



In your community: Nurses provide care and compassion

By Andrea Di Salvo

Kathleen Greenup begins her day at Pioneer Memorial in Heppner by making her rounds with her patients. The 41-year-old registered nurse says good morning, takes vitals and does a “head to toe” assessment. Then she discusses the plan of care with each patient, gets patient input and makes sure any questions are answered before moving on.

“And coffee. Always coffee,” she says.

It’s the beginning of a typical nursing shift in a profession and a place where, says Greenup, nothing is typical.

“In Heppner, nothing is typical,” she says. “We’re unlike any other organization anywhere else in Oregon. We’re the only frontier hospital. We serve our long-term care residents, and we serve our critical care patients.”

Greenup says outpatient procedures at the hospital are scheduled in



Greenup gets emergency room equipment up and going at Pioneer Memorial in Heppner. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

advance, and those are pretty routine. Otherwise, the schedule depends on what the day brings.

“Most of our day is spent prioritizing—the most sick versus the most stable patients. If you have an ER patient come in, that takes priority,” she says. “It changes every day, all day long.”

Greenup wasn’t always a nurse, but she does have a long history with the hospital, having been born at Pioneer Memorial. She was raised in Heppner and grad-

uated from Heppner High School in 1999. After that, she lived in Portland for 10 years, where she worked as a legal assistant.

The direction of her life changed in 2004.

“I was in a four-wheeler accident and suffered some pretty serious injuries,” she said, adding that she spent some time at Oregon Health and Science University in Portland after the accident. “I had some pretty awesome nurses and some who were horrific.

“I knew right then that

I wanted to be one of those nurses who was remembered for being awesome.”

Her career as a nurse didn’t start immediately. A certain number of pre-requisite credits are required to even be eligible for nursing school. Greenup opted to take care of those over a span of three years while still working as a legal assistant.

Once she was eligible, she went to nursing school for two years, graduating with an associate’s degree in nursing. Nursing degrees vary, she says, and range all the way from a two-year degree up to a doctorate in nursing.

“Someday I’ll go back and get my bachelor’s,” she adds.

The Greenups moved back to Heppner when their oldest son was born, and she went to work at PMH.

Pioneer Memorial has nine full-time nurses on staff, covering 12-hour day

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Local charity receives surprise donation from a friend



Heppner man and national rodeo celebrity Butch Knowles chose to donate his fantasy rodeo charity winnings to Friends Helping Friends. Knowles, center, is pictured with FHF committee members (L-R) Kathi Dickenson, Shelley McCabe, Susan Hisler, Janelle Ellis, Patty Matheny, Peggy Fishburn and Kirsten Harrison. Not pictured are committee members Mary Haguewood, Sandy Matthews and Jacque Wilson. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

Local charity Friends Helping Friends recently received a surprise donation from the world of rodeo, courtesy of Heppner cowboy Butch Knowles.

Knowles was presented with the opportunity to give back to his community by Teton Ridge Pro Fantasy Rodeo in conjunction with the National Finals Ro-

deo (NFR) in Las Vegas. Knowles won the 2022 contest and selected local charity Friends Helping Friends to be the recipient of the \$6500 in charity funds.

“When I received a phone call from Mary Knowles that Butch had won the rodeo celebrity fantasy contest and he had

chosen to gift the charitable money to our Friends Helping Friends committee, I was so surprised, somewhat shocked, that he would think of us!” said Friends Helping Friends committee member Susan Hisler.

The Teton Ridge Pro Fantasy Rodeo contest is offered to all rodeo fans across the country. In ad-

dition to the main fantasy rodeo event, there is also a separate charity league consisting of NFR announcers, television commentators and other contract personnel.

Each person selects a contestant from each rodeo event to comprise a fantasy team. The winner is the person who selected a “team” that wins the most accumulated dollars through the NFR’s entire 10 go-rounds and the average.

The winner of the Pro Fantasy Rodeo Celebrity Charity League is rewarded by being able to present the winning funds to a charity of their choice. Knowles had won the fantasy rodeo charity previously but said this time he wanted the funds to go to a local cause.

“We feel blessed and honored to receive this money. It will be used and go back to our community to make a difference,” said Hisler. “He could have given this to many different charitable organizations. We will use it wisely.”

Ione awarded funding for wastewater system

The City of Ione received confirmation from the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD) that it was awarded a \$1,981,000 grant and \$1,815,000 loan for the installation of a new wastewater system, the city announced last week.

LaDonn McElligott, Area Specialist of the La-

Grande USDA RD office, submitted Ione’s application to the USDA on April 7. Over the last several months, McElligott had guided the City of Ione along with the contracted engineering firm, Anderson Perry & Associates (AP), throughout the submission process.

The next step is for the city to apply to the Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for interim funding. The city is working in partnership with AP engineer Dane Maben in completing this application, and it will be submitted shortly.

The engineering contract was awarded to AP at the March 14 council meeting. At the request of the USDA, Maben presented an amended contract to include the Build America

Buy America clause. The amended contract was approved at the April 18 city council meeting.

The contract includes preliminary and final design, cultural resources monitoring, bidding, construction engineering and observation of the project, and the preparation of an operation manual. Ione Mayor Mike Skow extended appreciation to Maben and AP President Brad Baird and for their hard work in the design and funding processes.

“Anderson Perry has had the privilege of working with the City of Ione on the wastewater project since the initial study in 2014. The project design is wrapping up and the city will get underway this summer with construction.

We are very excited to see this project finally come to fruition and are glad to be a part of such an important project for the city,” said Baird.

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Emotions run hot over ambulance debate at county commission meeting

By Andrea Di Salvo

It was a contentious opening to the board of commissioners meeting April 19 in Heppner, when several Morrow County residents stepped to the mic to make their feelings known concerning ambulance services in the county.

While the conflict between Morrow County Health District (MCHD) and Boardman Fire Rescue over ambulance services in Boardman has been ongoing for months, tempers flared higher earlier this month when the Morrow County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously

to recraft the 1998 Ambulance Service Area (ASA) plan and voted 2-1 to provide a letter of support to Boardman Fire to seek ambulance licensing from the Oregon Health Authority.

The decision to revisit the ASA plan was made after consulting with attorney Bob Blackmore, whom the county engaged to help navigate the complicated legalities of Morrow County ambulance services, although Blackmore had advised against the letter of support.

The board of commissioners faced backlash over those decisions,

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Lexington airport to receive funds for runway improvements



The Morrow County Airport in Lexington is slated to receive more than \$200,000 in Dept. of Transportation infrastructure grants for runway improvements. -Contributed photo

Morrow County Airport in Lexington is one of two rural Oregon airports slated to receive funds for runway improvements from the U. S. Dept. of Transportation, U.S. Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley announced last Thursday.

“We appreciate the efforts of senators Wyden and Merkley in securing this funding for these important improvements to our local airport in Lexington,” said Morrow County Board of Commissioners Chair David Sykes. “This facility is very important to the people and economy of our rural county.”

The Lexington airport will receive \$223,000 in Airport Infrastructure Grants to support reconstruction of Taxiway D and reconstruction of the southeast apron pavement. Corvallis Municipal Airport will receive \$65,500 to support the design phase of sealing two taxiways.

“Small airports in rural areas help drive our state’s economy,” Wyden said. “I am gratified to see these dollars go toward improving crucial runway infrastructure that will allow for safer and more regular air service.

“Investing in airport infrastructure lays the groundwork for airports in Benton and Morrow counties to continue to support our state’s economy moving forward,” he added.

“Whether flying for recreation, business or agricultural operations, having access to safe and reliable airport infrastructure is vital to drive Oregon’s economy,” said Merkley. “These federal investments to support critical runway infrastructure at the Corvallis Municipal Airport and the Morrow County Lexington Airport will allow these hubs to continue to support local businesses and economies for years to come.”

Irrigon seeks grant for new business incubator

By Andrea Di Salvo

The Irrigon City Council moved a step closer to creating a new business incubator last Tuesday when it voted to move forward with an application for a grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

The purpose of the incubator would be to help small businesses get started with minimal startup costs until they could expand out on their own.

“It would probably be three to five years average for anybody. It might be up to seven,” said Irrigon City

manager Aaron Palmquist. “It takes at least a minimum of three years for someone to get established.”

The facility is planned to be 5,000 to 7,000 square feet and will also include a licensed kitchen that anyone in the community will be able to use. It will be built on land already owned by the city.

The \$1 million grant was already awarded to the city through Congressionally Directed Spending obtained by Oregon senators Jeff Merkley and Ron

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