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Cloudburst floods Ione area Monday



The Ione RV Park sign partially submerged from the flash flood Monday. -Contributed photo

By Andrea Di Salvo
Ione residents were left in shock Monday when a thunderstorm cloudburst caused flash flooding in the city and on area roadways. According to Morrow County Emergency Management, some streets and roadways were temporarily closed to allow for debris to be cleared. The Morrow County Road Department announced a closure on a portion of Ella Rd., where some residents estimated the water reached heights of 10 feet at the flood's peak. After confirming everyone was safe, the cleanup began. Ione city administra-

tor Elizabeth Peterson said Ione Councilor Mark Patton reached out to Oregon Department of Emergency Management (ODEM) for help, while the Port of Morrow immediately sent a vacuum truck and employees to help get the water off the city streets. After the Port finished, it was the fire department's turn to bring in trucks and wash away the layers of mud. In addition to the city, county and state resources that were mobilized, many locals pitched in to help out. Peterson estimated that 30-40 people turned out to help Ione Market owner Todd



What a mess! The Ione Market experienced extreme flooding after Monday's downpour, including layers of mud and debris. An estimated 30-40 volunteers showed up to help clear the mess. -Contributed photo

Knopp, whose building was among the hardest hit. The Cardinal Café, owned by Jeff and Dawn Eynetich, also experienced flooding. However, their kitchen was clear, and they provided soup and sandwiches for those volunteering with the market cleanup. "There were so many people helping, we cannot even begin to name them, but please know we recognize all your time and hard work," the city said in a statement Monday evening. Aside from the individuals who helped, other businesses who sent resources or employees

included Morrow County Grain Growers, The Broken Spoke, Wheatland Insurance, Crum Farming, ASE Farms, IRT, Morrow County Public Works and Oregon Department of Transportation. "It's amazing how our communities come together in times of need," said Morrow County Sheriff Bowles. ODEM is asking for a list of impacted individuals and businesses, hours worked to clean up the city and any resources or equipment used. Anyone who can add to that list can call Peterson at Ione City Hall, 541-422-7414. -Continued to PAGE SEVEN

Johnson takes over as Ione superintendent



Tracey Johnson at her superintendent's desk at Ione School District. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

By Andrea Di Salvo
Tracey Johnson is heading into her fourth year at Ione School District, but it will be her first in a new role. The Ione Elementary School principal will continue in that position, but she'll also be adding the title of school superintendent. "Starting the role, having the bond, it seems a little chaotic," Johnson admits. She officially started in her new capacity July 1. The positions of school superintendent and high school principal were previously held by Kevin Dinning, who announced his resignation last spring. Ryan Rudolph will fill the other gaps left by Dinning. Rudolph is taking over as Ione High School Dean of Students for grades seven through 12, as well as Ione Schools athletic director. -Continued to PAGE SEVEN

Despite the chaos, Johnson seems to have the experience and familiarity with Ione school to step into her role. She was born in Bend and raised in Sandy, OR. Her mother was a school teacher; when Johnson graduated from Sandy High School, she had no intention of following her mother's footsteps. "I was never going to be a teacher, because my mother was a teacher," she said. That changed after a few years. She married her husband, Doug, and the couple had two children. It was while their children were young that Johnson, a stay-at-home mom at the time, decided to start taking night classes at Mt. Hood Community College. She kept at it and obtained her teaching license in 2005. -Continued to PAGE SEVEN

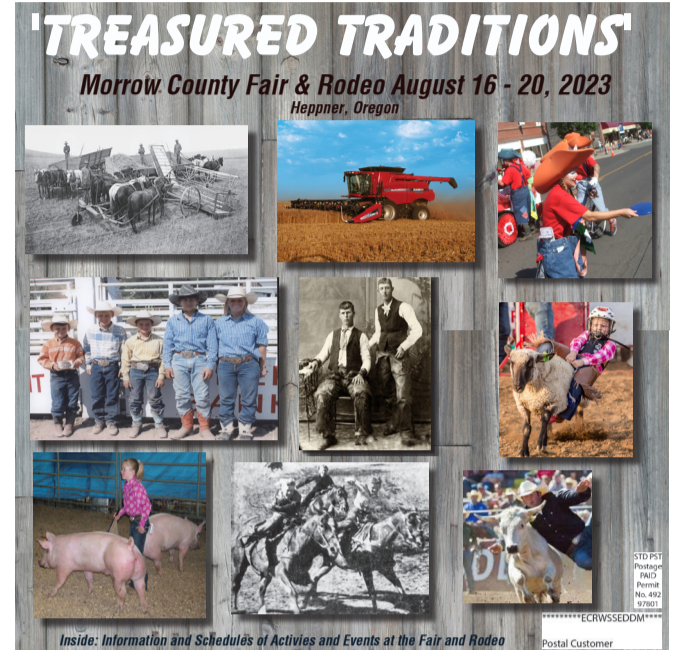
County commission hears update on nitrate progress

By Andrea Di Salvo
The Morrow County Board of Commissioners heard an update recently on the progress the county is making on well testing for those affected by nitrate contamination in North Morrow County. Morrow County Health Department Director Robin Canaday and Communicable Disease Coordinator Ana Pineyro were at the commissioners' meeting last week to give an update on well testing in Boardman and Irrigon. Canaday told the commissioners the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management had brought a team to the county July 17-25 to assist with canvassing efforts and collecting samples for testing. This was in addition to work already done by Morrow County Public Health. "The goal was to reach all the well owners in Boardman and Irrigon, collecting samples for testing if people were home and willing to do that," said Canaday. They ended up completing 676 surveys and collected 136 water samples, which are being tested through a lab in Pendleton. That leaves about 16 percent of well owners to be contacted in Boardman and Irrigon, said Canaday. "It was so nice to have them come in and help, because Ana's been trying to do all this by herself. We just don't have the numbers

to really get out there," said Canaday. "So they brought in the numbers and it was a big coordination effort." Canaday said there is still a lot of work to be done. "They didn't come and help us out and then leave," she said. "It's an ongoing process. And as the results come in, we'll be collecting more data and still providing water and filter systems to those who are in need." She also addressed an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the county and the state for continued water deliveries. "With the increase in testing, we're expecting there will be more people that are in need of water deliveries, the free water delivery from the state," Canaday said. "A lot of -Continued to PAGE NINE

Fair and rodeo next week

Look for special fair edition in this week's Gazette-Times

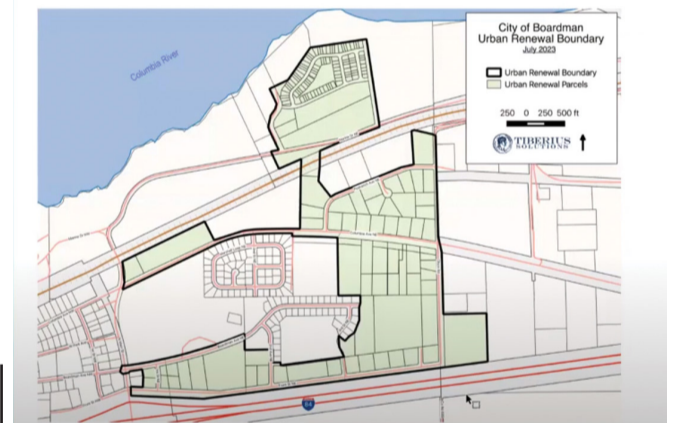


Look for the 2023 fair and rodeo special edition in this week's Gazette-Times.

The Morrow County Fair and Rodeo is next week, August 16-20, and Morrow County residents and visitors are invited to come and share in all the treasured traditions available throughout the week. "I would really like to encourage people to enter items in the fair," says fair secretary Sue Gibbs. "I want to stuff the pavilion with 'Treasured Traditions.'"

entered in the fair include garden produce, flowers, art work, sewing, needle point, canning, baked goods and even fresh eggs. Gibbs encourages everyone to pre-register their entries at <https://mcfair.fairentry.com/>. Those who need help can bring a list of items to be registered (not the items themselves) to the fair office Aug. 9 from 5:30-7:30 p.m., when staff will be available to help -Continued to PAGE THREE

Boardman moves forward with urban renewal area



The boundaries of the proposed North Boardman Urban Renewal Area. -Contributed

By Andrea Di Salvo
The Boardman City Council voted to approve the first reading of an ordinance to form a new urban renewal district on the north side of Boardman at its Aug. 1 meeting. The idea behind the urban renewal area (URA) is to fund improvements that will, in turn, generate more economic growth in the city. Boardman already has two other URAs, The Central URA and the Southwest URA. The proposed North Urban Renewal Area will be north of I-84 in Boardman. Elaine Howard of Elaine Howard Consulting has been helping the city with the plan, while Tiberius Solutions has been consulting on the financial details.

Urban Renewal 101
Howard explained that the funding for improvements will come from funds that normally go to special taxing district in the URA—in a way. She stressed that property taxes will not go up for property owners in the area, nor will special districts lose funds they already get from taxes. Normally, when residents pay property taxes, the county assessor collects those and then distributes them among the area's taxing districts. Assessors in Oregon are only allowed to increase property values by three percent per year, which they usually do unless there is a deep recession. "That is the limit upon -Continued to PAGE EIGHT

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