

# Landlords now responsible for unpaid city water bills

*New ordinance shifts responsibility of delinquent bills from renter to owner*

**By David Sykes**  
A new ordinance passed Monday by the Heppner City Council shifts responsibility for unpaid city water and sewer bills from the renter of a property to the owner, or landlord. The ordinance was passed to make it easier for the city to collect on unpaid water and sewer bills when the renters move out and walk away still owing the city. The city will still set

up accounts and bill renters for their water and sewer, it just now requires that renter to give the city the name address and phone number of the property owner, and that "owner of a rental property shall be responsible for any unpaid water or sewer accounts of his or her tenants." The new ordinance also requires "written consent signed by the owner which allows the transfer of liability for any

delinquent utility service accounts of the tenant to the owner."  
Prior to passing the ordinance the city held a hearing to take input from the public. Heppner resident Cody High, who is also running for mayor in the upcoming election, spoke out against the ordinance, saying that water and sewer bills are agreement between  
-See CITY WATER ORDINANCE/PAGE THREE

# Circuit court asks to alter judge bench at courthouse

*County not quite ready to alter historical furniture*

**By David Sykes**  
A proposal by the Morrow and Umatilla Circuit Court to alter the bench area in the historic courthouse in Heppner met with some resistance recently when the plan was presented for approval to the County Commissioners.  
Trail Court Administrator Roy Blaine came to last week's county court meeting with a request to cut the historic wood bench and install electrically adjustable table legs to "enable a large portion of the work surface to be raised or lowered for the comfort of whichever judge is using the court-

room," he said in a letter to the commissioners.  
Blaine said that there are now two large computer monitors on the bench work surface. He said three of the five judges are having trouble seeing over the monitors, and is requesting that the modifications be made in order that the judges can see the courtroom better. "We value and appreciate the historic nature of the Morrow County Courthouse, and of the courtroom itself, and we also appreciate that the County Court has worked with us over the years to enhance sound characteristics of the room,

electrical and computer network access, and other modern technology improvements," Blaine said in his letter to the commissioners. "We believe that this project is in the spirit and character of retaining the historic nature of the courtroom while improving its usability for any judge who might hear matters in the courtroom," he added.  
Commissioner Leann Rea had the most vocal concern about the plan, saying that every other alternative should be explored before the historical bench is cut and altered.  
"I have a real problem

with destroying the integrity of that bench," she told Blaine. "I think there should be another way."  
She said she had reservations about doing any alterations to the bench. "I think every other option should be explored, maybe look at different chairs." She said the State Historical Preservation should be consulted before anything is done.  
"We plan to retain a carpenter who has experience with restorations to ensure that the work surface is carefully cut and the edges

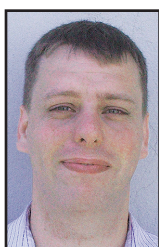
# Secretary of state visits Morrow County



Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers (left) and Oregon Secretary of State Jeanne P. Atkins pause for a photo during Atkins's visit at the Morrow County Courthouse in Heppner Tuesday. Secretary Atkins says she is on a mission to visit every county clerk in Oregon before the November election. Her visit to Childers in Heppner, one of several in Eastern Oregon this week, was her 28th stop. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

# Cody High appointed to fair board

The Morrow County Court has appointed Cody High to the Morrow County Fair Board.  
The court took the action at its Sept. 7 meeting in Heppner. High is a resident of Heppner and had expressed interest in serving on the fair board. The vote to appoint High to the three-year fair board term was unanimous.



Cody High

# Police searching for person of interest in Boardman shooting

The Morrow and Umatilla Major Crime Team is investigating a fatal shooting that occurred around 9 p.m. Sunday night in Boardman, including a search for a juvenile "person of interest," according to a news release from the office of the Morrow County district attorney.  
Police were called to an address located at 600 Wilson Road Trailer Park on a report of a male with gunshot wound. When police arrived they found Evencio Salas Birrueta, 27, of Irrigon with an apparent

gunshot wound. Officers immediately began lifesaving measures on the victim. These efforts were unsuccessful, and the victim was pronounced deceased by emergency medical personnel.  
Through interviews with witnesses and analysis of the crime scene, the Morrow and Umatilla Major Crime Team is attempting to locate a juvenile person of interest in the case. No further information was given about the juvenile,  
-See PERSON OF INTEREST/PAGE TWO

# Hughes named Round-Up princess

Makenzi Hughes of Heppner has received the coveted honor of being named a princess on the Pendleton Round-Up court this year.  
Hughes, 18, is the daughter of Kevin and Angie Hughes of Heppner. A 2015 graduate of Heppner High School, she now attends Blue Mountain Community College studying agriculture education.  
Hughes is continuing a tradition within her family; sister Jessica Hughes was a Pendleton Round-Up Princess in 2012. Hughes says she has been riding horses

all her life. That experience was accented by her active involvement in FFA, serving in leadership positions, and 4-H, winning several awards, including many in beef showmanship.  
"I plan to make the Pendleton Round-Up proud," said Hughes of her placement on the court, "by representing them as a cowgirl, ambassador for their town and the community."  
Look for Hughes entering from the west at a Pendleton Round-Up rodeo kick-off this Wednesday, Sept. 14, at 1:15 p.m.



Makenzi Hughes

# MCSD announces good start to new school year

**By April Sykes**  
Morrow County School Superintendent Dirk Dirksen, at the district's Monday night meeting at Sam Boardman Elementary, told the board that the school year is off to a good start. Dirksen said that district enrollment was at 2,270 students, up from last year. He estimated that after the dust settled, the increase would likely be closer to

60-65 students over last year's enrollment.  
Dirksen mentioned that there was talk about the possibility of a 120-unit apartment complex and 60 new homes going into Boardman. He said that with around 5,000 jobs at the Port of Morrow, around 3,000 workers drive in for their jobs, rather than living in Boardman. He said that the last time regular apart-

ments (not designated for specific populations) were built in Boardman was in the 70s.  
"It's kind of exciting," he commented, concerning the possibility of population growth in Boardman.  
Dirksen also mention the drastic need for bus drivers. He said that with the lack of substitutes, completing activity runs and getting everyone home has

been a challenge, especially if a driver calls in sick. He urged interested people to contact Mid Columbia Bus to apply.  
Dirksen commented on the district's increases in the number of computers and other technology, saying that it is "getting us closer and closer to one to one."  
He also discussed the  
-See SCHOOL DISTRICT/PAGE SEVEN

# Hospital foundation helps fund new ultrasound machine for PMH

**By Andrea Di Salvo**  
Pioneer Memorial Hospital has a new ultrasound machine, thanks in large part to a grant from the Pioneer Memorial Hospital Foundation.  
Foundation board representative Larry Mills said the organization was started a number of years ago to accept tax deductible donations for health care.  
"If anyone wants to send us a check, we're always open to that," quipped Mills.  
The foundation's scholarships for local graduates entering the health care field are well known, such as the Earl & Hazel Wilson Health Care Education Scholarship and the Dr. Wallace Wolff Memorial Scholarship.  
Another way the foundation aids local health care is by helping with improvements used for health care in the area. This time that improvement came in the form of a new ultrasound machine for Pioneer Memorial in Heppner.  
The foundation gave the hospital a grant for \$30,000, which covered a large chunk of the \$44,263 machine. Morrow County Health District CEO Bob Houser said the machine was a necessary upgrade for



Tuesday in Heppner, Pioneer Memorial Hospital Foundation members handed over a grant check for \$30,000 to help fund the hospital's purchase of a new ultrasound machine. Pictured L-R: Morrow County Health District CEO Robert Houser, Foundation Chair Larry Mills, PMH Lab and Imaging Manager Betty Hickerson and Foundation member Tonia Adams. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

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