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## Fundraisers planned to help family in search of answers



Lizzie Ginn, pictured, and her family have been on a long search for solutions to her medical problems. -Contributed photo

Several fundraisers are being planned to help a local teen Lizzie Ginn and her family as they seek answers to ongoing medical problems.

The first of these fundraisers is planned for Lexington's May Day celebration, where there will be a table selling snow cones,

along with a jar for donations.

According to a family friend, the Heppner teen has chronic granulomatous disease (CGD), a rare genetic condition in which the immune system doesn't work the way it is supposed to. With CGD, white blood cells are unable to fight off certain bacteria and fungi.

According to the National Institutes of Health, people with CGD—like Lizzie—are highly susceptible to frequent and sometimes life-threatening bacterial and fungal infections.

At the same time, Lizzie has other rare genes that have led to more hospital stays and more testing, since those genes might affect the results of any treatment plans.

Here is the story in her words:

*"My name is Lizzie Ginn, and I have been asked to tell my story.*

*"I am the daughter of David and Crystal Ginn. My support team consists*

*of my parents, my brother Jacob and my grandma Judi Hall, my primary care provider Eileen McElligott and numerous other family members, friends, community members and lots of doctors.*

*"I have had and continue to experience many health issues. Over the last couple of years, I have had multiple surgeries and so many other tests that I have lost count. I have seen and continue to see multiple doctors in many different fields of study.*

*"I have a whole team at Doernbecher: ENT, Hematology/Oncology, Infectious Disease, Rheumatology, Immunology, Cardiology, and Pulmonology, working hard to figure out exactly what is going on and how to treat me. They have had many consultations with other children's hospitals and specialists.*

*"I have had and continue to make multiple trips and hospital stays to Doernbecher. Each trip or stay gets us that much closer to*

*a diagnosis and treatment plan.*

*"As you can imagine, this has taken a toll physically, emotionally and financially on me and my family.*

*"I am humbled by the amount of support our wonderful community continues to offer. Saying 'Thank you' does not begin to express my gratitude to our community.*

*"My goal is to find a diagnosis and treatment that allows me to be myself again. I would love to get back to playing sports and helping at community events."*

Future fundraising plans include dinner and Bingo, and community members are asked to keep their eyes open for future events. A Venmo account has been set up under @crystalginn91 for anyone wishing to make a donation.

Please contact Tonja Lemmon 541-561-8953 or Kaylee Thompson 541-256-0942 for more information.

## Nichols breaks 32-year school record at regional invitational



Lily Nichols

Heppner High School athletes made their mark at the Cove Charter School 1A-2A-3A Regional Invitational in La Grande on Saturday, highlighted by junior Lily Nichols breaking a 32-year-old school record in the 1500 meters.

Nichols took first in the event with a time of 4:55.67, besting the long-standing record held by Jenny Krein. Nichols also added a second-place finish in the 800 and helped lead the 4x400

relay team to gold.

Hallee Hisler also had a standout meet, winning the 400 meters with a time of 1:00.59, and finishing second in the 200. Her younger sister Healy Hisler wasn't far behind, taking second in the 400 and third in the 200.

On the boys' side, Joseph Albitre won the high jump, clearing an even 6 feet for a personal best. Senior Nick Wenberg placed in the top five in both the 100 meters and long jump, and Chris Humphreys placed second in the javelin and sixth in discus.

Full stats from Saturday's meet were:

**Boys**  
1 0 0 Meters  
5th – Nick Wenberg (12), 12.24a (0.7) PR  
8 0 0 Meters  
9th – Marty Medina (12), 2:18.34a  
1 5 0 0 Meters  
9th – Marty Medina (12), 4:36.35a PR  
Shot Put (12lb)  
16th – Lucas King (9), 32'1.5"

-Continued to PAGE EIGHT

## BOC hears update on county strategic plan



At the April 2 Morrow County Board of Commissioners meeting in Heppner, the Morrow County commissioners heard an update on the county's long-awaited strategic planning process.

Consultant Matt Dixon, a veteran in local government with 28 years of experience, gave the update along with Morrow County Administrator Matthew Jensen. Dixon said he founded a consulting LLC after being asked to help

communities with strategic planning.

"I realized early on in my career, local governments don't do a very good job of really thinking beyond the next budget cycle," said Dixon.

BOC Chair David Sykes began the push for the long-range strategic plan recently, possibly spurred by the confusion surrounding the planned new circuit court building in Heppner.

The intent of the plan is to define a long-term vision—up to 50 years out—for Morrow County.

"A strategic plan is really stepping back and saying, 'Where are we headed and where do we want to be in the next 50 years? How do we want people to describe living in Morrow County in 50 years from

now?'" Dixon said.

That will include assessing community needs and identifying county priorities for the next five years. The plan will ultimately guide county operations and capital improvement projects.

While the board of commissioners will establish the vision for the county's future direction, Dixon and Jensen said they will not be working in a vacuum. A project advisory committee, composed of community volunteers nominated by commissioners, will gather public input through workshops and surveys.

A kickoff meeting is planned for April 23, and workshops in both ends of the county are already scheduled for May 1-2. Dixon said Jensen had

also given him a list of community stakeholders in government and education and health and economic development.

"So those stakeholders will also have their own opportunities in two meetings," he said.

In addition, Dixon plans to launch a public survey through advertisements at public locations.

"By the time it comes to you, you will have a really good sense of how the larger community feels," said Dixon.

A strategic planning retreat is set for June 9-10, with final adoption expected by early fall.

The county aims to align future decisions, including use of funds like those from Amazon, with resident input and long-range goals.

## ICABO to host local candidates forum ahead of May 20 election

The Ione Community Agri-Business Organization (ICABO) will host a public candidates forum on Thursday, May 1, at 7 p.m. at the Ione Legion Hall, providing voters with an opportunity to hear directly from candidates ahead of the May 20 special district election.

Candidates running for positions with the Port of Morrow, Morrow Coun-

ty Health District, Ione School District, Ione Library Board, and other local special districts have been invited to attend and share their vision for the future of the county.

The event is open to the public, and community members are encouraged to attend, hear what the candidates have to say and ask questions.

## Murray's receives AEDs from health district



Murray's Drug in Heppner and Murray's Condon Pharmacy each received an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) device from the Morrow County Health District through its community benefits program. Ann Murray notes that anyone nearby with an emergency requiring CPR can borrow the device from the store. "We are very grateful to the MCHD for these devices," says Murray. Pictured (L-R) are Scott Lamb, Ann Murray and Michael Skow. -Contributed photo

## Community gathers for two local Easter egg hunts



The Easter Bunny



Locals kids drawing up an egg attack plan. - Contributed Photo



Off to the races. - Photo by Julia Finch

By Rachel Sykes

On Saturday, April 19, families in Heppner were treated to not one but two festive Easter egg hunts, each hosted by a local business eager to bring easter joy to the community.

The first event kicked off bright and early at 8 a.m., hosted by Heppner Market Fresh. Shoppers were greeted by grocery aisles transformed into colorful hunting grounds with plastic eggs scattered across

the floors. The aisles were divided by age groups, and each one contained a special prize egg for the lucky child who found it. Kids hurried through the store and filled their baskets.

An hour later, the fun continued at the Morrow County Fairgrounds, where the Heppner Elks Lodge hosted the second egg hunt of the morning. Children lined up for a chance to meet the Easter Bunny, who

made a special appearance to pose for photos. Despite cloudy skies and a light drizzle, the festive spirit remained strong as kids dashed across the field, baskets in hand, determined to gather as many eggs as possible.

It was clear that many of the parents were enjoying the festivities just as much as the kids, sharing in the excitement and community spirit.

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