in the city is estimated to result in a tax of \$0.88 per \$1,000 of assessed value per year, or approximately \$132 per year on a home assessed at \$150,000.

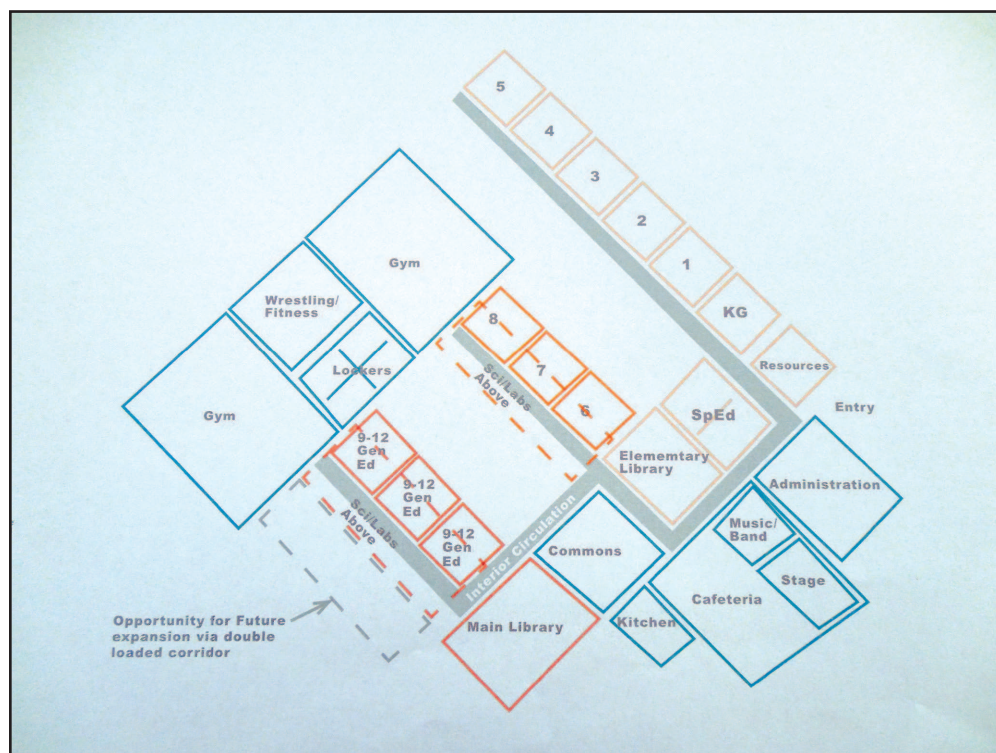
In the rural this measure is estimated to result in a tax of \$0.41 per \$1,000 of assessed value per year, or approximately \$62 per year on a home assessed at \$150,000.

The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Stop by to have your picture taken, drop off photos, mail them to PO Box 337 in Heppner, email them to editor@rapidservice.net or text cell phone photos to 541-980-6674.



Top: Aaron Smythe took this 3x4 buck on the opening weekend of rifle season. Aaron is the son of Scott and Claudia Smythe of Hardman. Bottom: Casey Fletcher, 13, shot his 4x4 buck Oct. 10 on the Columbia Basin Unit using a .300 Savage. Casey is the son of Andy and Andrea Fletcher of Lexington. —Contributed photos

## School district still considering K-12 school for Heppner



An artist's concept of what the layout of the K-12 school being considered for Heppner would look like. —Courtesy of DLR Group

By April Sykes

If the Morrow County School District is reading the Heppner populace correctly, citizens of Heppner are in favor of a new kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade school located at the present high school site on Morgan Street, according to Scott Rose, representing the DLR Group, an architectural firm hired by the district to come up with solutions to the district's facility issues.

Board member Barney Lindsay voiced concern as to what the Heppner community really wants for its schools.

"This is what we thought you wanted," replied Rose, adding, "We want to make sure this is what the community really wants."

He said that each community has to have some benefit in order to make the plan work and that the ultimate goal is to enable the students to become equally prepared for college or careers. MCS D Superintendent Dirk Dirksen added that the information DLR used was taken from input at several meetings held in each community.

According to DLR's long-range facility plan, "Heppner schools host the

smallest student population in the district with no indication from the community of potential growth. There is more education space than the students need and at the same time, a significant amount of recreation space that the community would like to share, specifically, the new gymnasium and cafeteria facility built across the street from Heppner Elementary School.

"Both of Heppner's schools have the highest facility conditions index. This indicates that the cost to renovate the overall facilities to meet modern standards would cost close to the amount it would take to build brand new facilities.

"A new consolidated K-12 building on the sloped site above Heppner High School is the community committee's preferred option."

DLR recommendations aim to work toward fixing the district's problems concerning aging buildings, maintenance and heating and cooling costs, student population and, most importantly, educating students of the future.

Recommendations for Heppner schools would include "offloading" the Heppner Elementary class-

room building; retaining the Heppner Elementary gym for shared use by the school and the community; demolishing the Heppner High School and shop buildings; and building a K-12 school above the demolished site.

Another option for Heppner schools would entail offloading Heppner Elementary, retaining the Heppner Elementary gym for shared use by the school and community and renovating the high school to become a new K-12 school.

Rose said that the plans were community driven and said that his company compiled information from a series of meetings that sought input from each community. He also stressed the importance of creating smaller schools within schools, creating an elementary or middle school separate from a high school, for example, although the schools would actually be in the same building.

The thinking of MCS D administrators is that the time to start addressing facility issues is now. MCS D Superintendent Dirk Dirksen said that for the last 10 years, the district's response —See SCHOOL BUILDINGS/PAGE FIVE

## Police investigating death of infant in Irrigon

Morrow County police are investigating the sudden death of an infant in Irrigon.

According to information from Morrow County Sheriff Kenneth Matlack, the infant's parents, Sheri Leigh May and Andrew Cody O'Neil of Garibaldi, OR, were visiting friends in Irrigon when their baby boy stopped breathing Monday morning.

Monday morning at 10:58, Morrow County Sheriff's Office 911 Dis-

patch Center reported that they received a call from a hysterical female who told the dispatcher that her six-week-old baby boy was not breathing. The dispatcher relayed the information to the nearest deputies in Irrigon and then tried to give emergency instructions to the woman. She remained hysterical and was apparently unable to follow the initial instructions. The dispatcher briefly lost phone contact but immediately

called back. A second female answered and the dispatcher began to give her emergency information.

MCSO deputies were on the scene almost immediately; within three minutes of the initial call, at 11:01 a.m., deputies arrived and deputy Oscar Madrigal began administering CPR to the infant. Eight minutes later, Irrigon ambulance arrived and transported the

—See INFANT DIES IN IRRIGON/PAGE THREE

## Boardman has first reading of marijuana ban ordinance

At their Oct. 6 council meeting, Boardman City Councilors held a hearing to consider a ban on recreational marijuana within the city limits.

One person attended the hearing and spoke against the ban, saying they felt the city would benefit from the tax revenue generated by recreational marijuana

businesses.

City Manager Karen Pettigrew said Morrow County voted about 63 percent against Measure 91, which directs the Oregon Liquor Control Commission to license the production, processing, wholesale and retail sale of recreational marijuana.

House Bill 3400 pro-



—See BOARDMAN MARIJUANA BAN/PAGE THREE



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