

Rollie Marshall named new Ione school principal

Former Heppner resident Rollie Marshall will be returning to the community after several years away. He has accepted a position as principal of the Ione School and will begin his new job on July 1.

Marshall and his wife Debbie, both graduates of Wallowa High School, raised their three children, Candis Smith, who now lives in La Grande, Brandi Sweeney and Kristen Marshall, both of Heppner, in Heppner.

Marshall was in the banking industry for 29 years and was previously employed by the Bank of Eastern Oregon in Heppner. He has nine years of education administrative experience at Weston-McEwen High School, Nyssa High School and Nyssa Middle School.

Marshall said he was very excited to become part of the instructional team at the Ione School District and "is looking forward to continuing the strong tradition of academic and athletic excellence in Ione."



Rollie Marshall

\$22,327 Community Enhancement Grants awarded

The Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) disbursed \$22,327 in Community Enhancement Grants to eight local organizations last week. The grant funds came from the Columbia River Enterprise Zone's commitment to provide money to better the local communities in the county.

In South Morrow County, the following grants were distributed: City of Heppner, \$1,000 for a 30-yard dumpster for residents to use in a city-wide cleanup that coincides with Mustang Mop-Up; also, City of Heppner, \$1,760 to provide for Main Street beautification with hanging baskets; Heppner Chamber of Commerce, \$600 for a project spearheaded by John Edmundson to rehabilitate the Welcome to Heppner signs on Hwy. 74 and Hwy. 207/206; Little League, \$10,541, which they will use to replace the sprinkler system, lay new sod in the outfield and



Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group Director Sheryll Bates presents a grant check to Jason Hanna of the Heppner Little League. Also accepting the check are Little League board members Jeromy and Jennifer Wilson. -Photo by David Sykes

install fence adjacent to highway; Neighborhood Center, \$1,487 to replace aging water supply pipes and plumbing and relocate a water line and meter; Oregon Trail Library District Heppner branch, \$1,039 to replace existing blinds and add blinds where there

currently aren't any; also to the Heppner library, \$4,400 to upgrade internet capabilities; and to the Town of Lexington, \$1,500 for beautification of both parks with flowers, brick retainer wall, bark dust for flower beds, native ground cover and blooming shrubs.

"We are very pleased to be able to give out these grants for the betterment of our South County communities," said WCVEDG President David Sykes. "We are able to help with a wide range of projects and we know the money is being put to good use."

County Commission moves toward facilities decision

Irrigon, Boardman, buy or build

By David Sykes

The Morrow County Commission is moving closer to deciding on where to put new offices and services in the north end of the county. Commissioners and staff have been talking for the past six months about

expansion and building plans for services and facilities, including the planning commission, VA, county clerk, parole and probation and sheriff's department. They agree the county needs more and newer facilities in Boardman and Irrigon, but so far, no agreement on where those offices should be located.

At issue is whether to construct new in Irrigon and keep the services currently located there, or to purchase an empty Blue Mountain Community College building in Boardman and move the offices there, or a combination of both. The frustration of continued talks on the issues, including several meetings with concerned Irrigon residents, came out last week.

"We have spent six months talking about this. We need some clarity and get some numbers together, and move forward," chair Melissa Lindsay said at the May 3 meeting.

Commissioner Don Russell also urged the commission to decide. He has been a proponent of taking a hard look at purchasing the BMCC building, which he says could be had a very

good price.

"This basically comes down to new in Irrigon or a combination of building in Irrigon and/or buy the BMCC building in Boardman," Russell said. "BMCC is not going to sit there forever," he warned. He said another unnamed government entity is interested in the facility but BMCC has agreed to hold off at least for a while for the county to make up its mind.

Russell said the BMCC building is 3,500 square feet and could be purchased for \$250,000 for a "minimum \$1/2 million savings." He says new construction is going to cost the county between \$300 and \$380 per foot. "It's hard to look people in the face who have pot holes in front of their homes, and we are going to spend a half million more than we need too," Russell said.

Commissioner Jim Doherty said the commission still does not have all the information it needs to decide.

"We still need figures and analysis on the value of the BMCC facility," and

on what the cost will be to prepare it for the county offices. He said if the BMCC building were bought, the county could move out of the Docken building where some offices are currently located in Boardman.

Lindsay said she is thinking of a combination of purchasing the BMCC building to house the services currently located in Boardman, and building new for those services currently in Irrigon. "I don't want to move out of Irrigon. I am committed to not hurting Irrigon and their economy," she said. "But we need to make a decision."

Several members of the Irrigon community came to the last commission meeting and urged the county to leave the current offices in Irrigon, which they say helps an economy that does not have a lot going for it.

In other discussions, the commission talked about how to divide up a proposed \$200,000 grant program amongst the five cities in the county. They seem to be settling on giving a basic amount to all

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Heppner sees surge of criminal mischief

City, law enforcement seek public's help to stop vandalism, juvenile mischief

By Andrea Di Salvo

The City of Heppner has experienced a rash of vandalism over the past couple of months, much of which law enforcement says can be traced to juvenile mischief. Morrow County Undersheriff and Heppner City Councilmember John Bowles says the sheriff's office has received 16 juvenile complaints and six criminal mischief, or vandalism, complaints



Heppner city workers replace the basketball hoops at Hager Park, which had to be taken down, rewelded and put back up after they were damaged in a recent rash of vandalism at city parks. -Photo by David Sykes

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MCSO announces new structure, promotions

Morrow County Sheriff's Office has announced it has restructured the command staff. Morrow County Sheriff Ken Matlack says the driving force behind the move is "to be more fiscally responsible and decrease the overtime budget, while operating as efficiently as possible."

In view of those goals, Matlack has announced the following promotions:

Terry Harper, Operations Lieutenant. Harper has been with the sheriff's office since 1989 and has been in law enforcement since 1985. He has served as a patrol deputy, detective and detective sergeant. As operations lieutenant, he will supervise the criminal and patrol divisions, as well as the Court Security Unit, OHV Park Unit and the Search & Rescue Unit.

Dan Robbins, Corrections Lieutenant. Robbins has been with the sheriff's office since 2010 and in law enforcement since 1993. He will supervise the community corrections division deputies, including community service supervisor. The corrections division staff is currently supervising 115 offenders.

Kristen Bowles, Communications Lieutenant. Bowles has spent her whole law enforcement career with the Morrow County Sheriff's Office, beginning in 2004. She worked as a dispatcher and was later promoted to communications division sergeant, then communications division director. She will supervise the communications/911 division, consisting of a communications sergeant and eight communications deputies.

Melissa Ross, Administrative Lieutenant/P.I.O. Ross also has spent her law enforcement career with the Morrow County Sheriff's Office. She started in 1999 with about a year in dispatch, then took a hiatus before returning in 2005. She has worked in the communications division, records unit, civil unit and the management assistant position for the sheriff. She will supervise the administrative division including

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Ballots due next week

With a low turnout so far in this year's Special Election, voters are urged to get their ballots in by next Tuesday. On the ballot this month are elections for local special districts. All ballots are due by 8 p.m. Elec-

tion Day, Tuesday, May 16. Ballots must be received, not simply postmarked, on that day. Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers says election results for Morrow County races will be

available online that night at <http://www.co.morrow.or.us/clerk>.

For voter convenience, 24-hour ballot drop boxes are located in each community throughout the county.



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