

## 4-H enrollment remains high

So far 141 project members have enrolled in Home Economics; 59 in Creative Arts; 199 in Livestock and Horse; and 20 in Games. Horticulture, Mechanical Science, Natural Resources and Small Animal

project members will also participate in the 1990 Morrow County Fair.

4-H project members enrolled by June 1, 1990 are able to participate in fair 4-H events and contests.

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## Diversity of fair showcases Morrow Co. pride, productivity

By Merlyn Robinson

Fairs showcase an area's productivity. Along with agriculture and forestry products, exhibits also display the diverse talents of its residents.

Morrow County's fair dates back to 1912. And county pride is the motivation for the volunteer efforts that continue to make each county fair a memorable event.

The first fair in Heppner was held on north Main Street where the city park, library and museum building now are located. Records show there were 200 entries and no premium money was paid.

A large round fair pavilion at this location was built by ranchers and other volunteers. When the fair was not in progress, the building was used for dances and roller skating.

The present site of the fairgrounds on Hinton Creek became a permanent facility in 1939. It was then that that county traded the former city

block on Main Street to the city of Heppner in exchange for the former Civilian Conservation Corps headquarters adjacent to the rodeo field. Old barracks buildings were converted into exhibit halls. But through the years, permanent buildings and barns replaced these wooden structures.

In 1952, a large cinder-block building was constructed, to be known as the pavilion. The adjoining annex building and the dormitory building were built later. Before the construction of the steel livestock barn in 1965, the existing open shed livestock barns caught fire and were reconstructed by volunteers just two weeks prior to fair.

In the late 60s the wooden grandstand adjacent to the highway was replaced with a steel and concrete structure. Other additions were horse box stalls, cyclone fencing and the drilling of a well.

From 1923 through 1930, the Morrow County Extension agent

took responsibility for putting on the fair. County agent Nels Anderson, now retired, served many years in this capacity. Under mandate of legislation, the county court appointed a three-person Fair Board. The Fair Board was later expanded to five people, with Jane Rawlins, Heppner, being the first woman to serve on the board.

The funding of a fair and the year-around operation of the grounds is now supported by revenues from racing receipts. State legislation came about in 1933. The apportionment of revenues has fluctuated according to racing funds received. The base amount for each fair and festival was set at \$22,000 in 1969. Additional racing funds are now distributed to approved fairs under the merit rating system. County Fair Commission members evaluate each fair. Money is awarded to each fair according to that fair's rating through a point system.

While space is limited for expansion of the Morrow County Fairgrounds and there is a growing demand for multiple usage each fair somehow accommodates an enlarged amount of exhibits.

Open class exhibits from homemaker skills to crafts and flowers, along with 4-H and FFA exhibits, are an integral part of Morrow County's annual fair.

## Sharon Dawn to emcee talent contest

Master of Ceremonies for the 1990 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Amateur Talent Show will once again be Sharon Dawn of Milton-Freewater, emcee for last year's contest.

The talent show will be held Thursday, August 16 at 7 p.m. Entry deadline is August 14. Entry forms should be returned to the Morrow County Fair, P.O. Box 464, Heppner or dropped by the fair office.

Cash prizes will be awarded for the first three places in each category--six and under; 7-12; 13-17; and 18 and over. There are also special categories for small groups and out-of-county contests. Acts may be individuals or small groups and are limited to six minutes or less. A pre-audition may be held prior to Aug. 14. Winner of the talent show will perform at the Oregon State Fair Aug. 25.

Judges are the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Queen and Court.

Almost anything goes as far as talent is concerned--musical numbers, dance routines, tumbling or lip sync numbers, just to name a

few. Fair secretary Darlene Scrogins says that some entries are in, but more are needed, so dust off those blue jeans and shine those boots and we'll see you on center stage.

**Bob**      **Marianne**

**Steve**      **Julie**      **Cindy**

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