

The Heppner GAZETTE-TIMES

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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10 PAGES

20 CENTS

HEPPNER, OREGON

Weather By City of Heppner

	High	Low	Precip
Tues., Sept. 22	65	34	0
Wed., Sept. 23	66	35	trace
Thurs., Sept. 24	60	42	.01
Fri., Sept. 25	62	42	trace
Sat., Sept. 26	62	47	.90
Sun., Sept. 27	66	45	.06
Mon., Sept. 28	65	40	.15

Columbia Basin board members vote again; sustain increase

Members of the Columbia Basin Board of Directors didn't change their minds last Thursday, when they voted once again to keep a controversial rate increase for electrical users in the district.

A five to six vote matched the vote taken at a July 30 meeting at which the board adopted a rate increase schedule that generated several public meetings and a 1,000 signature petition of protest.

About 50 people turned out at last week's meeting, which was moved from Columbia Basin Board Room to the fair grounds annex for more room.

Controversy over the rate increase centered on which class of customer in the co-op should bear the percentage of the new increases, which came as a result of increased power costs from Bonneville, and higher co-op operating costs.

The board adopted a rate increase July 30 (effective July 1) which saw electrical costs increase from 45 and 54 percent for residential and small business customers and 12 to 16 percent for large irrigators.

The increase was the result of a compromise between a rate study commissioned by the co-op and one by the large irrigators.

Following the July billing, a group called Concerned Consumers formed to fight the compromise increase.

Meetings were held, and a petition was circulated asking the board to rescind its previous action.

Concerned Consumers said the large irrigators were not receiving a large enough share of the new rate increase, and that residential, small businesses and small irrigators were shouldering too much of the load. The board was asked to go back to an original study, which the consumers said more equally distributed the increase.

Meetings were held in Heppner, Fossil and Condon by the Concerned Consumers.

Over 1,000 signatures were gathered by the group and presented to the board at its Sept. 24 meeting.

Thursday about two hours of discussion preceded the vote, during which the public and board aired their differences.

Explaining why he voted in favor of the compromise rate increase, Board Chairman Randall Peterson said that rate analysis is not "cut and dried", and that the co-op depends upon income from large irrigators. He said large increases in power costs might drive farmers out of

irrigated farming.

"Large irrigators are 25 percent of Columbia Basin's income," said Boardmember Van Rietmann, who also voted in favor of the compromise rate increase. "Loss of some of those irrigators is going to hurt us all. Our financial position is pretty precarious. We need a 35 percent (overall) increase. Right now we're borrowing short-term money at 20 1/2 percent and we can't operate that way," he said.

Boardmember Paul Tews, who also voted in favor of the compromise, said he did so because Bonneville was raising its rates July first, and in order for the co-op to avoid

taking a loss it had to raise rates quickly. He also said the co-op staff was spending too much time on the rate study causing it to neglect other necessary business.

"It is inconceivable to us that you people wouldn't vote any other way than in favor of this petition," Concerned Consumer Leader Dexter Miles told the board.

He said the petition represented a large percentage of the co-op members, and that the board should follow the wishes of the majority.

Other people told the board it should follow the first rate study and reject the compromise increase it adopted July 30.

Some said that since Columbia Basin is a co-op large irrigators should not be treated as a special group, and should pay the same as everyone else.

When the final vote came, the board voted on the motion: should the rate increase of July 30 be rescinded?

Boardmembers Eric Anderson, Dick Wilkenson, Floyd Anderson, Randall Peterson, Van Rietmann and Paul Tews voted no. And Herb Wright, Fred Griener, Bill Collins, Walt Yaeger and Ken Wright voted yes.

"There are problems on both sides and I don't feel I can justify it by voting the

other side," Peterson said afterwards.

"I don't understand this vote. We had 25 people (irrigators) sign a letter and better than 1,000 signed the petitions, 99 percent of the co-op members. I think what we lack is representation on the board," Miles said after the vote (the co-op said later there is 2,392 voting members of Columbia Basin Co-op).

Asked after the meeting what the group planned now, Miles said there probably wouldn't be any more meetings, but said "we're going to replace some boardmembers." (see story this page)

Police asks residents to 'Harden Target'

The Heppner Police Department is urging area residents to "Harden the Target" and make it more difficult for crimes to be committed.

The department asks people to lock their cars and homes and also to leave lights burning to make possible crime sights unattractive.

The department says "It's so easy to say 'I don't want to get involved,' or 'I don't have

the time,' but we need the help of the total community and without it, you're helping the criminal.

"The crime rate and status of law enforcement in any community is a reflection on the people," they added.

The department asks people to feel free to call Dean, Doug, Merle or Steve at the Heppner Police Department, located at Heppner City Hall, anytime.

Legion to meet Oct. 5

The American Legion and Auxiliary, Post No. 87 will meet at the Legion Hall

Monday, Oct. 5 at 7 p.m. for a potluck dinner. A regular monthly meeting will follow.

Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife says

Better production, survival means more bucks in the bag

Better production and survival of Mule Deer in the Columbia Basin, Heppner and Fossil units will mean more yearling bucks in the bag this year, says the Oregon State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife.

Deer season opens this Saturday, but don't expect to find many deer near agricultural lands. The Fish and Wildlife Dept. says abundant forage will keep the animals

away. If your looking for older age-class bucks, the dept. says they will be found at the higher elevations in heavily timbered areas.

In Umatilla county mule deer populations are up slightly over 1980, and a good carryover of last year's fawns and mature bucks from the 1980 season will provide some good hunting in that county,

according to the dept.

Because of abundant forage and hot dry weather, however, the deer will be scattered throughout the middle and high summer range.

In Wallowa County mule deer appear to be about equal to 1980. The Chesinnusm Imnaha and Sled Springs units had slightly lower fawn survival, but buck ratios are at or below 1980 levels in all units.

Deer numbers remain low in the Hells Canyon area and prospects are poor for bucks.

Union County deer populations are near or above management objectives level. Winter fawn survival was good and yearling bucks are abundant.

The Catherine Creek Unit will produce best hunting followed by Starkev, east Mt. Emily, west Wenaha and west Sled Springs units.

Keating and Pine Creek unit deer numbers are similar to last year. But Sumpter and Lookout Mountain levels are down somewhat.

Fawn survival was less than desirable so a smaller percentage of the available buck crop should be of yearling age-class. There will be somewhat fewer older age bucks.

Deer hunting prospects will be below average this year in

the southern part of Grant County.

A short seven-day season is in effect for the Murderer's Creek and Northside units due to a low carryover of bucks and a poor fawn crop in 1980. The Desolation Unit will have a 12-day season.

Prospects are good in this unit since buck carryover and fawn production were above average.

Lions donates flag to Co. fairground



On behalf of the Heppner Lions Club, George Koffler presented a new American flag to Shorty Peck (right) of the Morrow County Fair Board last Monday.

"It came to the attention of the Lions Club that there wasn't an American flag flying at the fairgrounds, so we decided to do something about it," said George Koffler, Lions secretary.

According to Shorty Peck, the Board is not sure what happened to the fairground flag. It was either stolen or misplaced, he said.

"The Fair Board would like to thank the Lions for their gift. We really appreciate all the (Lions) club does for the community," stated Peck.

'Pathways to the Future' is 4-H theme for youth programs

To many people, 4-H is a boy with a steer, a girl preparing food or learning to sew that's the visible part of the program. What people don't see is really the most important... it is the personal development of the member who is challenged to make decisions, be responsible for what he or she does, and to learn to be a contributing member of the community. Life skills, or skills that will benefit them throughout their lives are

learned in 4-H.

"The project, whether it is clothing, collecting bugs, or beef, is the vehicle for personal development and growth" according to Duane Johnson, State 4-H Program Leader. In addition, the project offers ways for young people to explore career options. The 4-H program of the Oregon State University Extension Service is designed to help young people discover their own capabilities, interests, and to

give them useful skills for a lifetime.

The projects available are many and varied, but working with animals and home economics remain the most popular. In Oregon last year, more than 64,500 young people participated in 4-H programs, with nearly 24,000 in animal science and more than 24,500 in home economics. In Morrow County, members tend to follow this trend, but the creative arts project also attracts a good

percentage. The top ten 4-H projects in terms of enrollment statewide were horse, foods and nutrition, clothing, sheep, beef, rabbits, swine, dog care and obedience, horticulture, and forestry.

Nationally, and locally, "Pathways to the Future" will be the theme for the 4-H youth programs. All youth 4th

through 12th grades are invited to explore their own pathways to the future by joining a 4-H club. Complete information about 4-H for both youth and adults is available from the Morrow County Extension Office in Heppner (676-9642). In addition, young people will be seeing and hearing about 4-H opportunities as John Nordheim and Birdine Tullis make school visits early in October.

Wilkinson won't run

Columbia Basin Boardmember Dick Wilkinson will not run for re-election at the annual meeting November 5, according to a co-op spokesman.

Three members including Wilkinson are up for re-election, and all positions are being challenged.

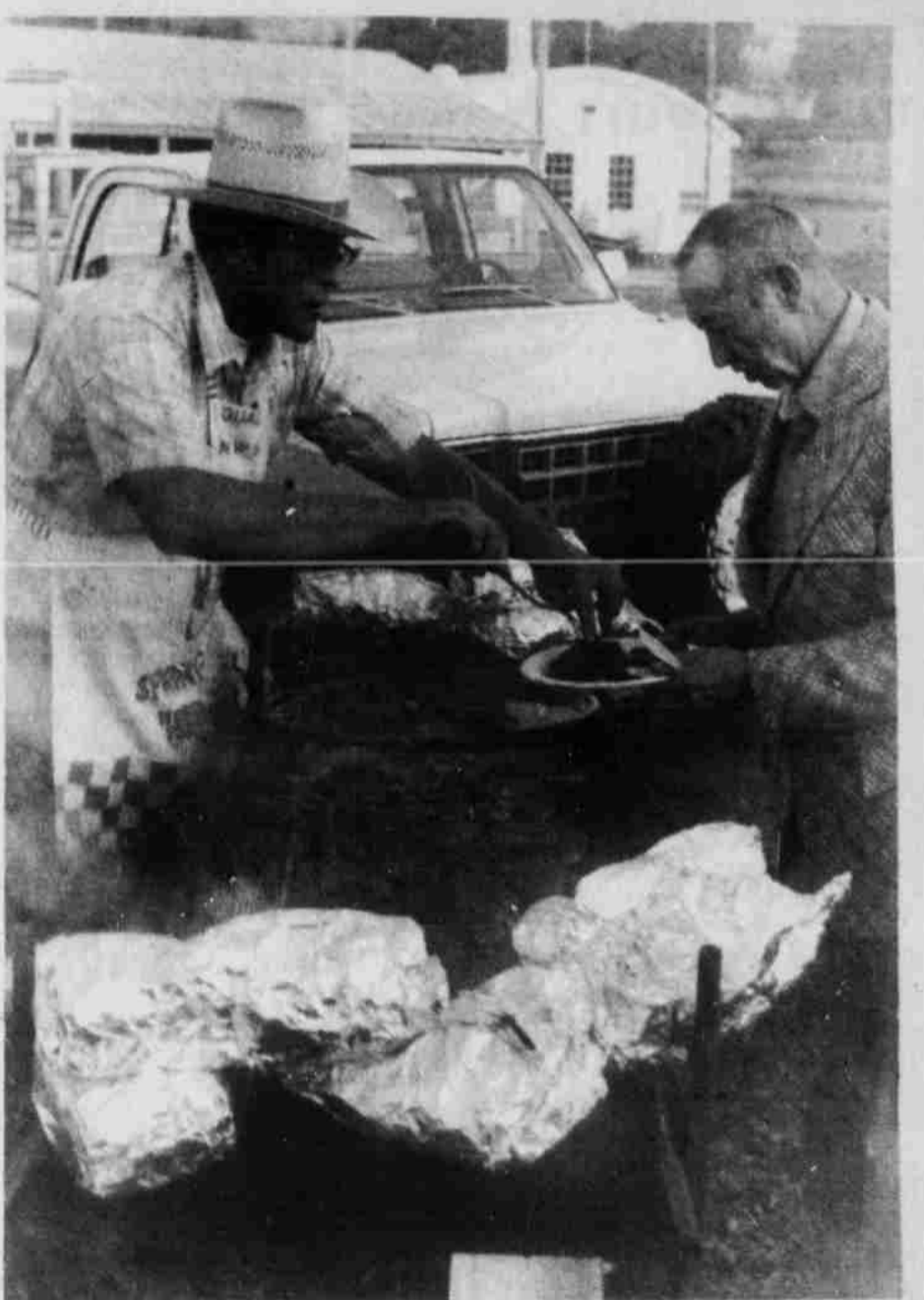
Harold Rietmann has been nominated to run against incumbent Ken Smouse, and Bob Lankford will run against board Chairman Randall Peterson. Dexter Miles will apparently be running for election unopposed now that Wilkinson has decided not to remain on the board.

Graves reports to Chamber

Dorris Graves presented a slide show to last Tuesday's luncheon meeting of the Heppner Morrow County Chamber of Commerce on her raft trip down the Rogue River this summer.

The trip was through the river rapids by rubber raft and lasted three days.

Livestock growers honor helpers



Jim Balzar dishes up lamb to Darrel Vinson at a barbecue dinner held Sunday afternoon at the Morrow County Fair Grounds in Heppner.

The barbecue was sponsored by the Morrow County Livestock Growers in honor of all those who helped put together and run this year's fair and rodeo.

Salad as well as lamb was served at the 4 p.m. gathering.