

# THE GAZETTE-TIMES

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## Construction set for Main Street

The Heppner City Council last week issued a building permit to Harry and Helen O'Donnell for construction of a Main Street office building on property adjacent to the Bank of Eastern Oregon.

The permit calls for a 41 x 100 foot single story building which will house the new offices of the Morrow County Abstract and Title Co. along with additional space to be leased to another office tenant.

Sidewalk and curbing has already been replaced in front of the property and construction of the footing was expected to begin this week, depending on the weather. Coughran Enterprises of the Tri-Cities is handling the

construction work.

The O'Donnells recently purchased the property from James and Jewell Hager. It is the former site of Empire Machinery and was later used by the Hagers as a building supply outlet until the building burned to the ground in the early 1970's.

Morrow County Abstract and Title Co. was incorporated in 1929 and has been in the O'Donnell family ever since 1930. The O'Donnells last year opened another office of the company in Boardman and recently became licensed to conduct escrow services.

Due to the weather conditions, a completion date for the new office building has not been set.



### Movin' things around

Construction in Morrow County is moving along at a rapid pace, especially in Boardman. In this photo, a bulldozer works on a new office building site in Heppner, next to the Bank of Eastern Oregon. The office will be occupied by Morrow County Abstract and Title Company. Owner Harry O'Donnell said the new building will have space for one additional office. Please see accompanying stories for details.

## New businesses planned for Boardman area

It looks like it's going to be 13,000 square feet of food and sporting goods for Boardman soon. Irrigon C & H grocery store owner Rodney Collins has announced plans to lease a building of that size at the Boardman South project.

Collins is also making plans to construct a 9,400 square foot grocery and sporting goods store at Irrigon on a new site just west of the Irrigon city limits. "I hope to get a start on that store in January but I've been planning this for the last two years," Collins said.

The Boardman store will be located at the corner of Main and W. Kinkaid streets. It will be constructed by Cal-Am/Fuhrman Development Co.

A 10,000 square foot retail building is also proposed at the 40-acre town center development south of I-80N. "Those will be individual stores, they will not be connected," explained on-site coordinator Joanne McCauley.

"The walkways will be covered and the construction will have a western theme," she said. "Of course, the buildings will not all be identical."

The western styling is required to complement each building. "It's really starting

to happen here," Mrs. McCauley said. "I've been with this project since the first shovel-full of dirt. I live here and it's important to me what is happening."

Collins anticipates beginning construction on the new store after the first of the year.

McCauley also added that Les Coughran Enterprises, a Tri-Cities firm, which was one of the first to begin construction housing in the new Boardman development, has also purchased a site behind the proposed C & H store.

The land will be used for the construction of two large commercial/retail buildings which will measure about 5,100 square feet each. Once the final plans are approved by the state, Coughran hopes to begin construction sometime in January, according to construction supervisor Roy Plant, Boardman.

"We're just building to lease," explained Plant. "There is a need for retail stores in Boardman."

"The beginning date of construction is yet uncertain due to some problems getting the property lined up and the plans ok'd from the state," Plant noted.

A third building is also tentatively planned for construction on the site. "We're just purchasing property from Cal-Am/Fuhrman Development as we go," Plant added. The third building is proposed for 7,800 square feet. The supervisor is presently not at liberty to disclose who the potential tenants might be.

Plant feels no threat to his company's facility being built adjacent to other retail stores. "We're trying to work together and get something for Boardman," Plant said. "We feel that we're part of this community and our reason for bringing in retail is to provide some more businesses here."

On the north side of the I-80N freeway another new construction project is being planned. Boardman businessman Earl Trudeau is taking steps to begin construction of a 5,000 square foot drug store by mid-January.

Trudeau owns Imperial Hardware and Electric Inc., at Boardman. That business will occupy about half of the new building which will be constructed on a site just north of the present location at First Street.

The other 2,000 square feet will be leased by Ray Michalis, a Portland pharmacist. He plans to open a complete McKesson-Robbins Drug Store there by April.

## Artist to display paintings of area



An exhibit of paintings by professional artist Robert Thomas of Richland, Washington, will be on display at the Bank of Eastern Oregon in Heppner from Wednesday, Jan. 4 to Jan. 20. The Morrow County Creative Arts Association will serve coffee and cookies at the bank on Jan. 4 from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The artist will also be present during that time.

Thomas' exhibit consists of paintings that depict familiar scenes in Eastern Oregon and Washington, including many from Morrow County. His representation of sagebrush desert and old weathered

buildings is characterized by a loose, free style complemented by simple details carried over from his former occupation as a technical illustrator.

During a recent painting workshop in Lexington, Thomas became interested in capturing on canvas some of the nostalgia present in the area.

Local artist Ardith Hunt made arrangements for Thomas' exhibit and visit and encourages all art lovers in the Heppner area to meet Thomas and view his unique collection at the Bank of E.O. The paintings in the exhibit will be for sale.

Richland artist Robert Thomas will have some of his paintings on display at the Bank of Eastern Oregon in Heppner.

## Merchants wrap up Bonanza

Heppner area merchants concluded their Christmas Bonanza this past week, having distributed \$500 in cash certificates to winners.

Dan James of Heppner took the top prize of \$50 this last week. Vernon Teeter of Fossil and Kirk Cooley of Heppner each won \$25.

Winners in the \$10 category

included Lil Boyce, Glenna Rollis, Joy Krein and Mrs. Winn Crist, all of Heppner; Vera Rietman and Barbara Peterson of Ione; Carolyn Howard, Donna Papineau and Ann Higgins of Lexington; and Rupe Kennedy of Boardman.

Winners can pick up their

cash certificates at the Gazette Times.

### Weather

Wed., Dec. 21	30	26
Thu., Dec. 22	32	24 .02
Fri., Dec. 23	31	23 .22
Sat., Dec. 24	30	26 .11
Sun., Dec. 25	28	25 .02
Mon., Dec. 26	27	22
Tue., Dec. 27	25	21

# 1977 - Drought, business are highlights

... a year of highs and lows. County agriculture took a beating and left uncertainty in the farm outlook. An influx of new businesses boosted area commerce

### January

City government activity in Heppner opened the 1977 year with the swearing in of three members of the City Council and the re-election of Mayor Jerry Sweeney. Cliff Green, Hubert Wilson and Warren Plocharsky all took the oath of office administered by the mayor.

For the councilmen, it was merely a formal induction into the political cauldron, having already weathered a month-long scrap involving renewal of the city's franchise agreement with Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative. The result was a continuation of the previous two per cent fee settlement, but not before a case was presented in favor of a three per cent fee.

Also in January, Morrow

County farmers were told that for the third year in a row, estimated gross sales from Oregon's farms and ranches exceeded the \$1 billion mark. Preliminary figures from the Oregon State University Extension Service indicated a total of \$1.04 billion which included \$683.5 million from crop sales and \$354.9 million from livestock and poultry.

Total crop sales were down six per cent but increases in grass and legume seed sales, hay and silage and small fruits helped to offset a major drop in grain sales.

Livestock sales were up nine per cent from the year before, mainly due to a significant increase in the value sales of cattle and calves and a major jump in sales of dairy pro-

ducts. Grains were again the state's leading farm commodity with sales of \$189.7 million—down 20 per cent from 1975.

The news of the \$1 billion gross did little to bolster county farmers who experienced a seven per cent drop in gross farm income from agricultural products. With the prospect of a damaging drought looming over their heads, Morrow County wheat farmers say their crop income estimate sink to \$4 million even though 30,000 additional acres of wheat was harvested in the county. Potatoes were the leading crop again but sales were off \$2.5 million.

It was in January that Heppnerites attended the grand opening of West of Willow restaurant and tavern. More than 200 persons turned out to help kick things off. Proprietor Jim Rogers and Master of Ceremonies D.O. Nelson decked out in tuxedos for the evening extravaganza.

A portent of things to come was seen in the county's school system in January. A.C. Houghton Elementary in Irrigon and Riverside High

School in Boardman both saw their student enrollments increase. School district officials were expecting the rise and Supt. Matt Doherty said the school system was prepared for the new students.

### February

Opening the second month of 1977 was the announcement that Dick and Lynnea Sargent had purchased the landmark Gilliam-Bisbee building at Heppner's Main and May Streets and planned to move their Coast-to-Coast store to the new location.

With new tenants in the G-B building, the Neighborhood Center found a new home at the old Howell Market location on W. Willow Street. Pat Brindle, director of the center, said kitchen locating costs would be about \$2,500 and community response was coming in to help with the move.

Another move was only being talked about and some people thought it wasn't being talked about fast enough. Rupert Kennedy, commission chairman of the Port of Morrow, told the Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of

Commerce that citizens should "immediately seek action from Congressional delegates to move the Navy" from its 50,000 acre bombing range in the county.

"The Navy is holding it up," Kennedy said, adding that action was needed before water to develop the bombing range was lost to other concerns.

Meanwhile, the Morrow County School Board and teachers' organization missed their Jan. 31 deadline for concluding contract negotiations for the 1977-78 school year. Both parties planned to get down to "serious salary discussions" shortly. A week later, Marshall Hesla, chairman of the Morrow County teachers' negotiating team, called a School Board salary proposal "not agreeable to us," and asked that a mediator intervene. The teachers and the Board were still several percentage points apart in their offers with the teachers coming down from a 12 per cent to a 10 per cent pay hike and the Board sticking with its four per cent increase.

Heppner moved a step closer to gaining a new dentist

when the Planning Commission granted a conditional use permit to Dr. Lee Hazen for construction of a new dental clinic in Valley View Estates.

Mother Nature was up to her tricks again when Orville Cutsforth told the Chamber of Commerce that Morrow County stood a 95 per cent chance of losing every lodgepole pine in the county to pine beetles. The prediction was made by Herb Rudolph, head of the Umatilla National Forest Service Office in Pendleton.

In a nutshell, it was looking like Morrow County was in for a dismal financial year agriculturally, but the county was not going to be alone. Statewide, Gov. Bob Straub anticipated a loss of nearly 5,000 jobs in agriculture and forest products industries. Crop losses in February were pegged at \$100 million for Oregon and were anticipated to reach \$400 million without more rainfall.

### March

March, the month said to come in like a lion, came in with big dollar signs in 1977. The Heppner City Council presented voters with a bud-

get package \$46,445 in excess of the six per cent limitation. Still, it was a trimmed version of an initial projected budget some \$50,000 higher.

The Morrow County School Board finished its budget deliberations and came up with an appropriation of \$3,120,453 including a tax levy of \$1,711,803 outside the six per cent limitation. The amount did represent an increase over the previous year but it was one of the smallest jumps in recent memory.

Representatives of the communities of Boardman and Irrigon, along with doctors and the Morrow County Court, reached a working agreement to proceed with plans for a medical clinic in Boardman.

Portland General Electric announced it had awarded two contracts totaling more than \$8 million for foundation and concrete work at the utility's Cary coal-fired generating plant.

The month actually kept in line with the other half of the saying, as both the Mustangs and the Cardinals quietly folded up the remains of respective 2-18 and 1-20 seasons on the basketball court

and headed outside for spring.

### April

April was a tough month for budgets.

The Heppner City Council wondered which way to turn when two slashed budget proposals were shot down. The Morrow County School District budget got kicked back to the School Board after voters turned it down.

Tragedy was felt in the county when the rampage of Michael Olds included the death of Mary Lindsay of Ione and a Washington man before Olds was apprehended in Pittsburgh after a five-day cross country chase.

Jim Wishart, John Edmundson and Dave Harrison jogged for the camera to publicize the Heppner Lions Club's efforts to provide a first class track at the high school. Time and equipment were contributed by various area businesses and citizens.

Six Eastern Oregon counties were already being considered for disaster area status from the drought. Extension Continued on page 2...