

Gazette Times

VOL. 136 NO. 6 8 Pages Wednesday, February 8, 2017 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

WCVEDG plans annual luncheon

Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) will host its annual luncheon on Friday, Feb. 17, from 12-1 p.m. at the St. Patrick's Senior Center dining room.



Rep. Greg Smith

The meeting is open to anyone who would like to attend. During the lunch, the group will hold its annual meeting, followed by guest speaker State Representative Greg Smith, who will be giving

a legislative update. Alvin Liu with Gateway Café will cater the lunch and will be serving barbecue ribs, grilled citrus basil chicken, homemade coleslaw, barbecue beans, sweet cornbread, cookie and a beverage.

WCVEDG is a volunteer organization dedicated to helping new businesses locate in the Heppner, Lexington and Ione areas and to support economic

growth in the local communities.

Regular meetings are held in Heppner City Hall the last Wednesday of each month at 8 a.m. Visitors are welcome to join the meetings.

This annual lunch is free and open to everyone. Those attending are asked to RSVP to Sheryll Bates at heppnerchamber@centurytel.net or 541-676-5536 no later than Tuesday, Feb. 14, to guarantee enough food and seating.

Town and Country awards this week

Heppner Chamber of Commerce's annual Town and Country Community Awards are this Thursday, Feb. 9.

The event will begin at 6 p.m. with a no-host social time, with dinner to start at 6:30 p.m. and the awards program to follow.

Alvin Liu with Gateway Café will be catering the dinner and will be offering prime rib with au jus and horseradish; creamy garlic mashed potatoes; green beans; garden fresh salad with raspberry vinaigrette dressing; dinner roll with butter; chocolate cake for dessert; and a beverage.

Tickets are \$30 per person and may be purchased at Bank of Eastern Oregon, the chamber office, City of Heppner, Community Bank and Murray's. Checks may be made out to the Heppner Chamber of Commerce.

Contact the Heppner Chamber of Commerce at 541-676-5536 with questions or to reserve tickets.

Irrigon man arrested for rape, sex abuse of a minor

Irrigon man Kenny Cole Blurton was arrested recently on several sex-related charges involving a minor, according to a statement by Morrow County Sheriff Kenneth Matlack.

The 19-year-old was arrested Jan. 26 pursuant to a Morrow County Circuit Court warrant issued from a secret indictment by the Morrow County Grand Jury.

Blurton was arrested on four charges of rape II, two charges of sex abuse I, three charges of unlawful sexual penetration, and a count of sodomy II.

The incidents allegedly occurred with a juvenile female under the age of 14 between July and December of 2015.

Blurton was lodged at the Umatilla County Jail with bail set at \$250,000 but has since posted bail. His pre-trial hearing is scheduled for Feb. 9.



Kenny Cole Blurton

Cupid takes aim in Heppner



Cupid has a larger-than-life heart in his sights in this festive Valentine's tableau at the end of Willow Street in Heppner. Richard St. Clair and Theresa Jones of Heppner created the scene, St. Clair projecting the images onto plywood and cutting them out, and Jones providing the artistry with her painting. They have done several such scenes for recent holidays, carrying on what for St. Clair is a long-standing tradition. "I used to own a house that was right on Hwy. 217 there in Tigard," he says. "I had a big roof there on my carport, and I just used to put up all kinds of crazy decorations." -Photo by April Sykes

Expo offers students opportunity to explore technology

Pendleton—Students from eastern Oregon school districts are invited to learn more about technology at the Technology Expo on Thursday, March 9, at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande, Oregon.

This event is free and open to all students currently enrolled in eighth through 12th grades who attend one of the IMESD's 18 component school districts. The expo is from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the EOU campus, and transportation will be provided from school districts.

Students can register for a variety of sessions that include hands-on activities, including: 3D animation, 3D printing, taking apart and diagnosing computer component issues, website development, computer programming, app development and more. In addition, students will visit with Career Advisors to learn about career paths and their educational requirements, plus meet representatives from regional companies that have jobs in technology.

"We are very excited about the sessions being offered at Tech Expo this year; with EOU's support and collaboration the course diversity is amazing. We know students will enjoy this dynamic, jam-packed day, which will expand their understanding of technology career opportunities and give them additional resources for future planning," said Karen Smelser,

STEP operations director at the IMESD.

Students can register themselves for the Tech Expo by visiting <http://step.imesd.org>. Students can also follow STEP on Twitter and Instagram--@EOSTepITup and #stepexpo17. Information is available at all participating middle schools and high schools from STEP representatives, at school front offices and on most school district websites.

The Tech Expo is part of an overall IMESD program called STEP, Student Technology Expanded Programs, developed through a grant from the Oregon Department of Education. The intent of the grant is to support summer programs that are designed to recruit and retain students in career pathways that lead to high wage and high demand occupations and link to existing CTE Programs of Study. The 18-month grant (spring 2016 through fall 2017) allows the IMESD to offer the spring Expo, summer technology camps for high school and middle school students and an internship program in the IMESD Information Technology department.

For more information or if you have questions about the Tech Expo or STEP programs, visit the STEP website at <http://step.imesd.org> or www.imesd.k12.or.us. You can also email karen.smelser@imesd.k12.or.us.

Get ready to hunt for the shamrock



The Heppner Gazette-Times and Bank of Eastern Oregon will again sponsor a shamrock hunt for those hardy enough to brave the weather and smart enough to unravel the clues published in the Gazette. While the leprechauns weren't willing to part with any gold for this year's prize, the winner will still be rewarded with hard cash in the form of a \$50 bill from the Bank of EO. Look for clues to the shamrock's location beginning in next week's Gazette-Times. Pictured: Heppner Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Sheryll Bates (left) and Bank of Eastern Oregon Heppner Branch Manager Tricia Rollins pose with the \$50 bill that will go to the winner of this year's treasure hunt. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo



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