



Heppner Community Foundation turns history into housing with Dr. Tibbles home project



Tibbles grandchildren and their spouses at Dr. Tibbles home in Heppner. (L-R) Darell Tibbles, Kathryn Gonnerman, Thad Tibbles, April Tibbles and Barbra Chabot (Tibbles).

By Chris Sykes

In late 2023, the Heppner Community Foundation (HCF) undertook a significant project to restore the former home of Dr. L.D. Tibbles, a beloved local physician who dedicated over 40 years to the Heppner community. The house, which holds a deep connection to the town’s history, was gifted to the foundation with the understanding that it would be renovated and used as a rental property for doctors and nurses coming to Heppner for employment at the local hospital. This project was not only a way to honor Dr. Tibbles’ legacy but also a solution to a pressing need: providing temporary housing for healthcare professionals in the rural community.

The renovation was led by the HCF Board, consisting of Kim Cutsforth, Melissa Lindsay, Joe Armato, Sandy Matthews and Patti Allstott who were instrumental in getting the project off the ground. With a generous grant of \$10,000 from the Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group, the foundation was able to completely revamp the house for approximately \$58,000. The renovations were extensive, including refinishing the wood flooring throughout the home, a fully remodeled bathroom, updated appliances, and the installation of a new water heater. The interior and exterior



Dr. Tibbles and his wife at his retirement party in 1975, held at the Heppner High School Cafetorium. - Photo from the Heppner Gazette-Times archives

terior were repainted, and all the old furniture moved out and back in to make way for the improvements.

Cutsforth spoke about the scale of the project, noting that the HCF board members alone contributed over 100 hours of volunteer labor. “It was a community effort,” she said, emphasizing the importance of preserving the house’s original charm while modernizing it for its new purpose. The renovation team worked to ensure that the home stayed as close to its original state as possible, capturing the essence of the time when the Tibbles family lived there. The local FFA chapter also played a key role in the project, spending many hours working on yard maintenance and cleaning



Inside Dr. Tibbles’ home, which was restored to be as close to its original condition as possible. - Photo by Kim Cutsforth



Barbra Chabot (née Tibbles) and Thad Tibbles driving the Ford Bronco, gifted to their grandfather by the community at his 1975 retirement party, in the 2024 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo parade. – Photo by Chris Sykes

up around the property to make it ready for rental.

For the Heppner Community Foundation, the restoration of Dr. Tibbles’ house was more than just a renovation project—it was about honoring the town’s history while addressing a current need. Cutsforth reflected, “It was a fun project and a rewarding way to give back to the community.” One of the core goals of HCF is to enhance the quality of life in Heppner by preserving its heritage, and this project was a perfect example of that mission in action.

The story of Dr. Tibbles and his connection to Heppner is one of dedication and service. Arriving in 1934 after graduating from Kirksville College

of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Tibbles quickly established himself as a pillar of the community. His medical practice, located in the First National Bank Building, was well known throughout the town, with frequent advertisements in the Heppner Gazette-Times highlighting his services as a local physician and surgeon. Over the years, he became much more than just a doctor to the people of Heppner—he was a civic leader, serving as city councilman, mayor, president of the Chamber of Commerce, and even a volunteer fireman for two decades. He also helped organize Heppner Little League baseball in the area and volunteered

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Mustangs defeat Knappa Loggers 42-14

The Heppner Mustang football team welcomed the always tough Knappa Loggers to Les Payne Field and made short work of them as they defeated the Loggers by the score of 42-14. Heppner scored early and often as they had touchdowns on their first six possessions.

Heppner got the ball first and had an eleven-play drive that saw the Mustang offensive line take control of the game as the team ran the ball and gained yardage in bunches. Hayden McMahon, Tripp Stewart and Alakae Rodriguez all had big runs during the drive that lasted for over five minutes. The first Mustang score came as the result of a 1-yard plunge over the goal line by Rodriguez to give the team a 6-0 lead.

The Heppner defense stopped the Loggers and gave the team good



Heppner vs. Knappa game. -Photo by Sheena Shank- Wenburg

field position. A two-play drive ended in another score when quarterback Mason Orem handed the ball off to Zach Brown and he sprinted 44 yards to give the Mustangs the ball at the Knappa 13-yard line. On the next play Stewart blasted into the endzone for the Mustang score. Stewart then ran the ball in for the 2-pt. conversion to make the score 14-0. The Mustangs started their next possession near midfield and after runs by Orem for 10

yards and Rodriguez for 25, Hayden McMahon scored a touchdown on a run from 14 yards out giving the Mustangs a 20-0 lead as the second quarter started. The powerful Heppner defense forced another Logger punt which gave the Mustangs the ball at the Knappa 40-yard line. It only took two plays for Heppner to score again as Stewart had an 18-yard run and the touchdown came as Nick Wenberg scored from 22 yards out. Orem passed

the ball to Caleb George for the 2-pt. conversion to make the score 28-0.

The quick strike Heppner offense scored again when Hayden McMahon carried the ball in from 10 yard out for the touchdown

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Heppner City Council express frustration with BOCs circuit court decision

Invites BOC to public workshop

By Annalynn Black

At the September 9th Heppner City Council meeting, council members vented their frustration over the Morrow County Board of Commissioners’ decision to place the new circuit court building in Boardman instead of Heppner. According to John Doherty, the new facility is set to be located at the corner of Olsen and Columbia Streets in Boardman.

Council member Dale Bates expressed his disbelief, stating, “We had three commissioners who were in support of it being in Heppner, and I know at least two of them didn’t [vote to keep it in Heppner]. I just don’t understand how they can do that and not address the people here in Heppner. I think they need to come here to Heppner and address the people of Heppner in a meeting.”

Mayor Corey Sweet-

ney shared that the city had made efforts to gather letters of support but faced a setback when the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo withdrew their letter, leaving the city without the crucial backing it needed.

Councilmember Cody High raised concerns about the future of the current Heppner courthouse and its operational status. City Manager John Doherty clarified that there are no available funds to remodel the courthouse. However, he specified that the courthouse will still host hearings for Heppner cases, stating that “that’s their way around naming this [Boardman site] a satellite, or annex, but it would not be jury cases. It would be basically south end civil cases only.”

Doherty also revisited discussions from the Sep-

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Mustang girls win 4 out of 6 games



Katie Spivey #20, jumping for an attack with Hallee Hisler #11, and Keeley Nairns #24. -Photo by Susan Hisler

Coach Wilson and her Heppner Volleyball team defeated Weston-McEwen

on Thursday September 12th. The Scores were 25-19, 18-25, 18-25, 25-15, 15-5, at WM. On September 13th and 14th, the girls fell to Crosshill Christian at the Powder Valley Tournament, No. 1 ranked team for 2A in the state, 23-25, 21-25. Then Heppner lost to Imbler 1-2 sets 23-25 25-15, 10-15 Heppner vs Union -- Heppner went 2-0 for the win, 25-22 25-17 Heppner vs Adrian, Heppner won 2-0 25-5 25-18 Heppner vs Joseph Heppner won 2-0 25-16 25-16.

Sage Garden Preschool delivers letters to friends



Preschool teachers Darcie Chick (L) and Kaylee Thompson (R) on an outing to the Heppner Post Office to deliver letters to thier friends. -Photo by Cindi Doherty

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