

# Heat, High Winds And Fires Strike County

## More Range Lost in Early Week Blaze

Extreme temperatures, high winds, and more fires continued to plague much of Morrow and Western Umatilla counties this week and hold top spot in the news of this area.

With temperatures climbing well over 100 degrees in the northern part of the county Friday through Monday fire danger was classed as critical and strong winds Sunday and Monday drove flames over nearly 70,000 acres of range, pasture and wheat. These serious fires followed by less than a week the huge fire which burned over approximately 70,000 acres of range between Boardman and Cecil on June 16. The most serious of the fires burned wheat and farm buildings in Western Umatilla county near Echo.

The strong winds also caused considerable grain loss in the North Lexington and Sand Hollow area and fear is felt that the high temperatures caused some grain shrinkage in the higher elevations.

The loss of practically all vegetation on an area approximately the size of the Boardman bombing range is causing fear among many persons that continuing fires and high winds may make a dust bowl of the area. The entire area which has been burned in recent days is normally dry, providing only some range grass, however because of the past two rainy years there had been a lush growth of grass that is, until fires destroyed nearly everything.

The largest fire in Morrow county during the past week started Sunday afternoon about five miles east of Boardman and burned a strip three miles wide and 10 miles long as far east as Ordinance along highway 30. It started on the bombing range at the Heppner cutoff road near milepost 167 on highway 30 and was fought by fire equipment from Echo, Hermiston, Irrigon, Ordinance and the Boardman bombing range fire departments until nearly midnight. As firemen were about to leave the fire they were called to put out another blaze that had started north of the Union Pacific railroad tracks, north of highway 30. It took the men until 3 am to control this fire.

A car driven by Joe Devine of Arlington, going west on highway 30 at the time of the first fire, collided with a weapons carrier from Ordinance as the vehicle was turning off the highway. Devine was accompanied by his wife and three children but no one was injured in the collision. For a time smoke and dust nearly obscured all vision.

Estimates of the area covered in this fire ranged from 19,000 to over 30,000 acres.

Many Other Blazes  
Later Sunday evening another fire burned over 41,000 acres in the Cold Springs area northeast of Hermiston. According to reports rangeland was the only loss in this fire.

Monday afternoon another fire destroyed about 2000 acres of grass and wheat and all farm buildings on the Ben Coombs ranch which lies between the Butter Creek highway and Echo. This blaze, which was fanned by winds reported to be nearly 50 miles an hour, jumped numerous irrigation ditches and fire guards and firemen were unable to save the Coombs home or buildings.

Creek Conditions Better

Though temperatures ranged from an official 99 degrees Sunday at Heppner to well over 100 degrees in other locations, southern Morrow county fared much better than did the northern end. Late last week a grass fire got into a stack of baled hay at the Leo Crabtree ranch near Ione and destroyed 1200 bales before it could be controlled. A small orchard near Ione was damaged by another blaze during the same period.

Clouds brought cooler temperatures and light rains late Monday and Tuesday to most of the county which was welcomed especially by wheat growers who were fearing considerable grain damage should the hot weather continue. Some wheat damage was reported in various sections, mostly in the higher elevations where the grain is still partly green.

The heavy winds of Sunday and Monday brought several reports of wheat loss north of Lexington.

The change in temperature (Continued on Page 6)

# HEPPNER

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MORROW COUNTY DELEGATES who attended 4-H summer school last week in Corvallis include these 32 youngsters and their two advisors. They are, first row, left to right, Shirley Van Winkle, Linda Hams, Jerry Anderson, Toni Taylor, Linda Halvorsen. Second row: Patti Partlow, Beverly Davidson, Dorothy Rosh, Brenda Billings, Libby Van Schoick. Third row: Diane Pettyjohn, Miss Esther Kirmis, county extension agent, Carol K Anderson, Bernice Thomson, Mary Slocum, Wanda Huwe, county leader. Fourth row: Connie Anderson, Marilyn Morgan, Linda Heimburger, Theresa Hill, Ann Schmeder, Brenda Townsend. Fifth row: Nat Webb, Judy Morgan, Gary Van Blokland, Terry Witherspoon, Joann Turner, Dennis Doherty. Back row: Roger Doherty, Tommy Martin, Karl Beach, Kenneth Smouse, Russell Dolven, William Rill.

## 32 Morrow County 4-H's Attend Summer School

"Did you enjoy your 4-H summer school?"—"Absolutely!" was the shouted answer of over 1850 Oregon 4-H members at the close of their 43rd annual 4-H summer school held at Oregon State college, the week of June 16-21st.

Among the 1850 4-Hers were 32 Morrow county club members who were accompanied to Corvallis by chartered Grayhound bus by Wanda Huwe, Irrigon, as county leader, and Esther Kirmis, Morrow county extension agent.

4-H youth stayed in 39 housing units on campus. 4-H leaders, county extension agents and counsellors helped supervise activities at each unit. Officers were elected in each house on Tuesday evening. Kenneth Smouse of Ione was elected president of his housing unit.

Summer school delegate's day began at 7 am with breakfast at their houses. The mornings and afternoons were spent in attending classes, and assemblies. In the evening they took part in style and talent revues. The sessions closed on Saturday evening with three large parties and an impressive candlelighting ceremony held in the college stadium.

## Farmers Approve Quotas on Wheat

Marketing quotas will be in effect for the 1959 wheat crop, according to a report on preliminary returns in the June 20 referendum of wheat farmers.

The referendum showed that 83.7 percent of the farmers who voted favored the quotas and 16.3 percent opposed with a total of 198,210 votes cast in the 38 commercial wheat states.

In Oregon the vote for quotas was 1942, with 218 against. In Morrow county the tally was 219 in favor and 3 against. Here only about 35 percent of the county's eligible wheat farmers voted.

With marketing quotas in effect for the 1959 crop, a farmer who complies with his wheat allotment will be eligible for a price support loan based on a national average of \$1.81, or 75 percent of estimated parity.

## MCGG Buying Interior Elevator At Heppner

Morrow County Grain Growers, officials are in Portland today to complete signing a contract for the purchase of the Heppner grain storage facilities of Interior Warehouse Co which is controlled by Balfour-Guthrie Company of Portland. The MCGG is to take over the facilities July 1. Al Lamb, MCGG manager reported.

Lamb said Wednesday that all details of the transfer had been completed except the signing. Purchase price of the elevator was not revealed.

The Grain Growers will operate only the grain storage facilities of the plant which has a capacity of about 240,000 bushels. Cornett Green, who has been manager of the Interior Warehouse, will operate the feed business as his own enterprise, it was announced. For the present time Green will remain in the present building.

Lamb said that while it is too early to state definite plans for renovation of the facilities, there are plans to remove or remodel the old portion of the elevator. Within recent years several steel grain storage tanks have been installed at the elevator, and they will be retained.

The addition of the Interior Warehouse plant will give the Morrow County Grain Growers nine storage elevators in the county with a total capacity of approximately 3,250,000 bushels.

The MCGG is the second largest country storage elevator in Oregon, only the Pendleton Grain Growers have more capacity.

## Funeral Services Wednesday For William E Pointer

Graveside services were held in Lexington Wednesday afternoon for William E Pointer, 79, who passed away at Portland Sunday, June 22. Rev Norman Northrup officiated at the service.

Mr Pointer was born in Kansas March 17, 1879, the son of Edward and Louisa Pointer.

He was a former resident of Lexington and is survived by one daughter, Mrs E'Toyle Darby of Portland; one brother, James of Walla Walla and a nephew, Don Pointer of Lexington.

Mr and Mrs Darby were in Lexington Wednesday for the service.

## WEATHER

	Hi	Low	Prec.
Thursday	93	59	—
Friday	92	59	—
Saturday	89	60	—
Sunday	94	63	—
Monday	99	66	—
Tuesday	90	59	.07
Wednesday	66	50	.03

Rainfall for the week .10; for June 1.05; for the year 10.29 inches.

## COMMODITY CREDIT CORP CHANGES ALLOWANCE FOR FREIGHT RATES

The Commodity Credit Corporation has agreed to let growers store wheat in local, county or terminal storage facilities without jeopardizing their rate payments, it was learned Wednesday by Al Lamb, manager of the Morrow County Grain Growers.

The first announcement of the change in policy was revealed by the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin Wednesday morning in a story quoting Washington Congressman Hal Holmes.

Lamb said that this will mean equal treatment for the farmer

regardless of whether he puts his wheat in local, terminal or his own storage. Basically it will mean a gain of the freight differential between the lower rates this year and the higher rates last year. Just what that will be is not yet known, but it has been estimated at about two cents a bushel for most Morrow county growers.

Previous loan rates were set using the old freight rates which have been lowered during the last year. Lamb said it will be after July 1 before the final loan rate will be known.

## Confusion Over Fire and Flood Alarms Noted

Confusion reigned among many Heppner residents during the past couple of weeks over what was a fire alarm or what might be a flood alarm signal. And, the bewilderment was only increased by the unusual, though very real, fire alarm which sounded at 6 am Wednesday.

The difficulty has arisen because of the new air horns which have recently been installed by the fire department for fire alarm use to replace the small inadequate siren which has been the alarm for the past several years. During the installation period both the horns and the siren have been used at various times for fire calls, but it is the plan to use the siren only for flood alarm or emergency fire calls when all necessary automatic equipment for the air horns is installed.

During the past week the air horns have been used for three fire and drill calls, but for some reason, not yet fully determined by fire department officials, the siren sounded at 6 o'clock Wednesday morning to call the department to a fire at O'Donnell's Cafe where an oven had blown up and flames seared the restaurant kitchen. The alarm was never called in on the regular phone and it is surmised that someone, not knowing the proper procedure, climbed to the siren control box at the corner of Main and Willow streets and banged on the equipment until the timer started the siren blowing. If smoke from the fire had not been visible from the fire hall, there would have been no way of knowing where the blaze was located. The fire was quickly controlled, but considerable smoke damage resulted.

## SPECIAL FLOOD ALARM

Local residents are again reminded that even should the siren be used for a fire call, the flood alarm is a special long signal and should not be confused with a fire call. The flood warning signal will be ONLY three long 20 second steady blasts of the siren separated by 10 seconds of silence. Should the danger be thought great, the signal may be repeated after one or two minutes of silence.

The flood warning was designed so that it could not be confused with any other siren code for its steady blasts are nearly 10 times as long as that used for emergency fire. Should the siren be used in the future for fire (in case of emergency or failure of the air horns) this call will be up to 10 short quick blasts of the siren.

The department's new air horns were installed to give a better alarm with greater coverage than given by the siren. Also the horns operate entirely independently of regular power. In the past fire calls have been received when the power was off and there was no method of summoning firemen.

Last Saturday afternoon the department was called to a small grass fire near Chase and Center streets which was quickly controlled without damage.

## Adult Swim Lessons To Start Monday

Swimming lessons for adults will start at the Heppner pool Monday evening at 6 pm and will continue for each night, Monday through Friday for two weeks. Mrs Tom Hughes, instructor, announced today. The pool won't be open to the public Monday, but will be on the other days.

Registration can be made for the lessons any time and a fee of \$2.00 for the series will be charged.

Children's lessons will start in a short time and will be held in the mornings.

## EXAMINER COMING

A drivers license examiner will be in Heppner Tuesday, July 1 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at the court house.



DEMOLISHED FORD in which Doug Gribble and Oliver Devin were injured Tuesday when it left the highway and crashed into a Power pole alongside the Jordan elevator. Doug was thrown from the car onto the railroad tracks about 30 feet behind where the car sits when this picture was taken. He is in critical condition at Pioneer Memorial hospital. (GT Photo)

## All Outside Burning Prohibited in City

Heppner fire chief C A Ruggles announced this week that effective immediately, outside burning of all types is prohibited because of the extreme fire danger.

The cooler temperatures of the two days has greatly lessened the fire danger from what it was last week, but the heavy growth of grass on all land makes fire a serious threat. No burning permits will be issued within the city limits and burning, even in barrels, is prohibited.

## Both Wheat and Barley Now Coming In to Elevators

Both wheat and barley were beginning to come into all stations of the Morrow County Grain Growers this week. Harvesting was slowed down Tuesday by rains but warmer weather by Wednesday put combines back into operation.

The Morrow County Grain Growers reported Wednesday that they had received 100,000 bushels of barley and about 10,000 bushels of wheat with continually increasing amounts due in coming days. The first wheat was harvested by D O Nelson Monday and received at the North Lexington elevator. Barley and wheat started coming in to Heppner and Ione Monday though deliveries were slow; both Lexington and North Lexington were receiving fair amounts of grain and the first to be received at the Heppner elevator came in today.

The strong winds of Sunday and Monday caused considerable shattering in turkey red, Regua and Burt wheat, all bearded varieties, in the north Lexington area, it was reported. There was also considerable damage to barley in that area where winds were reported as being over 40 miles an hour.

Al Lamb, MCGG manager, said the wheat in the North Lexington section is expected to run about 30 bushels to the acre and barley about 40 bushels. This is some higher than last year, and other sections of the county are expected to average even higher.

Some shrivel has been found in various fields due to the hot weather, particularly in the higher elevations, however there is no general pattern of damage.

## G-T Slates Early Paper Next Week

All news and advertising copy for next week's Gazette-Times should be submitted to the paper at least one day earlier than usual next week, the publisher reminds correspondents and advertisers.

The paper will be published on Wednesday, one day earlier than usual, to allow distribution ahead of the Fourth of July holiday.

## Rev John Rydgren To Be Installed Sunday

Dr S C Siefkes, district president, will be here to conduct the installation service for Rev John Rydgren at 11:00 am Sunday, June 29 at the Hope Lutheran church in Heppner.

A potluck dinner will follow the service and all members are asked to furnish a salad and a dessert.

Mrs Grace Hughes is visiting relatives in Portland.

## Two Youths Badly Injured in Car Crash at Jordan

Two Heppner youths were injured, one critically, about noon Tuesday when the car in which they were riding went out of control on highway 74 and crashed into a power pole at the Jordan elevator just east of Ione.

In critical condition in Pioneer Memorial hospital with a brain concussion, fracture of four lumbar vertebrae, contusion of a kidney and minor abrasions and cuts is Douglas Gribble, 18, son of Mr and Mrs Lowell Gribble. He is a Heppner high school senior. The other youth and owner of the practically new 1958 Ford sedan, was Oliver Devin, 21, son of Mr and Mrs O A Devin, who suffered a broken collar bone in the crash which completely demolished the car and threw young Gribble about 30 feet onto the railroad tracks below the highway.

Excessive speed was blamed by witnesses for the accident. After the car rounded the sharp curve just west of the Rhea creek road it went out of control, striking the bank on the right side of the highway then skidding over 200 feet before leaving the road and striking the power pole broadside. The pole was broken off in two places and power was cut off in Lexington for a short period.

Devin admitted Wednesday to police that he was driver of the car though municipal court records show that his drivers license was suspended by the state department of motor vehicles for traffic violation on April 30 and would not have been reinstated until July 29 of this year.

Devin was released from the hospital Wednesday. Physicians classified Gribble's condition as still critical, though improving.

Another accident occurred Friday evening at the intersection of highway 74 and Rietmann road at the east entrance to Ione when two cars driven by Roy Lindstrom and Alvin McCabe, both of Ione collided. Lindstrom and a passenger Ronald Palmer of Hermiston, both suffered minor injuries and both cars were badly damaged.

## Range, Forest Field Tour Set

The annual field tour to survey conservation practices will be held Wednesday, July 2 and this year will be held in the forest and range lands of the Blue Mountains, officers of the Heppner Soil Conservation district.

The trip is open to the public and transportation will be provided by school buses through the courtesy of the Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce. The buses will leave from the First National Bank at 8:30 am and the tour is expected to take most of the day.

Stops will be made at Fairview camp ground where the forest service will explain development of recreational camp grounds in the forest; at Bull Prairie where the proposed site for the recreation pond is currently being examined by state game commission engineers. The tour will go to Tupper guard station for lunch provided by the Forest Service, and while there will inspect engineering and forest practices, skid road seedings, forest roads and range water developments. From Tupper the tour will go east past Ditch creek and return along Willow creek checking other practices enroute.