

Army transfers thousands of acres

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part of the process was the incineration or safe transfer of the chemicals at the Depot—about 11 percent of the entire chemical stockpile of the United States. From 2004 to 2011, 220,604 munitions and 3,720 tons of chemical weapons were destroyed, mostly through incineration.

Incineration was completed in Oct. 2011 and the depot closed on Aug. 1, 2012.

“Many visionaries have worked diligently towards this goal for 30 years. This transfer is the culmination of their efforts. It is exciting to witness this historic event take place today,” said Port of Morrow Executive Director Lisa Mittelsdorf.

“The Port would like to sincerely thank the Army and local leadership for their dedicated commitment to return 9,500 acres of the Umatilla Chemical Army Depot in Morrow and Umatilla County back



The Honorable Rachel Jacobson (left) and CDA Executive Director Greg Smith. -Contributed photo

to local authority where it can be used for the cultural and economic benefit of our region.”

Kat Brigham of CTUIR said the tribes are glad the chemical weapons have been destroyed and the land transfer is completed.

“Now it is time to move forward with the planning,” Brigham added. “Great job, everyone.”

Now that the CDA is the new owner of the property, there is renewed interest in the development of the land, and more than 3,100

acres are already slated for industrial development on what CDA Executive Director Greg Smith called “one of the most significant industrial sites in the State of Oregon.”

“This is such a surreal moment. There have been many great community leaders, including some mentors of mine, who have worked on this,” said Umatilla County Commissioner John Shafer. “To see this finally get across the finish line, and being a part of it, is very exciting.”

Past CDA Board Members are Senator Bill Hansell, Gary Neal, Bill Elfering, Rod Skeen, Rosenda Shippentower, Dave Tovey, John Turner, Carla McClane, Carl Sheeler, Terry Tallman, Connie Caplinger, George Anderson, Larry Givens, Leann Rea, Ryan Neal, Jim Doherty, Bill Tovey, Don Russell and past executive director Don Chance.

Puzey thanked and congratulated all the local authorities and military partners who have worked tirelessly on this project for over 30 years. Quoting from the Old Testament, Puzey said, “Twenty-seven hundred years ago the Prophet Isaiah spoke of the future when he said, ‘The nations... shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.’”

A local celebration is being planned for July.

Indianhead division seeks members for reunion

Olivia, NC—The Second (Indianhead) Division Association is searching for anyone who served in the Army’s 2nd Infantry Division at any time. The association is planning a 100th reunion in Colorado Springs, CO from Septem-

ber 20-24, 2023. For information about the association and the 100th annual reunion, visit www.2ida.org/product/reunion/10 on the web, send an email to 2ida.pao@charter.net or call Mike Davino at 919-356-5692.

Ione new wastewater system

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problem for future development. In fact, former Ione mayor Linda LaRue told the January gathering that Ione has already lost potential housing opportunities because the lots were too small to support drain fields.

Meanwhile, many of the existing houses in Ione are also on small lots and have septic tanks that are on the point of—or already are—failing. Since all new septic installations have to meet Dept. of Environment Quality (DEQ) requirements, including the 180-foot drain field, septic tanks that have to be pumped will no longer be an option for most Ione residents. Without a solution, Rietmann told the crowd, the town’s longevity is questionable.

Since a public sewer system as such would be both complex and costly, the city has worked with engineering firm Anderson and Perry to find a solution that will solve the drain field issue without requiring a public sewer system and wastewater treatment plant.

The planned wastewater system will include a small diameter septic tank with on-site treatment improvements on every lot. The difference is that the effluent wastewater from the individual septic tanks will be pumped to a lift station at the base of Johnson Grade Road and, from there, up to a drain field on approximately 20 acres at the top of Johnson Grade Road.

Rietmann said the wastewater will be distributed into a checkerboard-pattern drain field, utilizing every other square. If one fails, it will be moved to an unused square. The 1,000-gallon septic tanks are similar to what homeowners would buy themselves and meet DEQ re-

quirements. The City of Ione will take responsibility for buying, installing and hooking up the new septic tanks, and will also clean the tanks once every three to five years. The city will also be responsible for maintaining the system except for the connection from the tank to the residence, which will be the landowner’s responsibility.

The project is estimated to cost \$5.7 million from start to finish. The Ione Community Agri-Business Organization (ICABO) has committed \$175,000 to cover half the cost of the design. The \$200,000 in Columbia River Enterprise Zone (CREZ) funds allocated to the city has also been earmarked for the project. The city has also received \$241,000 from Morrow County and \$72,800 from the American Rescue Act.

In addition, Ione School District will provide \$800,000 for its portion of the project, providing groundbreaking happens before the end of the second quarter this year. If not, Ione school will rescind the funding and install its own septic system. Rietmann said that once the system is up and running, the biggest cost will be electricity. A proposed monthly wastewater fee of \$45 would be used to fund system maintenance.

Installation of the system will be mandatory for Ione landowners, with the exception of Emert Addition. Emert Addition’s residents have large enough lots to allow for drain fields and have already received DEQ approval for their septic systems.

The project is expected to begin in the spring or summer of this year with the first hookup expected in the fall of 2024. Ione school will be the first system hooked up.

Ukiah school celebrates 100th anniversary with week of festivities



Ukiah students dressed up as though they were 100 years old on Monday, March 13, for the 100th day of school. -Photo courtesy of Ukiah School District



Ukiah School’s Technology Student Association (TSA) presented virtually with Heppner students in Teresa Veach’s class on Tuesday, March 14. -Photo courtesy of Intermountain ESD

Ukiah School District recently marked its 100th anniversary. The 100th day of school kicked off a week of dress-up days and celebrations, including a day for students and staff to dress as if they were 100 years old and a day to wear a fashion from their favorite decades.

The community also was invited to join in the festivities, which included a spaghetti lunch prepared by cook Kari Keen on Tuesday, March 14. Keen even made an anniversary cake with a red velvet swirl frosted with “Happy 100th” to mark the occasion.

In addition to the social activities, Ukiah School’s Technology Student Association (TSA) presented virtually with Heppner students, demonstrating the photography skills they have learned in classes with business and math teacher Teresa Veach.

As a grand finale to the centennial events, the school is also planning a special alumni reunion in the summer, scheduled for June 23-24, coinciding with the Ukiah Rodeo. This

event will bring together alumni and friends to celebrate the school’s legacy and achievements.

“We have a lot to be proud of in Ukiah, having served the children of this community for 100 years,” said Superintendent Laura Orr. “I’m so proud of our wonderful staff and students, and I look forward to celebrating this major milestone with all our alumni this summer.”

Ukiah School is a public K-12 school located in the foothills of Eastern Oregon’s Blue Mountains. The school currently has 27 students and employs eight staff, including teachers, teacher aides and Superintendent Orr, who also teaches science classes.

The school was founded in 1923 and has been in its current building since 1926. Staff say its old-fashioned schoolhouse design fosters close relationships between staff members and students of different ages. Orr said the Ukiah School District looks forward to continuing to provide quality education for the next 100 years.

New track in Irrigon

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Representatives from the Port of Morrow gathered on the new track surface on Thursday, March 23. The Port of Morrow was a significant contributor to the project. -Contributed photo

“Our student athletes are excited to be able to practice and have meets on a professional-grade surface and that we no longer have to bus to Umatilla for practice,” said Royer, adding that the improved facility increases safety for everyone.

The new track is a significant improvement from the previous gravel and dirt track that had become limiting for the track and field competitors. The final surface is three inches deep with a synthetic rubberized top layer, with lane stripe painting completed on the vivid red track in the fall.

Palmer said this track has brought the IJSHS community together while working toward this major goal.

“I am so happy to be a small part of this big project—so many people worked to make this project a reality, and I am grateful to our many community supporters who made this track possible,” she said.

“At the end of the day, we are always working to serve our students and community,” Combe added. “This track is a big thing to point to and say, ‘Look at what can happen when we come together.’”

Heppner students reading

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Patterson. At the end of the four weeks, students choose prizes based on the minutes they read during all four weeks. The top reader was Mikalie Duncan with 8,141 minutes.

“Basketball reading is a fun way to get kids to want to read for fun,” said Mikalie.

“Basketball reading

was very fun. I appreciated the effort to reward students for making the effort to read. I understand why it has been a program for thirty-five years. I hope it makes it to at least fifty years!” added Jasper Hanna.

Aside from individual achievements, there are team accomplishments, as well. Students were separated into teams and competed weekly for the highest

Ione Easter egg hunt planned April 8

Ione’s annual Easter egg hunt will be held Saturday, April 8, at 10 a.m. in the Ione City Park. Children up to the fourth grade are invited. The Easter Bunny will be on hand for photos and handing out treats.

This event is made possible by Bank of Eastern Oregon and community members’ donations. Anyone wishing to donate may do so at Bank of Eastern Oregon in Ione.

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