

GAZETTE-TIMES

Vol. 90, No. 49

Heppner, Ore., Thursday, Jan. 24, 1974

15c

Hospital may lose \$21,000

A "misunderstanding" between Pioneer Memorial Hospital and the Oregon Blue Cross threatens to deprive the hospital here of \$21,331 in Medicare funds, according to

Irene Wyman, hospital administrator.

She will attend a meeting of Blue Cross representatives in Portland on Feb. 14 to discuss the matter.

The misunderstanding concerns the hospital's operation of a nursing home in connection with the hospital proper, a procedure which the Department of Health, Education &

Welfare, which operates Medicare, does not favor. However, the Pioneer Memorial plan for combining the two facilities, while maintaining separate account records, was approved by both the Oregon Board of Health and the Oregon Blue Cross in 1970. The latter is administrator for Medicare in this state.

The hospital's auditors, Ernst & Ernst, Portland, informed the hospital last week that the \$89,158 due to be paid Pioneer Memorial for inpatient services for 1973 may be pared to \$66,981 because HEW does not approve of the nursing home facility being operated in conjunction with the hospital.

"The rules and regulations are made on the basis of experience back East," Mrs. Wyman told the Gazette-Times, "where nursing homes

are several to a block. Conditions are far different out here because of the vast distances between hospitals and nursing homes. I believe the Feb. 14 conference will prove that we should not be penalized in this respect."

Accounts and records of the nursing home and hospital are separately maintained, and Medicare payments billed only on the hospital portion of the operation.

The hospital was opened in June 1950, and now has 20 hospital beds and 24 nursing home beds. For the past two years, Mrs. Wyman said, the hospital has been able to operate in the black. It has an annual budget of approximately \$400,000, and while it is a county hospital supported by taxes, the tax receipts for the hospital amount to a maximum of \$22,500 a year.

The bad news

Property taxes soar for 1974-5

Property taxes will be increased as much as 43 per cent in Morrow County over last year's figure, Joyce Bergstrom, county assessor, told the Chamber of Commerce Monday.

Residential land within the City of Heppner will increase 21 per cent for 1974-75. Residential land with improvements will increase by 5 per cent.

Residents of the Lexington and Ione area had their property appraised for taxes last year and will not have their valuations increased this year because they fall within the "tolerance" set by the state, which requires that property be assessed at 100 per cent of its fair market value.

Boardman and Irrigon rural tract land will have a 15 per cent increase; rural tracts with buildings are up 12 per cent.

Rural tracts with buildings in Heppner, Ione and Lexington will have a boost of 11 per cent.

The area in the northern part of the county, along the bombing range 10-12 miles south of Boardman and extending to the Columbia River,

which is classified as farm land (not farm deferral land), will get the biggest increase in valuation, 43 per cent.

The increases were made by the Board of Equalization which is charged with the responsibility of keeping property values at market price. The last time Heppner property was officially appraised was in 1969. Had the property been appraised for 1974-75, the board would not have had to take the action, for the same percentage of increase would have been made by the appraisers.

The Board of Equalization is made up of County Judge Paul Jones, Harry O'Donnell and W.E. Nelson.

On a happier note, Mrs. Bergstrom said that ski fa-

cilities are available for 4-H members. In previous years buses and instructors were available Saturday and Sunday. But due to the gas shortage, members from Ione and Heppner will use the ski facility on Saturdays only.

The school bus will leave Ione High School at 8:30 a.m. and leave the public library in Heppner 9 a.m.

Skiing is also open to any other youngster interested in learning. Tickets may be purchased from Dick McElligott, Mrs. Bergstrom or the Morrow County Extension Office.

Next Monday's Chamber of Commerce luncheon speaker will be Rep. Jack Sumner, who will discuss the Oregon legislative session.

Stolen pickup wrecked, stripped

A 1974 GMC pickup reported stolen last week in Ione, has been found wrecked in Gilliam County.

Sheriff's deputies found the vehicle Thursday, just west of the Harvey Smith Ranch. The pickup apparently had been stripped of a tape deck,

several tapes, spare tire, jack and miscellaneous tools before being driven or pushed from the road, down a steep hill where it came to rest upside down at the bottom of a canyon.

Investigation into the theft is continuing.

Luciani heads fair board

George Luciani, Echo, was elected chairman of the Morrow County Fair Board at the directors' meeting Monday night. Luciani replaces Dr. Jim Norene, Heppner.

The rental rates for the pavilion and kitchen were raised at the meeting. The pavilion charge of \$25 per day was raised to \$50 and the kitchen rate raised from \$10 to \$25 per day. The annex charge of \$15 remained the same.

In other business, the board decided to open bids for general repairs to the main pavilion building and other buildings at the fairgrounds. Harold Kerr, county extension agent, asked members to allow the Department of Motor Vehicles to use the dorm building once a month to conduct driver's permit and licensing in the area. The board approved the request.

Don Evans, president of the Morrow County Rodeo, and Dennis Doherty, secretary, presented the 1974 advertising budget of \$1,329. Rodeo members also listed the additional cost for having a RCA rodeo at \$50 and the raise in price of \$50 for the sound system. The system will now cost \$250.

The fair board will take action on the advertising budget at the Feb. 18 meeting.



John Boyer, right, High School All-American selection, is shown here at the 1973 awards banquet receiving the Most Valuable Player Award from Football Coach Chuck Starr.

John Boyer is high school All-American

John Boyer, 17, Heppner High School senior, has been selected All-American by the yearly publication, "Who's Who in National High School Athletics" for his football performance last year.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Mel Boyer.

The votes have been tabulated by ballots submitted by a nationwide panel of more than 1,500 coaches, sportswriters and college football coaches.

Young men selected are honored for their adherence to the highest ideals of sportsmanship through competitive athletics and by their strong contribution to teammates acquired through sacrifice, sportsmanship, cooperation and fair play.

It was Boyer who told the audience at the Heppner Awards Banquet last year:

"The coaches told me all they knew about the game in about 10 minutes. The coaches asked me to go out on the field and if the ball should come near me to catch it and run for the goal line. They forgot to tell me that 11 other players would be chasing me."

Last year Boyer decided to go out for football for the first time. He made the varsity squad, and here are some of

his records:

—Led the Mustang team in scoring with 56 points.

—Led the team in pass receptions with 24 for a total of 396 yards, including six touchdowns and one for the extra conversion.

—Led the team in punting. Punted 37 times for an

average of 36 yards per punt.

—Led the team in punt returns, 10 returns for 227 yards, 2 for TDs.

—Carried the ball 10 times for 118 yards offensive.

—Led the team in tackles, 53 with 39 assists (defensive).

—Intercepted two passes, ran one back for a TD.

Boyer was chosen First Team All-Conference defensive halfback and offensive split end, and First Team All-State defensive halfback.

Boyer has excelled in basketball and baseball in previous years; however, last year was the first time he had ever played football for Heppner High School.

"Not a bad record for a beginner," said his football coach, Chuck Starr, who added, "John is an extremely talented athlete, and I only hope he continues in college. Although he is small for

college football at the present time, there is no denying he is a tremendous athlete. We know he will succeed in whatever sport he chooses."

Boyer plans to enter college this fall, but has not selected the college yet. He is interested in science, having majored in biology, and his present grade point average is close to 3.0.

One reason Boyer never played football before his senior year is that he was out for two different sports during the semester and was afraid that a third would bring his GPA down, so he waited until his senior year.

Fuel adequate for schools

By LIZ CURTIS

Morrow County Schools should have enough fuel, Ron Daniels reported at Monday night's school board meeting in Lexington.

Daniels said the schools' suppliers have told him that Morrow County Schools will receive 100 per cent of last year's fuel allocation. However, the price of PS300 heating oil has taken a sharp rise. The price per barrel has increased from \$5.84 at the end of November to a current rate of \$13.62. This is a 133 per cent increase per 42 gallon barrel.

The amount in this year's budget for fuel oil is \$14,000. The projected cost for fuel oil next year's budget is \$41,000, due to the rapid increase in price. Daniels did say that gasoline has not taken such a sharp increase. It is five cents higher per gallon than the bid price. The current price to the schools is 32½ cents per gallon.

No action was taken on the economic agreement of the teaching staff's contracts due to the need for further discussion between school board and teachers.

In executive session, contracts of Heppner Elementary principal Don Cole and Ione principal John Edmundson were renewed. In the regular board session Herman Green was hired as the new Heppner High School custodian, replacing retiring Mark Samples. Forest Godin was hired to replace Green as a bus driver.

School hours will remain the same for the remainder of the school year. The board felt it would be easier to maintain regular school hours than to change them for a period of only three weeks, when sunrise will be 35 minutes earlier than now. The need for time adjustment will be reviewed at the August board meeting because some change will be necessary next year.

Athletic practice times will remain the same. The board tabled action on any changes until such time as the fuel situation might become more critical.

A letter from Neighborhood Center Director Pat Brindle was read, in which Mrs. Brindle stated that the Neighborhood Center Board had not taken any official action in

(Continued on page 2)



Melting snow and ice played havoc with county roads last week. High water carried mud and debris across low spots and created deep potholes. This picture shows motorists picking their way cautiously through flooded Highway 74 near Lexington. —(Photo by Mel Boyer, Lexington)