

## Council approves office space lease to Bryant Foundation

Also moves forward with new restroom construction

By David Sykes

The Heppner city council voted Monday to lease the former Heppner Chamber of Commerce office adjacent to city hall to the newly-formed Howard and Beth Bryant Foundation nonprofit trust. Heppner City Manager Kim Cutsforth had earlier that day announced her resignation from the city effective February, and said she will now take over running of the trust.

Cutsforth did not make

a formal resignation at the council meeting, but through a letter to the Heppner Gazette-Times and by informing council members prior to Monday's meeting. (See story PAGE ONE, letter PAGE TWO).

Last month Cutsforth had asked the city to lease the office next to city hall to the Foundation; however, the council decided to wait one month, advertise the space as available to the public, and then make a decision. Monday Cutsforth

said the office space had been advertised and no one expressed interest, so the council decided to move forward with the lease. The foundation will pay \$350 per month for the office, and the lease term is for one year. The vote for approval was 6 to 1. The foundation was established in September of 2015 by the late Howard and Beth Bryant, long-time Heppner residents and active community members.

Also, the council voted

to move forward with construction of a new restroom and table storage cabinet at city hall. Allstott construction was sole bidder on the project, which will place a restroom in an existing storage closet off the main city meeting room, and construct a table storage cabinet along the wall of the main meeting room. Cost of the restroom would be \$21,897, and the cabinet \$7,331, for a total of \$29,228.

-See CITY COUNCIL/PAGE FIVE

## Cutsforth steps down as city manager

Wants to run a Heppner nonprofit

By David Sykes

In a surprise move Monday, Kim Cutsforth resigned her position as Heppner city manager, saying she wants to take on the job of running a nonprofit foundation in the community.

The Heppner City Council met Monday night; however, Cutsforth did not make her resignation of-

cial or public at that time.

She had earlier emailed a letter to the editor of the Heppner Gazette-Times (see this week's issue), and had apparently notified the city council prior to the meeting of her intentions to step down. The council held an executive session following



City Manager Kim Cutsforth will leave her position in February.

-See CUTSFORTH RESIGNS/PAGE FIVE

## Rea retires from county court

By Andrea Di Salvo

The Morrow County Court will bid farewell to veteran commissioner Leann Rea at the end of this month. Seventy-five-year-old Rea has served on the commissioner for eight years. She, along with current Morrow County Judge Terry Tallman, will leave office at the end of her current term, perhaps to retire—or

perhaps not.

Rea was born in Portland but, aside from some time her father spent working at the shipyards in the Willamette Valley during World War II, was raised on the family farm outside of Ione. She graduated valedictorian of her class from Ione High School in 1959. She says she married her husband, Gerald Rea, "like four days

later—really, right out of high school."

"Our families had known each other forever," she adds.

She and Gerald were married 54 years, until his passing in 2013. The couple had four children, Rick, who now lives in Irrigon, Darla in Boardman, Terrell in Nevada, and Robert in Island City, OR.

Right after their marriage, Leann and Gerald Rea moved to Heppner,

where she worked off and on for the John Deere/Caterpillar store as a "parts man." In 1964, they moved to Condon, where Gerald and three other men went into partnership in a John Deere store. There, she helped in the family business as a parts man and assistant bookkeeper.

"Of course, in there I was also having children," she adds.

-See REA RETIRES/PAGE FOUR

## Ione businesses plan Christmas open house

The public is invited to join Ione businesses for their annual Christmas open house this week. The traditional open house will take place this Friday, Dec. 16, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

While out and about, shoppers are also encouraged to help the Ione office of Wheatland Insurance collect the most food donations for their annual food drive. Local donations will be delivered to the Neighborhood Center in Heppner on Dec. 19.

## Celebrate Heppner Christmas Thursday

The annual Celebrate Heppner Christmas event will take place this Thursday, Dec. 15, starting at 6 p.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds. Community members are invited to bring their rewards cards and participate in this community get-together.

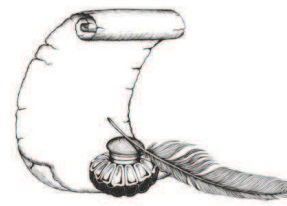
The event will start with a dinner served by the Heppner Elementary Parent/Teacher Club, and pictures with Santa will be available from 6-7 p.m. for \$5. Penny board and raffle items will be available; drawing for rewards cards items will begin at 7 p.m.

## Area pastors invited to submit Christmas messages

Businesses, individuals also invited to send in Christmas greetings

The Heppner Gazette-Times will publish its annual Christmas edition on Dec. 21.

Area pastors are invited to submit Christmas messages to be published in the Dec. 21 edition. The deadline is Monday, Dec. 19, at 5 p.m. Messages can be dropped off at the Gazette office, emailed to editor@



rapidserve.net, or faxed to 541-676-9211. Christmas service schedules are also welcome.

Any businesses or individuals who would like to purchase space on our special Christmas greeting page in the Dec. 21 Gazette should call 541-676-9228 or email megan@rapidserve.net by Monday, Dec. 19, at 5 p.m.

## Boardman schools prepare for possible influx from planned housing

By April Sykes

Morrow County School District Superintendent Dirk Dirksen told the board, at its regular meeting Monday night at Irrigon Junior/Senior High School, that he has heard that a 240-unit apartment complex

is scheduled to be built in Boardman within the next six months. While he said he was not yet certain if the project would indeed move forward, if it does happen it would greatly impact the school district.

He added that the dis-

trict's enrollment has increased by 42 students since the same time last year with the current enrollment at 2,206, compared to last year's enrollment of 2,164. The current enrollment report, as of December, is as follows: A.C. Hough-

ton Elementary, Irrigon, kindergarten through third grade-268; Sam Boardman Elementary, Boardman, kindergarten through third grade-330; Heppner Elementary School, kindergarten through sixth grade-174; Irrigon Elementary School, fourth through sixth grade-202; Windy River Elementary, Boardman, fourth through sixth grade-220; Heppner Jr./Sr. High School, seventh through 12<sup>th</sup> grade-158; Irrigon Jr./Sr. High School, seventh through 12<sup>th</sup> grade-376; Riverside Jr./Sr. High School, Boardman, seventh through 12<sup>th</sup> grade-427; Morrow Education Center, Irrigon-51; total-2,206.

Dirksen also commented on Measure 98, which is a drop-out prevention and college readiness bill that recently passed in Oregon. The bill will give state funds to public school districts to establish or expand career and tech opportunities and to establish or

-See SCHOOL DISTRICT/PAGE THREE

## County road committee seeks Lexington representative

Morrow County Public Works is currently looking to fill an opening on the Morrow County Road Committee. The opening is for a representative from

the Lexington area, which will include the Town of Lexington and surrounding area.

Meetings are held roughly two times a year

or possibly more as the need arises. Members work closely with the Transportation System Plan and help

-See ROAD COMMITTEE/PAGE FIVE

## G-T Trophy Corner



Chris, Natalie and Andre Rauch with this season's deer. It was Natalie's first time hunting. She got a 3x2 on the first shot through the neck with a Marlin .256 Winchester Magnum. -Contributed photo

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