

Heppner students take a 'Time Out' for reading

Heppner Elementary School fifth and sixth graders took "time out for reading" in January.

This popular basketball-themed reading incentive program was started by Jannie Allen more than 25 years ago. During Time Out for Reading, students keep track of their minutes read and are rewarded for their participation.

Students who read more than 1,000 minutes per week earn "1000 Minute Club" status and prizes. All students participate in the after-school reading party in which they read, play games and watch a basketball-themed movie.

At the end of the program, students are rewarded with a prize and a book. Prizes included fleece blankets, iTunes gift cards, Mrs. Allen's pillow cases and basketballs.

This year 60 students



Heppner Elementary's top 10 readers and their prizes: Cody Fletcher, Jace Coe, Paul Lindsay, Jett Stewart, ZaBrena Masterson, Aubri Rodriguez, Hailey Wenberg, Madison Palmer, Trevor Nichols and Coen Little. -Contributed photo

participated in the program, Cody Fletcher was the top reader, reading just over minutes in four weeks. 4,500 minutes.

Bank of EO reports 2015 earnings

Heppner—BEO Bancorp and its subsidiary, Bank of Eastern Oregon, announced consolidated year-end 2015 earnings of \$3,017,000, an increase of 24.7 percent when compared to \$2,419,000 in 2014. Basic earnings per share were up 17.7 percent from \$2.09 in 2014 to \$2.46 in 2015. Total assets increased 9.6 percent from \$325.9 million to \$357.3 million. Net loans ended 2015 at \$283.5 million, up 13.2 percent year-over-year. Deposits increased 8.8 percent from \$291.8 million to \$317.7 million.

"We are very pleased with the 2015 results," said President and CEO Jeff Bailey. "Net income is at an all-time high for BEO Bancorp. The acquisition of Bank Reale in first quarter 2015 provided excellent opportunities for additional earnings during the year. Net interest income was up 15.4 percent from 2015. Profitability was aided by a year-over-year 44.3 percent decrease in our provision for loan losses. The improving economy and overall quality of our loan portfolio have required less provision.

"As an agricultural-based institution we will continue to watch for weather and/or commodity price impacts to the loan portfolio and reserve accordingly," added Bailey. "While the decreased input costs bode well for our producers, the drop in crop and calf prices over the past year will impact farm

and ranch income. We have seen decent rains across our trade area and snow pack numbers are more encouraging than the past few years, so we are hopeful for better crop and grass conditions this summer. As with every year, we will just have to wait and see what materializes."

"Total shareholders' equity increased 11.6 percent year-over-year to \$27.85 million, an all-time high for the bank," said Chief Financial Officer Mark Lemmon. "2015 Return on Average Assets is 0.86 percent compared to 0.77 percent in 2014. Return on Average Equity is at 11.43 percent compared to 10.1 percent in 2014. Both metrics are a function of improved profitability. We continue to see steady growth in deposits, even with the sustained low interest rate environment. It will be interesting to see what the Federal Reserve does with rates over the coming year. The initial increase in Fed funds late in 2015 has had little impact to overall rates."

Chief Operations Officer Gary Prophet said, "The integration of Bank Reale into the BEO Bancorp family went very well, and we look forward to expanding our presence in eastern Washington. In Oregon our rural service network has grown through the addition of deposit taking ATMs in Dayville and Wasco and the opening of a loan production office in Madras. Each of these moves has been strategic

in nature and has brought about an increase in banking relationships in those markets."

"Looking back at 2015 we see a successful year brought on by skilled employees coupled with strong support of customers and shareholders. It is rewarding to see our market area and share continue to expand. 2016 is bound to have its own set of unique challenges, but the bank is well positioned to build on prior years' success. We look forward to serving the banking needs of eastern Oregon and Washington," concluded Bailey.

For further information on the company or to access internet banking, visit the website at <http://www.beobank.com>.

WEE BIT O' IRELAND

-Continued from PAGE ONE entertainment is sponsored by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District and is free to the public.

So go ahead, mark your calendar and plan on participating in some good old Irish activities, rain or shine, wind or snow. The new schedule is being finalized and will be out soon.

Visit www.heppner-chamber.com or call the chamber office at 541-676-5536 for questions or to get a copy of the schedule.

Local boxers sought for annual boxing event March 18

The Heppner community will be getting "ready to rumble" at the ninth annual amateur boxing event on Friday, March 18, in the Heppner High School gym. Gates will open at 6:30 p.m.

Admission will be \$10 for ages 12 to adult, \$5 for students ages eight to 11, and free for children seven and under.

Heppner Chamber of Commerce sponsors the event and is looking for individuals who would like to climb into the ring and box that evening.

Bouts are limited, so



A boxer has his opponent on the ropes at last year's Irish Smoker amateur boxing event in Heppner. -File photo

anyone interested should call the chamber office at 541-676-5536 or email heppnerchamber@centurytel.net to get information or sign up.

Road bowling returns to St. Patrick's weekend



Participants in last year's road bowling. -File photo

Heppner's Irish Road Bowling event will draw the St. Patrick's weekend celebration to a close on Sunday, March 20. Participants in this event will gather on Sunday afternoon before the 1:37 p.m. activity commences.

This Irish sport that dates back to the 1600s was played in America by the Irish troops in West Virginia during the Civil War. In recent years, a resurgence of interest in the sport has

developed in both Ireland and the United States. Heppner's event has gained popularity since it was first offered in 2006, and entries are limited (maximum of 17 teams). Entry forms can be picked up at the Chamber of Commerce office.

Teams of two to four members compete over a course of approximately one mile by tossing iron-and-steel "bowls" that weigh 28 ounces and are slightly small in diameter

than a tennis ball. The team that completes the course with the fewest tosses wins. Each participant must pay \$5 to play. The purse is then divided, with half going into the St. Patrick's Weekend fund and half being divided among the top three teams. The winners' names will be put on the trophy that is kept at Heppner City Hall.

The starting point of the course will be on Balm Fork Road. Spectators are welcome at the event but are cautioned to remain a safe distance from the action because the bowls are heavy and have been known to break bones.

Anyone interested is encouraged to sign up as early as possible to guarantee a spot in the event. The forms can be picked up at the chamber office or call 541-676-5536 to have a form mailed to you.

DA's Report

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson has released the following report:

-James David Town was found guilty of probation violation; probation is continued with the same conditions plus the addition of 20 days previously suspended jail time with credit for time served. Fines, fees and assessments totaled \$25.

-Ryan Everett Armstrong, 27, was convicted of Criminal Mischief II, a Class A misdemeanor; execution of the sentence of 180 days jail time was suspended and the defendant sentenced to 24 months bench probation, to include 60 hours of community service and no contact with the victim. An additional

count of the same charge was dismissed. Fines, fees, assessments and restitution totaled \$1,015.16.

-Daniel Lee Mead, 45, was convicted of Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUII), a Class C felony. The defendant's driver's license was suspended for life and the defendant sentenced to 36 months supervised probation subject to 180 sanction units with 90 jail units. Probation conditions include 160 hours of community service, mental health evaluation, substance abuse evaluation, alcohol evaluation and Antabuse if medically able and if directed by the probation officer, attendance at a victim's impact panel, and 90 days jail time

with credit for time served. Fines, fees and assessments totaled \$496.

-Eric Thomas Johnson, 49, was convicted of Possession of Methamphetamine, a Class C felony. The defendant's driver's license was suspended for six months and the defendant sentenced to 18 months supervised probation, to include 90 sanction units with 30 jail units. Probation conditions include 80 hours of community service, substance abuse evaluation, mental health evaluation and substance abuse evaluation. An additional count of Unlawful Possession of the Controlled Substance in Schedule III was dismissed. Fines, fees and assessments totaled \$750.

High-schoolers invited to range camp

High school students in grades nine through 12 are invited to the sixth annual High Desert Youth Range Camp June 15-18 near Burns, OR.

The camp at the Northern Great Basin Experimental Range is open to youth from Oregon, Idaho and Washington, targeting those

who have interest in range science, soil science, ecology, wildlife, or just enjoy the outdoors.

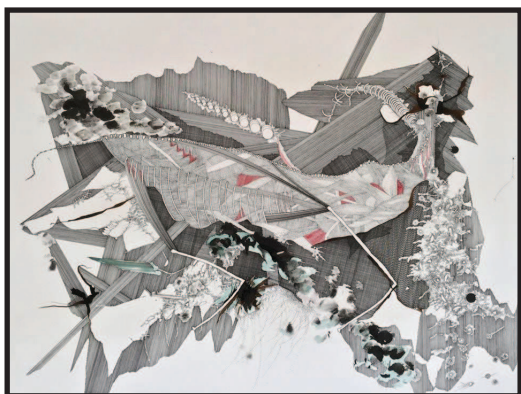
Successful completion of Range Camp also results in receiving college credit.

Total cost to the camper is \$50, as each camper will receive a scholarship to attend camp for \$125. All

meals are provided.

With questions, contact Brenda Smith, Eastern Oregon Ag Research Center, 541-573-4084 or brenda.smith@oregonstate.edu. For more information or to apply online, visit <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/EO-ARC/range-camp>.

ART EXHIBIT ANDREW SYKES

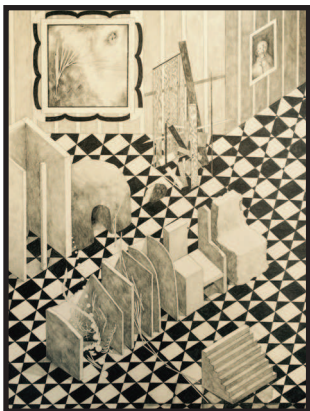


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