

Disque selected as home care nurse of the year

Robanai Disque of Lexington was recently recognized as the Home Care Nurse of the Year at the Oregon Association for Home Care's annual conference in Newport, OR.

Disque has worked as a home health RN since 1983. Traveling throughout Morrow and Gilliam counties, those who know her say she carried with her a strong set of clinical and teaching skills, as well as

Medicare-Certified Hospice. Carrying a full home health patient load and multiple work-related setbacks, Disque faithfully worked toward the goal of hospice certification.

When Pioneer Memorial Hospice received Medicare certification in 2002, Disque assumed the role of hospice coordinator. For more than 12 years, Disque co-lead the hospice volunteer trainings as well as monthly



Home health RN Robanai Disque (right) with Pioneer Memorial Hospital Chief Nursing Officer Molly Rhea. -Contributed photo

a strong sense of intuition. One of Disque's dreams, then goals, was to enable local residents to access the benefits of a

volunteer meetings held in three locations throughout the service area of Morrow -See NURSE OF THE YEAR/ PAGE NINE

MCSO arrests Hermiston man on assault, harassment charges

Morrow County Sheriff's Office has arrested a man on several counts of assault and Harassment, among others, according to a statement by the local law enforcement agency.

Last Saturday at 8:30 p.m., MCSO dispatch received a 911 call from 27-year-old Nicole Leticia Brown of Hermiston. Brown advised she had been assaulted by her husband, 29-year-old John Alexander Brown. According to her statement, they were camping in the mountains above Blakes Ranch, south



John Alexander Brown

of Heppner, with their two young daughters. Nicole Brown told police her husband had left on foot and that she didn't know his current location.

MCSO personnel responded and transported the victim and children to a waiting ambulance, which transported them to Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner. The Morrow County Sheriff's deputies were unable to locate the suspect that evening, but bulletins were sent out to other law enforcement agencies to be on

the lookout for the suspect.

On Sunday, April 24, sheriff's office personnel located the subject as he was leaving the area with the truck and camp trailer. A felony stop was performed and the John Brown was taken into custody without further incident.

John Brown was arrested and lodged at Umatilla County Jail on charges of assault II, two counts of assault IV domestic felony, one count of strangulation, harassment - offensive physical contact, and two counts of felon in possession of a weapon. Total bail is listed at \$143,000.

Open house planned for B2H project

An open house is planned for Wednesday, May 4, at 6 p.m. for those who will potentially be affected by the Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) Hemingway (B2H) transmission line. The open house concerning the preliminary Agency Preferred Route for the B2H line will take place at the Port of Morrow Riverfront Center in Boardman.

The Bureau of Land

Management (BLM) recently released the preliminary Agency Preferred Route to Hemingway (B2H) transmission line, a project proposed by Idaho Power Company (IPC). The preliminary Agency Preferred Route, along with other routes being considered, will be analyzed as part of the final Environmental Impact Statement which is

scheduled for release later this year.

The Bureau of Land Management will be available to answer any questions about the project and the BLM permitting process. Also available will be the Oregon Department of Energy to answer questions about the application that has been submitted

-See B2H OPEN HOUSE/ PAGE THREE

Ed. foundation grants more than \$260k to county schools

School districts upgrading technology, student opportunities with funding

BOARDMAN—Morrow Education Foundation awarded grants to all Morrow County schools this month totaling over \$260,000.

Both districts are focusing on upgrading and adding more technology to the schools. Morrow County School District received \$242,395, while Ione received \$22,604. Foundation board member Ed Rollins said the amount is determined on a per-student

basis.

Ione will use its funds to start a five-year process of replacing three Promethean Active Panels each year, totaling \$12,500, and add 20 Chrome Books with protective covers for incoming freshman for \$6,000. Ione Community School principal Henry Ramirez said the remaining funds will be used for the school's new science club field trip and early learning.

"We're very fortunate

and grateful for the funding," Ramirez said.

Morrow County School District superintendent Dirk Dirksen said the district will continue to invest in technology, Eastern Promise opportunities for students, field trips and wraparound services.

"Our goal is to be able to get technology to where students have technology available at a one-to-one

-See ED FOUNDATION GIFTS/PAGE THREE

Candidates speak to Heppner Chamber



County commissioner, judge, and circuit court judge candidates attended a candidates' forum last Thursday and spoke before a large crowd at the Heppner Chamber of Commerce.

Pictured above left to right are Jim Doherty, commissioner candidate, Melissa Lindsay, county judge candidate, and Leann Rea, also commissioner candidate.

Also in attendance and speaking were John Ballard and Jon Lieuallen, both candidates for judge of the circuit court sixth district, position two. Greg Sweek, who is also running for the county judge position, was not able to attend because of illness. -Photo by David Sykes

Health district discussion heats up over budget

By April Sykes

The Morrow County Health District Board approved a preliminary budget for 2016-17 amid sometimes contentious debate at its regular meeting held in Lexington Monday night. The disagreement among board members resulted from a difference of opinion concerning the district's policy on setting up "rainy day" capital reserve accounts, providing ending and beginning fund

balances, and presentation of financial reports.

The 2016-17 budget was approved with the condition that Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney will provide additional beginning and ending fund balances.

"I want to see that we have money on hand," said board member Aaron Palmquist, Irrigon.

"You see it every month," countered Mahoney.

Palmquist, who was the sole nay vote against the preliminary budget, also argued that the district needs to set up a reserve account to pay for capital items. Palmquist, seeming to direct most of his exasperation at CFO Nicole Mahoney, maintained that the district should not be financing projects or purchases when it has cash on hand and was adamantly in favor of setting up a capital reserve account.

"This is the people's money," he commented. "We keep spending more instead of tightening our belts," Palmquist added. "As a fiscal steward, we can't keep kicking the can down the road." He also questioned the way the financial reports were presented to the board, asking for additional information, requesting different formats and commenting more than once that Mahoney is an "employee" of the district. Board member Jill Parker, Boardman, indicated that she agreed with Palmquist, but voted in favor of the preliminary budget.

Parker commented that the confusion and perceived discrepancies probably arise because "at the end of the year the reports look different" that the monthly reports the board members receive.

While acting chair Leann Rea said she agreed that a reserve account should be established, she, along with Mahoney, noted that in earlier days the district's cash on hand had dipped to dire levels, which prompted extreme caution about spending down

the district's cash reserves and leaving the district in danger of not meeting its financial obligations. CEO Bob Houser added that he has seen the bottom line swing dramatically in small critical access hospitals such as Pioneer Memorial.

Rea also noted that the contentious discussion would be better held at a subsequent long-term planning meeting. She suggested that the district use a percentage of the com-

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Ione royalty sparkles at prom



Ione High School celebrated prom April 16 at the Port of Morrow Riverfront Center. Pictured are King Rory Barresse and Queen Ann Rietmann. -Photo courtesy of Little Echoes Photography

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