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The Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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Weather
by the City of Heppner

	High	Low	Precip
Tues., March 1	56	42	.02
Wed., March 2	58	40	Trace
Thurs., March 3	48	45	1.03
Fri., March 4	54	35	.02
Sat., March 5	52	39	.29
Sun., March 6	54	45	.04
Mon., March 7	56	42	.13

Thieves break into HHS, take cash, camera equip.

Thieves using a cutting torch broke into a large safe at Heppner High School over the weekend, stealing over $400 in cash and $460 worth of camera equipment.

Heppner City Police Chief Dean Gilman, in investigating the crime, said the break-in and theft appears to have occurred late Sunday night or early Monday morning.

The thieves first broke into the school shop building, took an acetylene torch assembly, then broke in through a door to the high school kitchen area and went downstairs to a safe in the main office area. A small hole was first cut in the wall next to the safe where the thieves were apparently checking for an alarm system. A larger six-inch hole was cut in the door of the safe to gain entry.

High school custodian Wade Bothwell discovered the break-in when he came to work at 6:30 Monday morning.

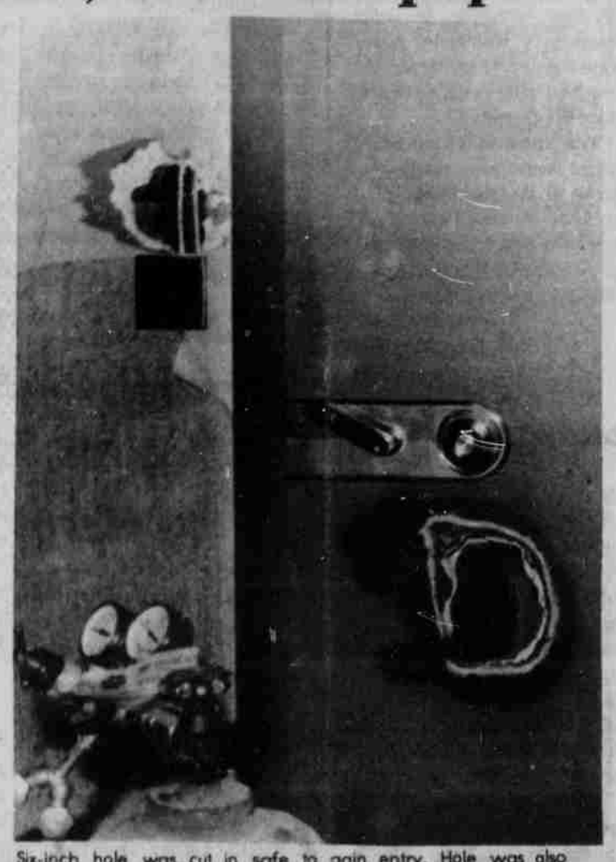
City and state police were called in to investigate. Policemen found a footprint in the shop and were checking for fingerprints throughout the area.

State Trooper Terry Springer examines a damaged lock at the high school VoAg shop early Monday morning.

photos by Mary Ann Cerullo

When asked if there were any suspects in the crime, Gilman said, "All I can tell you at the point is that it's under investigation."

High School Principal Jim Bier said Tuesday that the money taken included money from hot lunch sales, postage stamp money, some money belonging to the junior class, student body funds and some petty cash. Nothing else was taken from the office area or the school, Bier said. The acetylene torch and tanks were found left in front of the safe.



Six-inch hole was cut in safe to gain entry. Hole was also cut in wall (left).

Bier said about six doors were damaged in the break-in with repairs to cost about $75 per door. He also said the damages and stolen money were not covered by insurance.

The last break-in at the high school occurred during the fall of 1982, Bier said, when 13 soda pop canisters, and two teachers' stereo equipment and a calculator were stolen. He said the thieves were apprehended and the equipment is to be returned to the owners.

Co. Court says tax levy down over $289 thousand

Morrow County Court has announced that the proposed levy for the 1983-84 fiscal year is $289,802 less than the levy approved by the voters for 1982-83.

The tax rate this year for county operations will be approximately $3.92 per $1,000 valuation. Last year's tax levy was $4.37. However, Portland General Electric was required to pay back taxes that had been under dispute, resulting in an off-set of taxes required and reducing the levy to $3.52 per $1,000.

Although the total taxes proposed to be levied are down from last year, the tax levy would actually increase because there will be no off-set this year.

A total budget of $6,306,745 was approved by the budget committee on February 18. Of this, $2,742,478 is requested to be funded by property taxes. The tax base for 1983-84 is $438,281, and $2,304,197 above the tax base will be presented to the voters as a special levy on March 29.

According to Judge Don McElligott, one of the major reasons for the decreased tax requirements is due to increased efficiency in county operations resulting from changes made during the past three years.

County employees will receive a 3.3 percent cost of living increase in salary for 1983-84. This increase is required due to union contracts currently in effect, said a court spokesperson. The cost of living increase for last year was 6.7 percent.

The county budget includes all county operations plus the Pioneer Memorial Hospital, North Morrow Medical Clinic and ambulance, County Fair and Rodeo, Mental Health Services, Juvenile Services Commission and Federal Revenue Sharing.

State statutes and federal laws require county governments to provide certain services at county expense. One of those requirements is tax collection and property assessment, not only for the county, but also for the school district, Blue Mountain Community College, the incorporated cities and special districts within the county, the Court spokesperson explained.

Other required services include public health, waste disposal, judicial systems, police protection and maintenance of county roads, all of which are cost consuming programs.

All county taxing districts requiring property taxes will reflect a similar increase based on their proposed levies, the court spokesperson said.

City Council learns

State contends city owes for bridge

Four years after construction has been completed, the state of Oregon has informed Heppner that money is still owed on a bridge project here.

The city council received a bill for $1,800 from the state at its meeting Monday night, for work done on the Morgan Street Bridge.

"There's no justification for the bill;" said City Attorney Bill Kuhn, "they don't even say what it's for."

The bridge was built under an agreement where the federal government paid 80 to 90 percent of the project, the city 10 to 20 percent, and the state was to supervise the construction. Total cost of the bridge was about $110,000.

"We don't owe the state anything, and it's too late to owe the state anything," Kuhn told the council. The council agreed, and voted to refuse payment.

In other business, the council:

— voted to hire EDM Surveying of Irrigon for $800 to do surveying on several pieces of property in Heppner, including a potential site for a new city well, and property owned by Gene Pierce to be used for a park.

— learned that June 14 has been chosen for dedication of the new Willow Creek Dm. The dedication would be on the 80th anniversary of the great Heppner flood of 1903.

— voted to buy 30 feet of pipe and other pumping equipment for city well number 2, for $525.

— reiterated that responsibility for upkeep of the Democrat Gulch School House at the City Park, is the responsibility of the Morrow County Historical Society, not the city.

— referred an inquiry from Shorty Peck about water and sewer service to property outside city limits, to the City Planning Commission. The property is located along the new Willow Creek Road southwest of the cemetery. Owner Larry Angell plans to divide and sell the land in parcels.

Bunches receive conservation award

Mike Bunch and his father, Al

1983 Morrow County Wheat League President Mark Miller (left) presents gift to outgoing president Chuck Nelson.

Al and Mike Bunch were named Morrow County Conservation Men of the Year Monday night at a meeting of the Wheat League in Heppner.

The Bunches, father and son, were given the award for their work with no-grade terraces, trashy fallow and chemical fallow.

"The S.C.S. (Morrow County Soil Conservation District) office said they do as good a job as anybody with chemical fallow, said Morrow County Wheat League President Mark Miller in making the announcement.

The Bunches farm some acreage four miles below Heppner, and property south of Clark's Canyon. Al has been farming in the area since 1946.

Also at the Wheat League meeting, Mark Miller, the new 1983 president of the league, presented a gift to outgoing 1982 president Chuck Nelson.

Heavy rains add 9 ft. of water to Willow Creek Lake

Last Friday's heavy rains added about nine feet of water to Willow Creek Lake behind the new Willow Creek Dam, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced Monday.

The Corps restricted water flow out of the lake to 260 cubic feet per second. Water was coming into the lake from Willow and Balm Fork at 495 feet per second.

"We're not saying we prevented a flood, but it would have been higher if we hadn't had the dam there," said Doug Dugger with the Corps' Walla Walla, Wash. office. Dugger said the channel of Willow Creek would have been at capacity without the dam.

The creek reached a peak at 2 p.m. on Friday, and it was at its highest since February of 1979.

By Monday morning the level of the lake had risen over 11 feet from Friday morning's depth.

Dugger said probably more water was released than had to be, but the Corps did not want to raise the lake level too high and flood an access road behind the dam still in use by a contractor.

Work on the dam is still continuing, with grouting now underway to correct seepage of water.

"We're having seepage, as expected," Dugger said. He estimated water was seeping through at about four cubic feet per second, or 1,800 gallons per minute.

"As far as engineering, it's nothing to worry about," Dugger said. "It's more than we want, but not abnormal for a new dam."

He said grouting now being done should cut back the seepage substantially when completed.

"All dams leak when you close them, we'll just have to cut it back to a tolerable level."

Townspeople greet Calif. Dr. and his wife

Dr. and Mrs. Roy Kent

Several townspeople greeted Dr. and Mrs. Roy Kent of Sonora, Calif. at an open house at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner last Saturday. Dr. Kent is considering opening a practice in Heppner, and came up to "look things over."

Kent, 48, has been practicing medicine, obstetrics, pediatrics and basic surgery, said Hospital Administrator A.K. "Lucky" Felt.

Kent's wife, Julia, 41, is a registered nurse and a national certified physician's assistant, Felt said.

Felt said the hospital board would probably know the doctor's decision by April.

Heppner City Planning Comm. to meet

The Heppner City Planning Commission will meet at a 7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 14, at Heppner City Hall, announced Chairman Dick Bigelow: "There is no regular business scheduled for the agenda, so this should be short," he added.

St. Patrick's Day, Mar. 17, Schedule of Events

This year's second annual St. Patrick's Day celebration promises to be even bigger and better than last year's event. A full day of activities are planned, and several prizes will be awarded.

Following is a schedule of events:

9:30 - 10 a.m.	Slides of Ireland - Elks Lodge
9:45 - 10 a.m.	Heppner High School Band - Main Street
10 - 11:30 a.m.	KUMA "Coffee Hour" - Upstairs Elks Lodge (with phone conversation with patrons of a pub in Ireland)
11:10 - 11:25 a.m.	Heppner Jr. High Band - Main Street
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Brunch and entertainment - Elks Dining Room
12:40 - 12:55 p.m.	Heppner Fifth Grade Band - Main Street
1:25 - 1:40 p.m.	Heppner Sixth Grade Band - Main Street
1:30 p.m.	Tour of Willow Creek Dam
1:45 - 2 p.m.	Ione High School Band - Main Street
2 - 5 p.m.	Farley Motor Co. 35th Anniversary Celebration
5 - 7 p.m.	Irish Stew Feed - St. Patricks Catholic Parish Hall

In addition, the Morrow County Museum will be open all day; Cal and Beverly Sherman, owners of Cal's Arco will be celebrating the station's 15th anniversary and everyone is invited to stop by for coffee and cookies; the Athena Weston Bagpipe Band will be performing during the day; members of the Morrow County Creative Arts and Crafts group will hold a show and sale with refreshments in the old Post office building from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and local Soroptimists will be having a homemade pie and plant sale in front of Sears beginning at 9 a.m.

Also, several Heppner merchants will be offering coupons with purchases good for a free cup of coffee or soda pop at participating businesses.

Prizes to be awarded include $10 to the best dressed Irishman, sponsored by Eb Hughes; $10 to the best dressed Irish woman, donated by Matt Hughes of M & R Floor Covering; $10 to the Irish descendant who travels the farthest distance, sponsored by Farley Motor Co.; $10 to the best dressed leprechaun, sponsored by Turner Van Marater and Bryant Insurance. The best bagpipe band will be presented with a $50 award from Morrow County Grain Growers, Matt Doherty and Jim Norene.

KUMA will be announcing the winners of prizes the radio station is donating over the air. They will be giving away a $50 green bill, a green sweater and other prizes.