



January

The first month of 1976 didn't produce the excitement that will stand 1976 out as a good year for many and a bad year to some. January was kind of a dull month. The top story had to be that the city of Heppner banned committees. In an effort to expedite local government affairs, Mayor Jerry Sweeney disbanded small council committees and suggested that all matters be brought before all members of the common council for its approval. Other stories: Larry Mills installed as Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce president. Heppner TV upped their rates \$1 per month. The first baby of 1976 was Anna Lea Lolland, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Lolland, Condon. Ida May Gravill celebrated her 94th birthday. Kimee Haguewood was the Soroptimist Youth Award scholarship winner. The city water system was completed. And Portland General Electric awarded its construction contract to Peter Kiewit & Sons.

February

The police were put to work in February. Three youths were arrested for cow killing, numerous marijuana and drug related incidents produced arrests and convictions. Disorderly conduct and harassment yielded to a prescription tampering charge and kept police busy. Also: Bill Weatherford filed for judge in the county. Oregon's oldest twins, Maggie Reynolds and Mary Bailey, celebrated their 88th birthday. The county fair theme "We've Come A Long Way" was chosen by Gladys Van Winkle. Craig Cooley was hired as a respiratory therapist at Pioneer Memorial. Terry McElligott and Tim Skow were Elks scholarship winners. Voters pounded the city council doors with concern over dog problems.

March

Top high school athletes Jim Lankford and Dave McLachlan were honored in the city's basketball awards banquet. The first works concerning justice court and city police cases were discussed. Heppner High School's Future Farmers of America honored Bill Van Schoiack and Ken Grieb as top award winners. PGE began housing projects in Boardman. Pioneer Memorial Hospital received new equipment. Beetles infest Blue Mountains. Craig Hams, an 11-year-old lone boy, designed the Morrow County Historical Society decal and won a check. The Willow Creek dam proposal was bounced again in a heated meeting with city officials and the Corps of Engineers.

April

The Gazette-Times got a new owner in April to highlight a rather dull news month. Jerry Reed, Hermiston Herald publisher, bought the Heppner paper from Ernest Joiner. Also in April an Agri-Rama, sponsored by the Extension Service Homemakers, drew a large attendance. PGE offered space for windmill studies in Boardman. Ken Rogers was assaulted and three men arrested in Heppner for it. A Hermiston man, Steve Kemp, escaped serious injury when his late model car went out of control on Gale Street. Citizens participated in a March of Dimes Walkathon that tapped the \$5,600 mark.

May

A city budget defeat and the death of a popular and prominent Heppner man shocked Heppner in May. Kenneth Dean Belcher, 37, was killed in an airplane crash in early May. Belcher was spraying a field for local farmers. The first Heppner city budget was balked at by voters by a 2 1/2 to 1 margin. Primary elections were also made (see page 1 story). Also, thieves looted Morrow County Grain Growers, taking tools and a chain saw. Lyle Lowe was named new branch manager of First National Bank, succeeding Belcher. Morrow County court of Queen Patricia Van Schoiack, Kate Evans, Kimmee Haguewood, Bonnie Schiller and Jan Spaulding made first appearance in Arlington. Seniors priming for June graduation. Otheo Crawford, former G-T editor, dies in Lincoln City at 90.

June

Farming, the governor's visit, and a junior rodeo topped June news. Roy and Tommy Martin were named Conservationists of the Year at the same time aphids were found in area wheat crops. Gov. Bob Straub spent a complete day in Heppner, visiting local citizens, officials, and the Kinzua Corporation mill. Also in June, the lone American Legion raised the flag at Wells Springs. Laurie McCabe was seriously injured in a one car accident near Ruggs. The common council revived parking meters in the city. Janice Healy and Dawn Peterson tied for all-around senior girl in the Morrow County junior rodeo. Voters say yes to second budget of \$32,138. County royalty being seen more and more as summer's fair draws closer. G-T names Wil Phinney, Hermiston Herald Sports Editor, to head news desk. The city upped water, sewer rates. County gains \$25,000 from Land Conservation and Development Commission to upgrade comprehensive plans for cities.

July

Topics for July had to be the city's Bicentennial birthday party (story on page 1). Council stopped First Federal Savings and Loan initial



Summary, 1976 photos by Wil Phinney

attempt to locate a mobile banking service in Heppner. Harvest is slow in getting to area (see page 1 story). Gov. Straub appoints Delores Gribble as justice of peace for county. First Federal oked after three meetings. Grain quality listed as good, but market bad. Lone blaze guts Stefani building. Teresa (Peck) Thurmond was a victim of a wierd car accident that put her in the hospital. Accident involved backing over an embankment. Henry Heppner's great nephew visited Heppner for the first time, bringing greetings from Abraham Beame, Mayor of New York City.

August

Big news month. Senator Hatfield visits, Boardman man killed in wreck, baby dies in crash, community readying for county fair at end of August. Bigfoot and late rainy harvest (stories on page 1) also made headlines. Larry Fetsch named sheriff, replacing resigning John Mollahan. Pinball owners in businesses stop amusement tax proposed by city. Kinzua adds new man when Darl Hagey resigns, Larry McGillivray takes over personal manager post. Eight-month-old baby dies in one car accident on highway 207. Ferguson heads all-star cast of cowboys for county rodeo.

September

RCA cowboys, cowgirls ride away with more than \$12,000. Jerry Gentry wins county all-around and Kinzua donated saddle. Gov. Straub appoints Al Nistad to Energy Facility Siting Council in early September. Flag napping escapades produce two arrests: Ed Schwarzin and James Richardson, 19-year-old Heppner men. County fair featured with parade, court, carnival, horse show, rodeo, 4-H and FFA plus numerous exhibits and programs. Grid season starts. First day of school for many youngsters. Jana Steagall, Lexington cowgirl, wins Western State Junior Rodeo Association all-around title for second straight year. One arsonists arrested (see page 1). Sisters, brother meet after 26 years of separation in Graves, Gates families. Lone hanggliders featured. First talk of swine flu vaccination hits papers. Ron Ward nabs Eagle Scout award. Bad curves at lone set for improvement. Candidate for attorney general, Jim Durham, slams legislature here.

October

A candidates' fair and the talk of closing the child development center, along with a new restaurant in Heppner opened eyes. 16 candidates were part of a candidates' fair for the benefit of voters in Heppner and Morrow County, sponsored by the American Association of University Women. \$1,200 was needed to keep the Heppner Child Development doors open for the next month. Donations and contributions kept the doors open. Poor jail facilities riddle sheriffs' department and district attorney. A 26-year-old Boardman man, Leopoldo Espain, died in a one car accident near Boardman. Mustangs lead Columbia Basin Conference with 4-0 mark. Jim Rogers opens West of Willow restaurant, graces city with new look and style. Races for county, state, city elections begin to culminate. Lowell Gribble's Heppner based Ultrasonic Predictable Maintenance gains worldwide recognition, contracts. Lone residents have mixed reactions to Judge's statement concerning road to tie PGE plant and lone.

November

A \$100,000 suit that could involve county overshadows county's number one potato growing status, antirecessionary checks, Artifactory work and football all-stars. A suit that still could involve the city concerns the death of Logan Ledbetter and who was at fault when a power line electrocuted Ledbetter. County named number one potato processing county in state, taking lead from Malheur. City, county receives antirecessionary checks to spend as they like. Ron Palmer, Heppner businessman, injured in one car accident, sustains reported broken back and severely lacerated ear. Artifactory priming for early December show. Queen Mary Ann Proctor named to head county fair in 1977. Chris Rauch, Carl Christman, John Schiller named to CBC first team. Christman, Rauch, Darla Cooper top athletes at fall sports dessert.

December

Gary Grieb and family named Cattleman of Year and later honored at Farm-City Banquet. Mustangs lose six of first seven contests in pre-season basketball clashes. 1977 princesses: Kyrnn Robinson, Debora Palmer, Donna Palmer, and Teresa Proctor named. Blow to head kills three-year-old Irrigon boy, still being investigated by Oregon State Police. Artifactory termed success. Child center faced with move from church building. Tad Miller elected Oregon Wheat Growers League president for state. Drouth continues to baffle farmers. Lone parents upset over doubled up classrooms in elementary school. Dentist says OK to Heppner. Portland dentist, Lee Hazen, is slated to start business here by March 1. Ray Boyce elected president of Chamber of Commerce. Gonty's shoes sell out, but Ed Gonty starts new business in radio repair. Reed's Mobil station changes hands.

