

# The Heppner GAZETTE-TIMES

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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HEPPNER, OREGON

## Weather

BY THE CITY OF HEPPNER

	High	Low	Precip
Tues., July 7	67	39	trace
Wed., July 8	79	47	
Thurs., July 9	77	47	
Fri., July 10	73	40	
Sat., July 11	75	46	
Sun., July 12	80	49	.11
Mon., July 13	74	41	

## Reports say it looks good

### HARVEST!



Combine works the field



Brok Tucker (L), Bob Costa, county extension agent, and County Judge Don McElligott discuss the crop

Harvest began last week for some southern Morrow County wheat farmers and, according to most reports, the yield looks exceptional.

Although most farmers are hesitant to proclaim this year's crop better than last year's record breaker, they are saying it may equal it.

Brok Tucker, who started cutting last Thursday, says it appears he is getting 55 to 60 bushels an acre off some of his land north of

Lexington.

Morrow County Grain Growers General Manager Larry Mills reports that about 10 growers around the North Lexington area had begun cutting by Monday, but that it was a little early to tell what the yields would be.

"It (yield) appears to be comparable to last year, and the quality looks good," Mills said. But he added that it would be several days before more definite information would be coming in from the fields.

## Planning commission OK's bowling alley expansion

The Heppner City Planning Commission gave its OK Monday night to plans by a Vancouver, Wash., couple to improve the Heppner bowling alley.

Douglas and Sonia Smith have purchased the alley, and Monday night Douglas asked the commission to approve his plans for expansion and improvements.

He said he plans to build an addition to the alley which will allow for larger eating facilities.

Heppner businessman Jerry Hollomon spoke in favor of the plans, telling the planning commission the improved bowling alley will "be quite a

benefit to the city." Smith also told the planning commission he plans to have the bowling alley open during the summer.

In other business, the commission passed a motion to recommend to the city council

that a change in city zoning be made to allow for mobile homes on commercially zoned property.

The motion came after a request by James Lankford, who wishes to build a mobile home pad and rent it out.

## First HHS reunion for 1940-1945 slated Aug. 1

The Heppner High School reunion for the classes of 1940 through 1945 has been scheduled for August 1 and 2, beginning at 6 p.m. at the Elks Lodge in Heppner.

The program for the reunion, the first for these six classes, includes: Saturday, August 1: 6 p.m. - no host

cocktails, Heppner Elks Lodge; 7 p.m. - dinner, Elks Lodge; 8 p.m. - program - Elks Lodge; after program to 2 a.m. - dancing, Elks Lodge.

Sunday, August 2: 9 to 11 a.m. - no host breakfast, Elks Lodge.

The registration deadline is Monday, July 27. A cost of \$15

## Jury hears testimony in county murder trial

The trial of Jose Mario Mendoza Verduzco, Boardman, accused of murder and conspiracy to commit murder in the death of Antonio "Tony" Delgadillo Guzman on April 25 got underway at 9 a.m. last Thursday at the Morrow County Courthouse in Heppner with the Circuit Judge William W. Wells, Pendleton, presiding.

Representing Verduzco, 23, referred to in the courtroom as "Mario", was Boardman attorney F.E. Glenn.

The victim was fatally shot in an incident near the H-Bar-W Tavern in Boardman.

Court proceedings began Thursday morning with jury selection. Prospective jurors fielded questions such as "Are you familiar with the term 'Wetbacks'?", "Did you vote for President Reagan?", "Have you had contact with Mexican Americans?", "Do you believe there are some circumstances where a person is justified in killing another person?" and "Does the fact that the defendant is a Mexican American and that he has married an American girl bother you?"

Courtroom security was tight as law enforcement officials feared reprisals against the defendant who, according to Morrow County District Attorney Ann Spicer, had received threats against his life from the victim's family.

Each person entering the courthouse was required to pass through a metal detector, flanked by Morrow County Sheriff's deputies. On the opening day of court, two Oregon State Police and one Sheriff's deputy, who was able to communicate with deputies via radio at the ground floor door, were in the courtroom audience.

A translator, Barbara Smith, Lexington, communicated with the defendant

constantly during the jury selection and the opening statements.

A jury of six men and six women and two alternates was selected the following morning at 10 a.m.

In opening statements, DA Ann Spicer maintained that Mario shot Tony "in the back of the neck", that the victim (Tony) was not even looking at him (Mario), and that the quarrel between Mario and Tony "didn't start the night of the incident. It started at least two weeks before."

Glenn maintained that Mario "was a peaceful man" who, "on many occasions had broken up fights" and "seldom drinks," and was acting in self defense and feared for his life or the life of his friends when he shot Tony.

Glenn also maintained that the victim liked to "ambush people with knives" and that he (the victim) was "perfectly capable of taking his big knife and cutting out his sister-in-law's gizzard, as he threatened to do."

In conclusion of his opening statements, Glenn cautioned jurors that "There are going to be bloody photographs. If blood bothers you then take whatever precautions you need."

Questioning of witnesses began Friday afternoon when Spicer called Ruperto Madrigal Frias, a friend of both the defendant and of Tony Guzman to the stand.

Frias testified that he had been drinking with the deceased on the night of his death.

Frias said that during the course of the evening Guzman "offended" Mario Verduzco with curses about his (Mario's) family.

Later outside the tavern, Frias said he witnessed a fight between Guzman and another man, Pedro Cisneros. During the fight Frias testified he heard someone say "Here we are to get you, Iron Mask (a

nickname for the deceased)."

Frias, who could not speak English and gave his testimony through an interpreter, told the jury he saw Verduzco with a rifle in his hand.

He said Verduzco tried to fire the gun at Guzman but that it did not go off.

The fight then moved to a parking lot in front of a pharmacy near the tavern. Frias said, where Guzman was shot and killed.

Frias testified he saw Verduzco fire a shot at Guzman, and he saw Guzman fall to the ground and that he, "did not move again."

Frias said he then went to the Sand Piper apartments in Boardman, told Guzman's wife, Corrine, what happened and brought her back to the scene.

District Attorney Spicer next called crime scene investigator, Jon Spilker of Pendleton, to the stand.

Spilker told the jury he investigated the scene of the shooting and found one spent cartridge in the parking lot and an intact bullet across the street in the H-Bar-W Tavern parking lot.

He said the victim had a single bullet hole in the head, and a blood alcohol content of .27 percent. For purposes of driving the law defines .10 percent as drunk, Spilker added.

Next to testify was Dr. Tibbles, county medical examiner.

Tibbles told the jury that Guzman was killed by a single bullet wound in the back of the neck.

Next Spicer called the victim's wife, Corrine Guzman to the stand.

She said she had lived in Boardman since 1975, and had been married to the deceased for about one year.

She told the jury she was at home asleep when the shooting occurred, and that when she was told of the incident she first called the police and then went to the parking lot.

Once there she said she shook her husband to see if he was alive.

Corrine testified that her husband sometimes carried a pistol in the glove compartment of his pickup truck, but that he did not have either a knife or a gun the night of the shooting.

She said her husband appeared to have been friends with the defendant, and that her husband had acquired a pistol after having been in a fight with another man several months earlier.

Concluding testimony and jury verdict will be printed in next week's Gazette-Times



Defendant Mario Verduzco arrives at court



Woman entering courthouse passes through metal detector

## Court hears of trial security

By MARY ANN CERULLO

Morrow County Court came to order last Wednesday to join a staff meeting concerning courthouse security during the three murder trials which are being held this July and August. The first trial began Thursday, July 9.

The Morrow County Sheriff's Department informed courthouse employees that during the trials all those entering the courthouse will be put through a metal detector. It was suggested

that people wear as little metal as possible. Those entering may also expect all purses to be checked.

The Sheriff's Department reported that tight security measures are being taken because of recent threats on the defendant's life.

Next on the agenda, Dr. Terry Templeman reported that in totalling up revenues in client fees, Mental Health Services has received \$14,000. Mental Health had projected revenues to total \$8,000. Dr. Templeman explained that the extra \$6,000 will not exceed

the department's budget. Templeman further stated that the Department of Mental Health will still survive even if the expected cut of ten percent of state money occurs.

In other business, County Court approved a four-month trial period with United Parcel Service pick-up for courthouse departments.

In a comparison between postage and UPS rates, Commissioner Dorothy Krebs and County Clerk Barbara Bloodworth said they found United Parcel Service to be more economical.