

The Official Newspaper of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

Heppner

GAZETTE-TIMES

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Mobile Maker Lab outreach continues to grow Has seven-month plan to visit Eastern Oregon counties



The Mobile Maker Lab (MML), dedicated at EOU on Jan. 25, is part of a small fleet that travels throughout Eastern Oregon serving children preschool through high school. -Contributed photo



Eastern Oregon University hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony Jan. 25 to celebrate the launch of the Greater Oregon STEM Hub's (GO STEM) new Mobile Maker Lab (MML). -Contributed photo

The Greater Oregon STEM Hub (GO STEM) and its Mobile Maker Lab is seeing its Eastern Oregon outreach and engagement grow following a launch earlier this year.

"We are encouraging young people to get excited about science, technology, engineering, and math, as well as preparing students for future careers in STEM," said David Melville, Executive Director, Greater Oregon STEM Hub. "There is a lot of excitement seeing the lab come down the road as it visits our rural communities."

The Mobile Maker Lab (MML), dedicated at Eastern Oregon University on Jan. 25, is part of a small fleet that travels throughout Eastern Oregon serving

children preschool through high school. Melville said the lab was at the Morrow County Fair last week with OMSI, connecting with young people to spread enthusiasm for science, technology, engineering and math. Additionally, the MML will be at the Pendleton Roundup and Girls Tech Day this autumn.

Melville said when they first launched the MML they knew they were tasked with serving over 100 schools across the seven rural Eastern Oregon counties, but it was hit and miss as they could not regularly visit all corners of their region. The program now plans to concentrate its efforts by spending a month in each county's schools before moving on so they could truly concentrate on

selected areas of their region during this upcoming school year.

The program began as a College of Education faculty project at Eastern Oregon University in 2014.

"It was born and raised at Eastern Oregon University and has major support from the College of Education," David Melville said. "It was conceived to provide and support STEM education to remote areas across the seven rural counties of our region."

Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, the MML will travel to deliver in-person STEM lessons and hands-on activities to schools across the GO STEM region, including Morrow, Umatilla, Harney, Grant, Baker, Union and Wallowa counties.

The Mobile Maker Lab is a classroom on wheels, with hands-on STEM learning activities, a career-connected learning curriculum, and an open concept of tinkering with STEM-related tools and materials. The MML was created with the mission of making STEM education accessible to all students across Eastern Oregon, no matter how remote their location.

This pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, community-focused curriculum includes concepts such as renewable energy, ag science, aerospace, bio-medical, and computer science, as well as other career-focused projects that can accommodate different grade levels' learning and diverse schools' interests and needs.

The Heppner City Council

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funding rounds.

Heppner Public Works Director Chad Doherty reported that the city is still waiting for the Dept. of Environmental Quality to respond to its sewer project feasibility study. Once the DEQ approves it, the city can start to pursue funding for the project and will have a better idea of the construction timeline.

The city is also working to remedy several spots where water doesn't flow into storm drains properly. The spots were brought to light by the same rainstorm that caused flooding in Ione.

In other business at the city council meeting, Fire Chief Steve Rhea said the fire department is getting more requests for lift assists because Morrow County Health District ambulances are currently running with skeleton crews, which usually means one EMT and a driver.

"And most of those drivers are female," he added. "So it's almost an automatic page out for us any time the ambulance has a patient that needs to

be transported."

He said they were running quite a few miles on those life assists.

"I think by the end of the year, we're going to see our lift assists with EMS be double from what it was last year," he said.

The Heppner Fire Department had started charging the health district for services at the helicopter landing zone, Rhea said, and they might have to do the same with lift assists.

"Especially where we're running to Blakes Ranch and Cutsforth Park," he said. "It's not really cost effective for us to be part of the ambulance crew."

Rhea also asked about the hydrant on the corner of Main and Willow streets, which was damaged by a construction truck. Heppner Public Works Director Chad Doherty said he had the part to fix the hydrant, but the Oregon Dept. of Transportation crews needed to raise it because the were raising the cement at that spot.

"That makes me nervous," said Rhea. "We've had too many calls for the senior center."

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Les Schwab Proudly Supports the Morrow County Fair

This year Les Schwab gave \$200.00 to each 4-H member who expressed interest in having Les Schwab purchase their animals.

The recipients were as follows: Brooklyn Hendricks, Ketch Fennern, Mikalie Duncan, Hailey Cimmiyotti, Axton Hendricks, Kelly Doherty, Tenley Rosenbaum, Michael McElligott, Katie Spivey, Carmine Albitre, Eva Worden, Tacey Schonbachler, Irelynn Kollman, Jayden Macias, Hadlie Duncan, Pearl Miller, Callahan Baker, Catherine Lindsay, William McElligott, Conner Wilcox, Madison Orem, Dallie Wilcox, Colden Hoeft, Riley Archer, Arianna Worden, Matthew Wilson, Kord Dickenson, Andee Lathrop, Madelyn Campbell, Aden Lathrop, Elizabeth Doherty, Avree Lathrop, Caydance Kreitzer, Mason Orem



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