The Library
University of Oregon
Eugene, Or 97403
For Microfilm

The Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
Morrow County's Award-Winning Weekly Newspaper

VOL. 97, NO.9 HEPPNER, OREGON THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1979 TWO SECTIONS—14 PAGES 20 cents

Laughs... a lot!

Billed as a show for the audience, 'Slice It Thin' draws laughter from its funny situations and rapid-fire wisecracks. The Heppner High School drama class production can be seen Thursday and Friday evenings with the curtain rising at 8 p.m. in the cafetorium. In this scene Ben (Bill Kenny) interrupts a heated argument between a slipping movie idol (Jim Ackley) and his Russian girlfriend (Susan Johnson) with a pair of pants he needs mended. The Coleman family mother is played by Alice Abrams and the aspiring actress-daughter is played by Millie Yocom. Price of admission is just $1.50 for adults and $1.00 for children.

Truck accident claims life of Martin Potter, injures three others

A 28-year-old Lexington man was killed and three others seriously injured Sunday night, when a pickup truck veered off Hwy. 74 about five miles west of Heppner and overturned.

Dead at the scene was Martin Ray Potter, 28, of Lexington, an employee of Morrow County Grain Growers.

Injured were Raymond L. Banka, 28, of Rt. 2, Heppner, the driver; Richard E. Pettyjohn, 25, of Heppner, and Calvin Papineau, 15, of Lexington.

Banka was transferred from Pioneer Memorial Hospital to Good Shepherd Hospital in Hermiston, where he is undergoing treatment for serious internal injuries. Pettyjohn and Papineau were taken to Lexington Airport after receiving preliminary treatment at Pioneer Memorial, then were rushed by a Life Flight airplane ambulance to Emanuel Hospital in Portland. Both were being treated for critical head injuries.

The accident occured about 9:30 p.m. Sunday, as the vehicle was headed towards Lexington. Banka apparently lost control of the pickup, crossed into the oncoming lane, and according to state police reports, skidded sideways for 391 feet onto the north shoulder of the highway, where the truck flipped, then rolled another 111 feet along the berm before coming to rest on its side. Banka and Pettyjohn were thrown from the truck.

The truck, a 1974 Ford, was owned by Robert L. Humphreys of Heppner.

No charges have been filed in connection with the crash, but an investigation is continuing, state police said.

Trooper Vic Groshen praised the efforts of Pioneer Memorial personnel and a group of volunteer Emergency Medical Technicians consisting of Monte Stookey, Henry Helmholtz, John Hedman, Rick Curtis and Dan Sweeney for their efforts in treating the crash survivors.

Funeral services for Martin Ray Potter were held Wednesday in the United Church of Christ in Condon, with the Rev. Fermer Plank officiating. Concluding services and interment with military participation were held at Igo Cemetery at Condon.

Potter, who enlisted in the Army in January of 1969, spent one year of his military service in Vietnam, where he received three Purple Hearts for war injuries. He returned to Condon in December of 1971, and a few months later moved to Lexington, where he made his home since.

Potter was born in The Dalles on July 17, 1950, the son of Garland and Myrtle Maidmant Potter. He attended Condon schools, graduating from Condon High School in 1968. He was a member of the Heppner VFW post.

Survivors include his three daughters, Rebecca, Sarah and Kelly Potter of Hermiston; parents, Mr. and Mrs. Garland Potter of Condon; sister, Sharon Hamner of Condon; brothers, Darrel and Kevin, both of Condon and David of Umatilla; grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Karl Blois of Tygh Valley; several nieces and nephews.

Contributions may be made to the Potter Memorial Education Fund, in care of the First National Bank in Condon.

Sweeney Funeral Home in Condon was in charge of arrangements.

Hardwick Logging goes out of business; future of Camp Five area uncertain

Wheeler County's already bleak unemployment situation took a downward turn recently, when Don Hardwick Logging Co. announced that it was closing down operations.

Hardwick has been operating in the Camp Five area for the past 10 years, almost exclusively involved with cutting and hauling timber for the Kinzua Corporation. During the peak of last year's activities at Camp Five, Hardwick had 40 employees on the payroll. Last week, workers received official notice that the logging company was going out of business. Workers had been idle since Jan. 17, when Hardwick closed down due to an oversupply of logs at Kinzua's Heppner sawmill.

"We've just outgrown the job," Hardwick told the Gazette-Times in confirming the shutdown. "We're too large an operation for what logging there is to be done... Kinzua's just not needing that many logs from their tree farm. They've been buying their logs on the open market."

"It was a tough decision to make," said Hardwick, who has been in the logging business in Eastern Oregon for some 30 years, "but all good things have to come to an end sometime...I feel badly about the employees, though."

A public auction will be held sometime this spring to sell the Hardwick company's equipment, Hardwick said.

The Hardwick company has been managing Kinzua Corporation's company town of Camp Five. What will happen to the community after Hardwick's scheduled pullout date of May 1 remains undecided. Hardwick indicated that there was a possibility that the town would be closed as a logging camp. Kinzua Corporation officials said future plans for Camp Five and logging in that area have not been decided.

Hardwick made it clear that he harbors no hard feelings toward Kinzua, noting that the Heppner corporation had offered a proposal for a smaller scale logging contract that would have required relocating in Heppner. After lengthy consideration, Hardwick opted not to accept the proposal, he said.

Hardwick said his personal plans "are very indefinite." He does plan to take a vacation, and after that, "I suppose there's nothing to stop me from getting back in the logging business, if that's what I really want."

A native of the Baker area and the son of a logging contractor, Hardwick said he has enjoyed his more than 10-year stay in the Camp Five area. "I think we've been good for this area," he said, "and I know it's been good for us."

Rebuilding of damaged roads is not forseen by county, state

Morrow County's cracked, buckled, potholed and flood damaged roads are not likely to receive more than a patch-up job this spring and summer.

The county's road serial levy passed last year will provide approximately $180,000 for use on county maintained roads this year. According to County Roadmaster Doc Sherer, the funding should be sufficient patch up damaged pavement. "But there probably won't be enough to do any new oiling this year."

The recent arrival of relatively warm and dry weather has allowed county road crews "to begin to gain" on repairs to thaw damaged county highways, Sherer said. Most of the work has been centered in the county's north end, where quicker drying, sandy soils prevail. "The frost is still coming up in many areas in the south end," Sherer said.

Along state highways running through the county, a 10-ton weight limit remains in effect on Hwy. 207 between Lexington and the Umatilla County line enroute to Hermiston. State crews have filled the more hazardous spots along the severely damaged highway with sand and crushed rock. Although traffic must slow to a crawl at more than a dozen locations along the route, local State Highway Department officials indicated that they anticipate receiving funds sufficient to only patch and not reconstruct the battered highway.

Pavement on Hwy. 74 leading out of Heppner towards Pilot Rock, where no weight limit is in effect, was beginning to break up in a number of locations this week. The most severe damage was centered along a stretch between Jones Hill and Franklin Grade, and a section between Nye Junction and Hog Hollow.

Judge D.O. Nelson said that the county's state-declared "disaster area" status will apparently not result in any funds being available for road repair or reconstruction.

Morrow Abstract & Title enters 50th year of operation

A lot of Morrow County land has changed hands during the past 50 years, and a family-owned business has been there all along to serve the needs of land buyers and sellers during a half century of change.

Morrow County Abstract & Title Co., Inc., is celebrating its 50th birthday this year. The oldest established title company in Morrow County, with records dating back to the land patent days, should have even more promising prospects for success in its second 50 years, as Morrow County property becomes even more productive and more in demand.

The current operators of the family-owned corporation, Harry and Helen O'Donnell, have kept links to the past alive in their new, stucco, Spanish style office on Main Street. Their new business quarters, opened last summer, serve as a showcase for commercial life in the Heppner area during years past. Included among functional and decorative antiques in the new Morrow County Abstract & Title office are a vault door from the old Farmers & Stockgrowers National Bank (now the Case Furniture building), a 20-foot oak counter, purchased from a Monument tavern, and refinished and upholstered oak captain's chairs, originally used in O'Donnell's Pastime, owned by Harry's parents, Harry and Claire O'Donnell.

A teller's cage and a savings department window cage from the old bank serve as attractive wall hangings in the new office. The antiques were refinished by Mrs. O'Donnell.

The business was incorporated in 1929 by F.B. Nickerson, Harry's uncle. Nickerson had been a title examiner for Oregon Title Insurance Co. of Portland, prior to coming to Heppner. The original office of the firm was located in the Morrow County Courthouse.

After a relatively brief stay in the Courthouse, Morrow

Continued on page 3

Helen and Harry O'Donnell's Morrow County Abstract & Title Company is commemorating its 50th year of service to area re. dents.

Heppner water is safe to drink, EPA rules

Boil no more!

Pots, pans and kettles began returning to their customary cupboard space in Heppner this week, after Environmental Protection Agency officials ruled Sunday that the city's water supply now meets purity standards.

City residents for most of the past three weeks were told to boil all drinking water, after a high level of impurities turned up in the system following a flood that swept through the area on Feb. 6.

City officials have yet to discover precisely what caused the contamination, but the gradual flushing of the water system, the shutdown of one city well, and the cleaning of a storage reservoir may have played a role in purging the pollutants. Chlorination of the water system is likely to continue until the cause of the problem is rooted out.

Chief suspect for the blame is a decrepit, three-mile section of 1930-vintage water main leading from the Heppner City limits to city wells up Willow Creek.

EPA technicians needed to verify two consecutive "safe" readings of city water samples in order to lift the boiling orders.

A bond levy is expected to appear on a municipal ballot sometime this spring in an attempt by the city to raise money to replace the three mile stretch of antiquated water line.

In an effort to locate the source of trouble, city workers plan to boost water pressure on the suspect pipe, and insert a quantity of dye into the line to pinpoint the leakage. The dye turns a hue of brilliant green when mixed with water.

Gazette-Times merges with Oregon newspapers.

G.M. Reed, publisher of The Hermiston Herald, announced today (Wednesday) that his weekly newspapers in Hermiston and Heppner were involved in the merger and reorganization of three Oregon newspaper corporations.

Gazette-Times General Manager Terry M. Hager said no changes in the Heppner newspaper's staff or community news coverage would take place. "The merger enables the Gazette-Times to become a stronger newspaper and still maintain local control," said Hager.

The new alignment will bring 16 weekly newspapers in Oregon and Washington under common ownership.

Reed said his papers and those owned by Dick Nafsinger, publisher of the Hood River News, were merging with Blue Mountain Eagle (BME) newspapers headquartered in Salem.

Together with the merger, a reorganization of the parent operating company will result in a change of its corporate name to Eagle Newspapers. Nafsinger, former BME vice president, has been named president of the new corporation. Reed will assume the office of vice president. Dennis A. Smith, Salem, former BME president, has been elected chairman of the board.

The three men will make up the executive committee of the surviving corporation.

Newspapers published by Hood River include the Hood River News, The Dalles Reminder and two Washington weeklies — the White Salmon-Bingen Enterprise and the Goldendale Sentinel.

Other Eagle Newspapers, all in Oregon, include the Prineville Central-Oregonian, Madras Pioneer, Lake Oswego Review, Polk County Itemizer-Observer (Dallas), Sun-Enterprise Newspapers in Monmouth-Independence, Sheridan Sun, Woodburn Independent, Canby Herald, Willamette News.

The Lake Oswego, The Dalles and Sheridan newspapers were purchased by the company in 1978.

Eagle Newspapers also operates four central newspaper offset printing plants, situated in Salem, Hermiston, Hood River and Prineville. Total paid circulation of the newspapers is 55,286 with another 51,500 copies of companion free distribution publications circulated in four of the communities.