

Fire hall taking shape



Workers inspect the groundwork for Heppner's new fire hall as construction progresses on Riverside Ave. in Heppner. -Photo by David Sykes

Sheep dog trials 'mom' receives plaques on behalf of her daughter



Back (L-R): Alita Nelson, Jessica Kempken, Kevin Murray. Front (L-R): Kacie Gray, Kellie Nelson, Meredith Huwe, Sheryll Bates. Not pictured: The Barnyarders members Meranda Lemmon, Mikel Jaca, Joseph Sherman, Hunter Gree-nup, Tim Gould, Roy Collins, Brian Lindsay. -Contributed photo

A sense of nostalgia was present at this year's sheep dog trials as participants and planners recognized the absence of a familiar face.

Karen Mohny had been coordinating the Wee Bit o' Ireland sheep dog trials for the past several years. She said she enjoyed it, and having her own dog

it even more important to keep the event going during our local St. Patrick's Celebration. This was her passion.

Last year, on Saturday night, March 14, Karen had a serious medical event that eventually took her life. Although everyone stepped up to finish the it, and having her own dog

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Community, public enhancements grant funds available

Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) has received funds from the Columbia River Economic Zone (CREZ) Board to be used for community and public enhancement for South Morrow County.

Applicant organizations must be local organizations, clubs, special districts or governmental entities that reside in the South Morrow County Service Area (as defined by the WCVEDG Service Area Map). The requestor must have at least 50 percent of funding (which may include in-kind and cash contributions from local and regional sources) for the total project budget committed before applying. Exceptions may apply at the discretion of the board.

A grant application has been developed for use

in applying for funding through this grant. Grant requests will be accepted from Monday, April 4, through Friday, April 29. A review and decision of grants awarded will be decided by the WCVEDG board and the winners communicated.

To receive a grant application form and an eligibility and exclusions information sheet, contact Sheryll Bates at 541-676-5536 or email to heppner-chamber@centurytel.net. Forms can also be picked up at Heppner, Ione and Lexington city hall offices.

All completed grant applications will need to be forwarded to Bates at the chamber office. Grants can be emailed, mailed or hand delivered, but must be received in the chamber office no later than Friday, April 29.

Health district CEO announces progress on clinic provider search

By April Sykes

Morrow County Health District CEO Bob Houser said, at the MCHD monthly meeting at the Port of Morrow in Boardman Monday night, that after the latest interviews he was optimistic about finding a mid-level provider for the district.

"Things are progressing nicely," he said.

He reported to the board that interviews with prospective mid-level providers were conducted on March 17. A mid-level provider would be a nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant, rather than an MD. He said that one

nurse practitioner from the Eugene area visited on March 24 and a second candidate, from Virginia, who was finishing up her physician's assistant program, would not be available for an onsite interview until mid-April. The third was once a physician's assistant at Columbia River Health Center in Boardman, but that person was not willing to relocate to Heppner from Portland and instead proposed commuting. Houser said he was also trying to set up a telephone interview with a candidate formerly from the Boise area and plans to set up interviews

with four more candidates. "Some very good candidates," he added.

One issue is finding enough housing for the candidates in south Morrow County.

He also spoke about the possibility of moving two staff to offices downstairs in the Pioneer Memorial Clinic Building, after the physical therapy department moves to the county annex building adjacent to the clinic. He said that will also leave room for a more spacious meeting room downstairs.

Houser said that he was also in the process of

scheduling a visit with a respiratory therapist interested in working part-time at MCHD and assuming other duties as well. He added that Elizabeth Peterson has volunteered to be the district's new quality improvement director.

He said that the district is now advertising for a business office employee to replace Eva McMasters, who has been accepted into a radiology tech certification program. That hire will also assume some of Peterson's duties.

Also at the meeting, -See HEALTH DISTRICT/
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Pursuit of an end to MS takes Heppner woman to DC

By Andrea Di Salvo

When Merilee McDowell of Heppner was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, or MS, in 1977, she knew her life would change. She probably never expected that her journey with the disease would take her to Washington, DC to speak with the nation's movers and shakers.

Yet that's exactly what happened when the local woman was invited by the Oregon Chapter of the Na-

tional Multiple Sclerosis Society to attend a conference in Washington, DC this month. McDowell traveled to the nation's capital with four other Oregon women on March 13 to attend the 2016 MS Public Policy Conference. The other attendees were MS Oregon Chapter President Lisa Roth, Oregon Chapter staffer Carol Choutka, and Pamela Hussie and Brie Stoianoff, whose lives have both been affected by MS.

"It's a place for MS activists to meet. There were over 300 MS activists there," McDowell explains. "It's to connect with other people with MS and then researchers and doctors, and learn about the issues and different bills to be presented to legislators for research and other funding."

Legislative concerns include National Institutes of Health (NIH) research funding and the MS Congressionally Directed Medi-

cal Research Program. McDowell says the National Multiple Sclerosis Society invested about \$54 million to MS research last year alone, and often partners with the NIH on MS research projects.

"Research is how we can stop MS in its tracks, restore what has been lost and end MS forever," she says.

According to the MS -See MS ACTIVISM/PAGE
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Washington man killed when milk tanker overturns on I-84

Oregon State Police is investigating a milk tanker that overturned on I-84 in Morrow County early Monday morning, killing the driver and leaking a significant amount of milk into nearby waterways.

At 5:41 Monday morning, Morrow County Sheriff's



This milk tanker overturned on I-84 near Boardman Monday, killing the driver and spilling thousands of gallons of milk into nearby waterways. -Photo courtesy of Oregon State Police

Office reported that it received multiple 911 calls saying that a Milky Way semi-truck hauling milk had overturned on Interstate 84 westbound near milepost 167, just east of Boardman. Callers reported that the truck, which apparently carried around 20,000 gallons of milk, was spilling its

contents onto the interstate.

MCSO, Boardman Police Department and Boardman fire were the first on the scene, arriving less than 10 minutes after the first call. First responders determined the truck, which was hauling double tankers, had rolled over on its side on the shoulder of the road.

The driver, James W. Crow, 62, of Kennewick, WA, was trapped in the severely damaged cab. The truck was also leaking diesel fuel and milk. OSP trooper John Juzeler arrived on the scene shortly after and began a crash investigation.

After about two hours, the Boardman

fire crew was able to remove the driver from the truck cab. Boardman ambulance transported Crow to Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston. He was subsequently transported by air ambulance to

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Bunny Sightings



The Easter Bunny did some quick hopping this year, appearing in both Heppner and Ione for Easter egg hunts. Top: Nolan Freeman, 2, son of Shelbi and James Freeman, sits on the Easter Bunny's lap in Heppner. Bottom: Moira Di Salvo, 7, daughter of Carmelo and Andrea Di Salvo, poses with the Easter Bunny in Ione. -Photos by David Sykes and Andrea Di Salvo

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