

**The East County Journal
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410 Color Sports Photo**

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Morton/White Pass boys basketball takes two of three contests in a week to improve to 8-4
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Raise the butter cups, Packwood crab feed returns

BY CATHY KANE
East County Journal

After the cancellation of last year's event due to COVID-19 restrictions, the sounds of fun and laughter echoed once again through the Packwood Community Hall during Saturday's night Crab Feed benefit, sponsored by the Packwood Improvement Club (PIC).

With 136 tickets sold and generous bidding in the silent, live and dessert auctions, the event was deemed a success by President Ron Blankenship.

"I am tickled to death that so many people came out with all that is going on," Blankenship said, referencing recent adverse winter weather conditions, the off-and-on closing of White Pass and omicron concerns. "We put this all together in just a little over a week."

Besides the good ticket sales, Blankenship said the community volunteers who showed up to help was nothing short of

amazing.

"We had lots of help. We went from four volunteers to nine to 10 people decorating the hall. We ended up with 11 dinner servers," he added, noting all dinners were plated and served in 14 minutes. "It's amazing what can be done when people cooperate and work together."

PIC trustee Sheryl Hall, who invested days of preparing for the event alongside Blankenship, added her own accolades.

"I am so impressed with the Blankenship family and all they do. Also, Deb Townsend from Randle, who stepped in to help. She was amazing – a jewel. Also, the kitchen help, including head cook Jim Rehn, Lee Grose for driving down to pick up fresh crab and Toni Just who gave all she could while suffering from pain," she said, adding all of the volunteers from Packwood and Randle really stepped up to make the event

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County Commissioner and long-time Packwood Improvement Club member Lee Grose presided over the live auction at the club's annual Crab Feed benefit on Saturday night.

Cathy Kane | East County Journal



Chris Johnson | East County Journal

Future hoopster

Kaeston Westover, 3, is hoisted up to the hoop by his dad Nick in hopes of making a basket to win a bottle of soda at halftime of a recent basketball game in Morton.

Morton SD seeks \$24.5M bond from voters Feb. 8

This is part 1 of a three-part series on the 2022 school bond measure to be put before voters on the Feb. 8 special election ballot. Parts 2 and 3 will be in the Jan. 26 and Feb. 2 issues, respectively.

BY CATHY KANE
East County Journal

On Tuesday, Feb. 8, Morton voters will be asked to approve a 30-year bond of \$24.5M for the expansion and renovation of Morton Junior/Senior High School.

"A bond is a school's way of taking out a mortgage," Morton School District (MSD) Superintendent John Hannah said,



referencing the adage – levies are for education and bonds are for building.

"It's either buying a building or paying for a renovation just like you do with your own home. That's why we have anywhere from one to 30-year bonds. You are basically taking out a mortgage as a community to pay off that building," Hannah said.

Before choosing the bond, the district also looked at bringing the current elementary school building up to current code and that expense was estimated at just under \$21M, while the new wing is estimated to

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Mossyrock City Council sets aside funds for summer fests

BY BUDDY ROSE
East County Journal

Mossyrock city council members passed a resolution during the regular meeting Thursday, Jan. 13, that will make up to \$30,000 in city funds available to the Mossyrock Area Action League (MAAL) to plan and organize two festivals next summer.

The Freedom Festival – hosted last year for the first time and well-attended – will take place over the Fourth of July weekend and a second event will take place during the first weekend in August. The latter was previously called

the Blueberry Festival, but according to Mayor Randall Sasser, MAAL members are planning to change the theme of that event and call it something different.

In other business during the council meeting, Sasser reported the recent heavy rains resulted in the city sewer system struggling to handle all of the extra water. The lift station on Meadow Lane was unable to keep up with the high flows, he said, and they had to hire a pump truck to empty the tank there several times and transport the wastewater to State Street, where it could be discharged into the gravity

system.

Sasser reported that an inspection of the system afterwards discovered several leaking manhole covers that added to the problem, as well as identifying several locations where private roof drains were emptying into the sewer system, which is not allowed.

City Treasurer Angeleetta Hartmann provided a summary of the city's 2021 budget. She reported city revenues were \$1,710,031.19, which was slightly over the projection. Expenditures, however, were only 88

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East Lewis County saw the end of 2021 come in with a bit of wild weather, with high winds striking the area in October causing power outages all along the Highway 12 communities; an atmospheric river hitting the region with heavy rains in November, seeing the heaviest flooding along the Cowlitz River between Packwood and Randle; and a winter storm that produced a white Christmas bringing more than a foot of snow to the east end of the county.

Part 3 of a three-part series recapping life in East Lewis County in 2021. Parts 1 and 2 appeared in the previous two issues of The East County Journal.

October

- Lewis County firefighters were saluted for their dedication to the community during Fire Prevention week.
- Arbor Health Commissioners approved an operating lease and

- purchase of a portable imaging machine to augment recently added orthopedic surgery and podiatry services at the hospital for Drs. Robert Williams and Garret Paresko.
- Morton School District pre-kindergarten through sixth grade



Chris Johnson | East County Journal file photo

Fall fishing along the Tilton River in Morton proved to be beneficial for anglers ready to limit out.

- students took part in a Jog-a-thon to benefit the Associated Student Body.
- An afterschool program between the county and Cispus Learning Center was approved for Morton and White Pass School districts.

- A weekend storm on Oct. 22 and Oct. 23, featuring 60-mile mph winds and fallen trees and branches, left 4,000 customers in Mossyrock, Morton, Mineral, Salkum, Glenoma and Randle without power, according to PUD operations manager Cory

- Moses.
- Halloween fun was enjoyed with a trunk or treat and bake sale in Mineral; haunted house sponsored by LCFD 4 and trunk or treat at Gust Backstrom Park

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