

The Official Newspaper of the
City of Heppner and the
County of Morrow

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

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Letters to the Editor

Think carefully before marking ballots

To the Editor:
As concerned citizens and members of Pioneer Memorial Hospital's Board there are some things we would like to make the taxpayers of Morrow County aware of before going to the polls on June 25.

Like most other hospitals today Pioneer Memorial is suffering under the pressure of competition. The hospital is attempting to meet this challenge by expanding its services and making it a facility we all can be proud of. The recent Administrative Agreement that Pioneer Memorial entered into with St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton will help us achieve this goal.

Located within the hospital is a licensed 28 bed nursing home. The importance of a loved one who is in a facility like this to remain close to family members, friends and the communities to which they are familiar can not be measured by dollars. The loss of this alone would be a sad consequence.

Our tax asking this year is 51 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value compared to 45 cents per \$1,000 last year.

This amounts to \$25.50 for the year on a \$50,000 residence. This year's budget is a "no frills and bare bones" approach. We do have some monies included for maintaining the building and replacing outdated equipment.

Another point that should be brought out is that of the \$419,700 levy, \$112,200 is estimated to pay for mandatory free care. The Hospital and the County borrowed money from the government to help build the facility and, in turn, the Hospital pays it back through free care of qualifying individuals. This amounts to 26.7 percent of the budget.

Pioneer Memorial Hospital is an asset to Morrow County, one which we believe is worth keeping. We are appealing to the taxpayers of Morrow County to think very carefully before marking your ballots on June 25. The future of Pioneer Memorial Hospital rests in all of our hands.

(s) Marcia Anderson
(s) Frank Pearson

Support the hospital budget

To the Editor:
We, the members of the Pioneer Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, urge all residents of Morrow County to vote "Yes" on the hospital budget Tuesday, June 25. As volunteers, we have become actively involved with the 22 residents of the Nursing Home. Nearly every Morrow County citizen either knows someone or may already have a family member or friend who calls Pioneer

Memorial Hospital their only home. Please help. Let's all get out and vote "Yes", and continue to give these wonderful people our support.
(s) Betty Brown
Alma Green
Renee Siminoe
Faye Ruhl
Carley Drake
Anna Johnson
Helen Dyer

Police doing a good job

To the Editor:
In recent weeks Police agencies have been criticized by Lexington residents for the speed they have been driving through town. While responding to emergency calls. One feeling these concerns seem to have created for Police personnel is that their law enforcement efforts have not been appreciated. I would like to dispel that myth.

From my personal experiences I believe that our Sheriff's Office, under the direction of Sheriff Drago and Sgt. Denton, have done a very good job with the resources they have available. The training and professionalism of department members reflects a level higher than any other time during the ten years that I have lived here. Their response time, considering the area they cover, resources available and work load, staff dedication, and interagency cooperation are all commendable.

Their ability to quickly and effectively organize a search for and capture of the lone Bank robbery suspects is an example of their abilities.

My experiences with the Heppner Police Department under Chief Rathbun and the State Police have also been positive.

Our law enforcement personnel need to be recognized for the good things they are doing in a generally thankless and sometimes dangerous job.

As a Lexington resident with two young children I am concerned about the danger of high speed traffic on the State highway that bisects our town. Speeding trucks automobiles and motorcycles seem to be an all too common hazard for Lexington residents. Patrols by the Sheriff's office and the State Police have helped and are appreciated by those of us who live near the highway.

County officials assure me that all their vehicles, and most other Departments' vehicles responding to the recent lone Bank robbery were traveling through Lexington at or below 55 mph. They state that no vehicle approached 100 mph. Of that I am glad to hear, even though I would prefer a slower pace for responding patrol cars through Lexington.

In the midst of this controversy I hope that we do not lose sight of the valuable and effective work our police agencies do for us. It is important that they continue to feel supported in the performance of their jobs.

(s) Bill Sheirbon
Lexington

Guest Editorial

Morrow County Judge Don McElligott

Answers accusations & rumors

Psychologists tell us that stress symptoms manifest themselves in many ways. Surely our community has been under severe stress the last six months, probably the most since the "Dirty Thirties," with low commodity prices, an incipient drought and shaky economic system. Probably the general malaise has contributed to the number of rumors that have been circulating this spring, particularly about our County Government.

An irate taxpayer confronted me last Friday night with the accusation that the County had threatened retaliatory action against the county employee who had signed a letter concerning the police speeding through Lexington to the scene of the recent bank robbery. This was disconcerting on two counts. First, because no county employee signed it and second, because we do not restrict anyone's right to free speech except when representing county policy.

The man who told me this said that this rumor was circulating "all over town." At a time when a tax levy is only a week away, it is time to set the record straight on several of these things.

In the case of speeding through Lexington, even though there have been no complaints to the County Court, I have been endeavoring to investigate to determine the validity of the charges. ORS 487.075 and 487.085 allows fire and emergency equipment to answer calls at 10 mph over posted speed with emergency warning equipment operating. Police are not restricted except that they may not endanger persons or property. Four vehicles from three jurisdictions went through Lexington, two at 55 mph and one at 63 to 65 mph, all with lights and sirens, one went through at 40 mph because his warning equipment was not operating. There has been no evidence to suggest a higher speed or that any unsafe conditions existed at that time. No action will be taken except to counsel all to be careful.

Other rumors recently circulated are that we have increased our Courthouse employees, and should reduce the number by five. Also that the County Court was variously going to build a new hospital in Heppner, Lexington, or Boardman at a cost of 5.5 million dollars. It was never clear whether this was to be done with or without a vote by the people. Another was that we were starting some sort of penal camp in the mountains with juvenile delinquents from the valley or elsewhere.

Since 1980, there have been 1 1/2 positions cut in the Courthouse though the work load is probably 30 to 50 percent higher than in 1979. There have been some responsibilities shuffled with corresponding increases or decreases in particular departments. The Road Department has been increased by 10 people over the 1979 figure. Former Judge, Oscar Peterson told me that this was two positions less than he carried in the 1960s. There are however, two full time State of Oregon employees with an office in the Courthouse. Employees of two title companies are copying records here, in so often that they seem like regulars. Awbrey Software programmers are designing and installing a double entry system of bookkeeping and various and sundry C.S.D., police, engineers, state employees, and copy machine repair people who are such regular visitors that a casual visitor might suspect them to be employees, not to mention the numerous people who appear at the Courthouse for Circuit, District, and Justice Court appearances.

We do have a work camp program with joint sponsorship by the Private Industry Councils summer job training program, Morrow County Juvenile Services Commission, and the County Parks department. We furnish the project and materials and the other agencies pay the kids and a foreman-instructor.

For some reason, some of these rumors seem to circulate just prior to elections. Hopefully, none are malicious because I believe that most people realize that we have the third lowest tax rate in the State and are still considered one of the most efficient and progressive of all the Counties. The Court is always open to questions and have set a time from 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon on every Wednesday's Court agenda to hear from individuals or delegations. If you have suggestions or complaints you are welcome to come in.

Please remember, Tuesday, June 25 is election day for your County and Hospital levies.

Water Policy? When?

To the Editor:
Oregon's water policy is not what we might reasonably expect. No department or agency is charged with the responsibility for either changing or even maintaining the available quantity of Oregon's waters.

Under the present condition of most watersheds, the unwritten water code is hit, run, rip and ruin. Aesthetic and economic productivity from seasonal yields of water from Oregon's watersheds should be a goal. The goal cannot be attained by legislative and media rhetoric.

Oregon's water laws are well tested in case law even to including the water rights of the beaver.

Much of Oregon's water law is directed to distributing growing season water among out-of-stream users. This, however, accounts for less than eight percent of the runoff

from Oregon's watersheds, half of which is reused as return flows. Minimum streams flows set by the Water Policy Review Board account for approximately 40 percent of the watershed yield. Municipal and industrial water accounts for a little over one percent of the surface waters of the state.

Still to be accounted for is the more than half of the State's water that flows from our man-altered watersheds in gluttonous excess.

This is the water that takes out sections of our highways, reams and ravages stream channels, destroys the infrastructure of communication, transportation, fishery, energy, agriculture, and recreation for which we annually spend millions of dollars in costs for repairs. In addition, we have loss of productivity.

We accept the ravages of hostile run-off water and the consequences of summer drought as normal.

Stream flow data is mostly recorded from harvested or altered watersheds. The data base does of go back in time far enough to indicate potential.

Vote 'yes' on county budget

To the Editor:
Next Tuesday, June 25, the citizen of Morrow County will again be going to the polls to vote on whether to tax ourselves nearly \$2.4 million outside the tax base for the general operations of the county. This levy is considerably less than the levy we were asked to approve, but defeated, the first time it was voted on.

I wonder if we can further reduce the budget without severly curtailing some service and actually ele-

Favors road budget

To the Editor:
Support the Road budget with a "yes" vote. One, it's responsive to local control. Two, roads need work

after a tough winter. Three, local residents use the roads. Four, good roads result in cheaper vehicle maintenance.

(s) Don Peterson

Get out and vote

To the Editor:
I am writing to ask that each of the voters of Morrow County take the time to vote on June 25. All Morrow County voters will have a vote on the County budget and the Pioneer Memorial Hospital serial levy, while voters in Heppner and Irrigon will also have city levies to consider.

Last month's levy elections saw turnout of only about 25 percent. While statistics like this are not uncommon, they are disturbing. They are disturbing because they suggest that Americans take their freedom for granted. It has often been stated, but bears repeating,

Add your 2¢ worth

To the Editor:
How much do you value the honor of your state? For a lack of two cents per inhabitant, the State of Oregon now stands dishonored before the nation and the world.

Possibly as many as 150 bodies of veterans, their wives and parents were scattered in unmarked mass graves in Lincoln City. Thus far only 48 of these bodies have been found in what has become known as the Lincoln City Omsberg tragedy. Our small town has run out of funds to pursue the search further. Our appeals for State and Federal funding have met with buck-passing, although contingency funding at both levels is known to exist.

that "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." For our system of government to work, each of us must be vigilant and exercise our right to vote.

The State of Oregon—and Eastern Oregon in particular—has always shown a higher percentage of voter turnout than most of the Country. Regardless of your opinion on the issues, make your voice heard. Get out and vote!

Sincerely,
(s) Barbara Bloodsworth
Morrow County Clerk

Two cents from each person in Oregon will enable us to complete the search. The Lincoln County Missing in America group is composed of survivors of the victims. We have sworn never to let this matter rest until every victim has been found and given a decent burial. Your individual letters to Governor Atiyeh and your representatives in the Legislature will also help us to secure funding.

Do not break faith with the dead. Put your two cents worth in.
(s) Barbara Porter, Co-chairman
Lincoln County Missing in America Fund
P.O. Box 1012
Lincoln City, Oregon 97367

embezzlement. We continue to share the wealth but choose to designate the blame.

Redirection of efforts need not be negative to Oregon's economic viability.

Redirection of education and knowledge may be the most formidable obstacle in the way of sound resource management. All should be gainers. It is beyond the time to paly losers and winners.

Vision is needed, but, most of all, we need to address the problem and to share the load. Planning is necessary, but as every farmer know, there is a time for planning and a time to plant; both must occur.

All doers and users: those who build, move, cut, drive, fly, plant, graze, launch, drain, flood, float, drill, pan, store, walk, rest, ride, pack, cheer, view, ponder, worship, consume, plug-in, discard, and inhabit the land have significant effect on water.

The reluctance of all segments of our society, universities, legislature, business and government, to become involved in the advocate approach to resource management has continued to perpetuate conflict and educate future participants to also be resource adversaries.

Will we continue to pay for Patching? Or should we finance restoration? The short run cost will be about the same. However, former civilizations attest to the long run price.

To make progress, some of us will have to adapt to a philosophy extolled by a bright, rebelling preschooler to his friend, with his, "My mind is fixed." Upon unexpected confrontation with facts from his mother, he quickly added "I've got my mind fixed so that I can change it."

(s) David Childs
Star Route
Arlington, OR 97812

LAWN AND GARDEN SUPPLIES
Coast to Coast
We can help you

The children of
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Wilson
request the pleasure of your company
at a polluck dinner in honour of the
Twenty-fifth Wedding Anniversary
of their parents
Saturday, the twenty-second of June
from one to five o'clock
at the American Legion Hall
Heppner, Oregon
No gifts, please

GIFTS OF GOLD FOR YOUR VALENTINE

A beautiful way to say, "I Love You" is with a gift of Stamper GENUINE Black Hills Gold jewelry. Each piece of this exquisite tri-color jewelry is handcrafted in the Black Hills of South Dakota. It incorporates the traditional wild grape clusters and leaves in yellow, pale green and rose gold. Many designs for men and women—in a wide range of affordable prices. Looking for something very special for your Valentine? Look at Stamper Black Hills Gold jewelry!



50th
Wedding Anniversary
In honor of the Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary of
Claude and Anna Graham
their children and grandchildren request
the pleasure of your company at a Reception
on Saturday, the thirteenth of July from
two until five o'clock in the afternoon
at the All Saints Episcopal Parish House
Heppner, Oregon

No Gifts Please