



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

Sidewalk completion delayed until spring

Contractor can't do red brick stamping before winter



Filling in the section between the sidewalk and gutters, like this section on Gale, with simulated red brick concrete is last part of big street project.

By David Sykes

The final piece of Heppner's \$2.7 million street renovation project, filling in the gaps between sidewalk and street with red brick stamped concrete, probably won't be completed until spring, the city council was told Monday night.

City Manager Kraig Cutsforth said between COVID-19 shutdowns and changing out street water fixtures, the project was delayed, not leaving enough time for contractors to pour the brick-looking red concrete between gutters and sidewalks. The long strips of bare ground waiting for the concrete, mostly on Gale Street, must be poured before freezing winter temperatures set in.

Cutsforth said the contractor offered to complete the work now without delay, but it would be a grey "brushed" job instead of the decorative red simulated brick called for in the original contract. Councilmembers agreed they didn't want that however and opted to wait until spring and have the project done as intended. "It's what people wanted and are expecting," councilmember Corey Sweeney said in urging the council to stick with the original plan. "This project is for a long time, and we all have to look at it. Let's do it right," he urged.

But the bare ground spots cannot be left "as is" through the winter, and city crews will need to fill the gaps with gravel for safety. Snow would cover over the dirt areas and not be safe for the public, Cutsforth explained. Public Works director Chad Doherty said it won't cost the city anything since the gravel purchased would be used elsewhere later. "I'm always needing gravel somewhere," he said.

In other business at Monday's meeting the

council heard a report from Barb Orwick about work being done at the Neighborhood Center. "Last month we gave out 132 food boxes which helped feed 341 people," she said.

The holidays are a busy time at the center and Orwick said the recent canned food drive was a success. "The football players went out and picked up food from people and we received 809 cans," she said. Orwick also said donations of winter coats, boots, mittens, scarves and "any kind of winter clothes" is needed now at the center.

She also said they would be doing their kids shopping day this year where children get to go out and shop for their siblings for Christmas gifts. There is also going to be a giving tree at the grocery store in Heppner with ornaments naming specific gifts needed by children and young people up through high school age in the community. People who would like to give, can pick off the ornaments and then take the suggested gift to the Neighborhood Center in time for distribution to the families before Christmas. She also said anyone knowing of someone in the community that would be eligible for food baskets, to urge them to come by the center and sign up for the gifts program.

In other business the council heard from Kim Cutsforth of the Bryant Trust, who asked the council to purchase a piece of land on Riverside for use as a dog park. She said the trust would reimburse the city for the cost of the lot.

Several community members have been looking for a spot to put a dog park and Cutsforth said the 12,000 square foot lot

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Friends and community will help family through local man's deployment



Danielle, Garin, Justin and Colden Hoeft at the mobilization ceremony held prior to Justin's deployment. -Contributed photo.

By Bobbi Gordon

Local man and Oregon National Guard Staff Sergeant E6, Justin Hoeft, has been deployed to Kuwait, along with men and women from other Oregon units. Hoeft is with the Badger Company 3116, Hermiston, and is a tank commander with a four-man crew, including himself. The guards will be going under Montana's flag at this time, starting off in Texas for training before being sent to Kuwait.

Justin joined the Oregon National Guard in 2005 and was deployed to Iraq in 2010-2011. This will be Justin's second mobilization deployment and will last for about 14 months. He has traveled to many different places for training over the years and was once sent to Romania for a couple of months to do training exercises with other countries.

Justin and his wife, Danielle, met in 2010 and married in 2012. They soon added two boys, Colden, now age 9, and Garin, age 6, to the family. Danielle was born and raised in Lexington and Heppner. Justin's dad was in the Air Force, so he grew up all over, before settling in the Pendleton/Pilot Rock area in 2004.

Justin and Danielle met shortly before his deployment to Iraq, and she was able to travel to Georgia to spend time with Justin while he was there visiting his brother. While Justin was deployed with his brother, Josh, they were able to leave on R&R to

go to Germany, where his parents lived at the time, to attend their dad's retirement ceremony from the Air Force. Danielle was able to go as well, describing it as "an awesome experience." While they were in Germany for those two weeks, they became engaged.

When asked how Justin's deployment affects the family, Danielle noted, "Although we are very used to the military life as a family, this will be the first long-term deployment our boys have seen. I am sure there will be hard times,

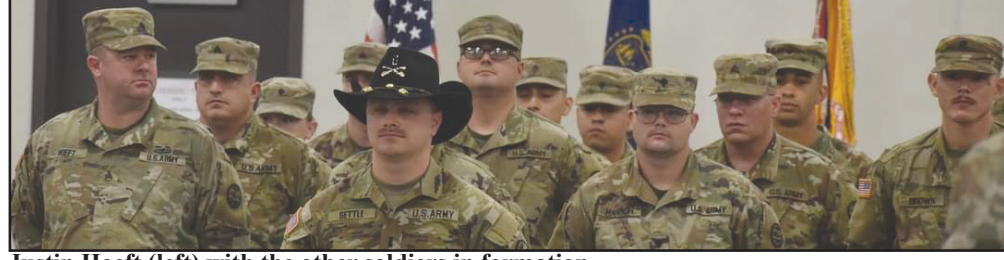
but I am confident we will get through it with so much support from our very large families, all of our friends and a community that is so supportive."

"The boys will be kept busy with the usual things we do, such as hunting, fishing, riding dirt bikes, camping and sports," Danielle continued. "We also have a lot of support from the military family we have gotten to know over the years. Being a National Guard family brings its own set of challenges. We do not live on bases with other

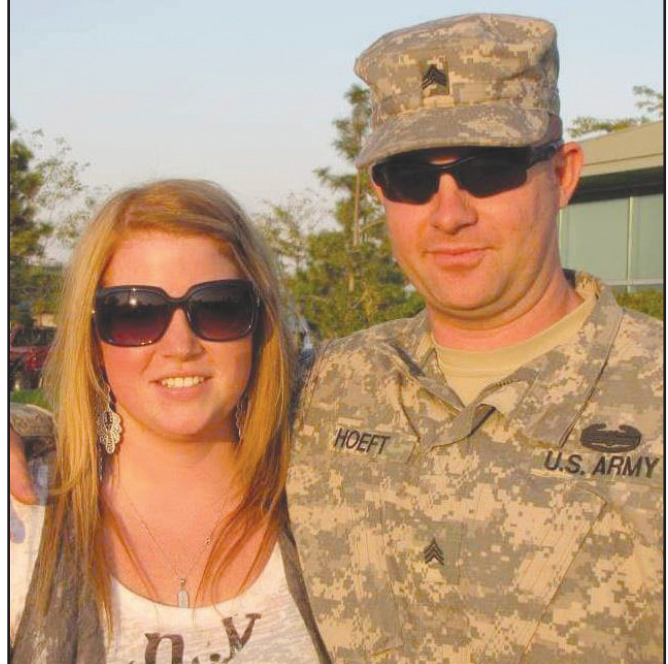
families going through the same thing, but we do still have those connections. We are just more spread out. It comes with its challenges for the soldiers as well. I like to explain to people that Justin can go from three weeks in army camo during annual training in the desert on Sunday to HiVis safety wear and work boots on Monday when he goes back to his 'regular job.' We wouldn't trade his service for anything though. We completely support what he does and are very proud of him," Danielle noted.



Justin's family attended the mobilization ceremony. Pictured (L-R): Justin's brother Josh (who deployed with Justin in 2010-2011) Justin, his dad, Kevin and his other brother Travis Hoeft.



Justin Hoeft (left) with the other soldiers in formation.



Danielle and Justin when he returned from deployment in Iraq.

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