

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

**GAZETTE-TIMES**  
Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

U.S.P.S. 240-420

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## Letters to the Editor

### Support community through room tax

To the Editor:

The proposed transient room tax under consideration by the city council has raised some misconceptions in the community about who is being taxed and who would receive the benefits.

The proposal calls for a five percent room tax to be collected by the operator and submitted to the city. The operator would keep 10 percent of the tax collected for their expenses in collecting and remitting the tax. This is not a tax on the operator. It is a tax that is paid by the folks that rent rooms when they are visiting the community. A high percentage of the room rentals are business travelers or travelers here for events like St. Patrick's weekend. While these folks are in the community they receive the same fire, police and ambulance services as everyone else. The room tax is common in every area of the country. In fact, I don't remember when we have stayed somewhere and not paid a room tax. The room tax would not affect a traveler's decision to stay in Heppner.

The proceeds would be devoted to the Chamber of Commerce for their activities in promoting the community. The chamber is an organization whose membership is made up of individuals that are interested in the future of the community. Chamber members include main street business people, agribusiness farmers and ranchers, folks involved with government agencies (schools, hospital, county, forest service, etc.). Membership in the chamber is open to everyone and they

openly encourage everyone to be involved. One of the direct benefits of the chamber is the number of visitors we have for such events as St. Patrick's weekend. These visitors patronize the motel, the Bed and Breakfast, local restaurants and taverns and other downtown merchants. In addition, many community organizations such as the volunteer fire department, churches, school groups, etc., have fund raisers that raise several thousand dollars for their needs during St. Patrick's weekend.

It would seem only logical that the funding for these promotion activities would come from the folks that we are drawing into the community. Instead of constantly going back to the businesses and individuals that support the community for additional funding.

Looking around the state, you find many agriculture and timber dependent communities that are having a very difficult time because of declines in those industries. In comparison, we still have an active, vibrant community and in order to maintain our community, we need to promote ourselves and make an investment in the future.

Please join us in encouraging the city council to pass the transient room tax.

Remember, when you travel, you are paying a room tax to support someone else's community. Let's do the same thing to promote our community.

Yours truly,  
(s) Larry and Betty Mills

### Supports Courson for judge

To the Editor:

I support Judge Richard Courson for re-election to the Umatilla and Morrow County District Court.

First my bias. The Honorable is my brother. But do not let my bias deter you from reading further. Dick began his legal career in Portland and, for reasons all of you know better, moved to the "Other Oregon" where he was elected district attorney for Umatilla County in 1958. Dick served as district attorney for nine and one-half years until 1967 when he became the Umatilla County District Court Judge. He has now served on the bench for 25 years and is currently the presiding judge. Because of a

change of law, he is now running for re-election in both Umatilla and Morrow counties.

Notwithstanding my previously stated bias, Dick is by all third-party accounts fair, but tough on convicted criminals. Some of you may recall from newspaper accounts that he has sentenced people convicted of extremely hideous crimes to the maximum prison terms.

I also come from the "Other Oregon", Baker City (nee Baker) and have had the opportunity to work in Morrow County for the past 20 years and believe that the judge has the judicial temperament that would suit Morrow County.

(s) Douglas R. Courson  
Portland

### Room tax issue must be addressed

To the Editor:

We feel that for a better understanding of the transient room tax issue attorney William Kuhns letter to the editor of March 18, 1992 needs to be addressed because he made some statements that show a lack of understanding and are just wrong. We're sure that it must be common knowledge that Mr. Kuhn is retained by the city of Heppner but for those who are not aware of this fact it may help to know "where he's coming from."

"This tax will not cost the motel any customers" is pure uninformed speculation not based on fact as presented by that prestigious Purdue University study which concluded that for a motel of our size (17 units) a decrease of 4 1/2 percent to 5 percent in occupancy of a 5 percent room tax. Now I ask you who would you believe? "No one would really drive an extra 45 miles to avoid paying a dollar or two room tax." This statement is evidence that a point brought out by a construction worker who attended the meeting was completely ignored. The fact is that such workers receive a "per diem" a set amount for room and meals away from home. If the room rate is high it means less to eat on so some would rather drive to the next town for a better rate, and more choices of where to eat and more to do. Besides the company pays for the gas. So why should we slap a five percent tax on working people who come here to improve the town and eat out

here as well?

As for it "not costing the business owner any additional expense" this statement is just wrong. The text of the ordinance reads: "the operator is to deposit a security twice its estimated quarterly liability or \$5,000."

Many concerned people attended the city council meeting last March 9. After an hour of public reaction 90 percent voiced their opinion against the tax. The result was that the council "tabled the issue for further study." It leaves one to ponder the question of what would have been the results if the general opinion was in favor of the tax? Would it have felt that it had enough input to go ahead and pass the tax without a vote of the people?

Heppner is indeed a wonderful place to live and enjoys a friendly reputation. Let's all work together to keep it and not impose an unfriendly room tax on the folks that come here to do business. You can have a voice in this matter. If you have any questions and wish to sign an initiative petition that would amend the city charter so that "any new tax or increase in any existing tax must be approved by a majority vote of the people."

Let's keep government of the people, by the people, for the people, alive.

Please contact the motel.

Sincerely yours,

(s) Thomas LaRusso

Dolores Cooper,

Owners Northwestern Motel

### St. Pat's letters

To the Editor:

We've been receiving thank yous at the Heppner Chamber office in response to our St. Patrick's celebration and would like to share them with the community. A donation was given to St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee in memory of Daniel B. McLaughlin who died March 6, 1992. The committee voted to have another large Irish flag made to fly during the celebration.

Dear Committee Chairman, After returning from Heppner this past weekend and taking in the St. Patrick's celebration all those who worked so hard to put on the programs and prepared food need to be congratulated. I do so now.

I have a question - how and when are the different families selected and honored for each years celebration? I would like to nominate the Mollahan family descendants of Pat Mollahan who came to Heppner in 1911 from County Leitrim.

Pat and Elsie Owens Mollahan made their home in Heppner and raised four children there-- Robert, Mary, John and Larry. The Mollahans have close ties to the Kenny family since Bea Kenny was Pat Mollahan's sister.

Thank you for a wonderful weekend and am hoping to be able to come to next years celebration, health permitting.

Sincerely,  
(s) Phyllis Dunlavy  
Roseburg, OR

People like you make the world nicer for people like me. Thank you so much. Thanks

### St. Patrick's Senior Center Bulletin Board



There were 110 people present for the senior dinner April 1 with five meals taken out. Members of the Lutheran Church served. Rose Moe won the door prize, Louise Wood the meal ticket and Joan Ployhar the guest prize. The meal site committee met after dinner.

Hostesses for April are Yvonne Connor and Vern Batty. Menu for April 15 Easter dinner will be baked ham with raisin sauce, mashed potatoes, salad, fresh vegetable tray, bread and pudding. Members of the Christian Life Center and Mormon churches will serve.

Friday, April 3, the Morrow County budget officer met with the Transportation Committee to explain the STF computer print-outs. The RSVP potluck was cancelled.

The SCRAM bus picked up a full load of people at the senior center Monday, April 6 for a trip to Elko.

The senior bus took a group of seniors to Stokes Landing Senior Center in Irrigon Monday for dinner and a tour of the town, fish hatchery and refuge. They also attended the AAA meeting with the county court.

Merri Reamer will meet with the office receptionists Monday, April 13 at 9 a.m. Reamer will provide eggs and dye for coloring Easter eggs. Seniors wishing to help should be at the center at 11 a.m.

National Volunteer Week is April 27-May 1. More information will be forthcoming.

A bus trip to Hood River and ride on the Mt. Hood train is planned for April 23. Seniors wishing to go may call the office 676-9030 for more information.

Other dates to remember: Monday-quilting, 1-4 p.m., knitting 7-9 p.m.; Tues & Thurs. exercise 10-10:30 a.m.; Wednesday, senior dinner, noon; Friday Bible study 10:30 a.m.

### Court to visit Cherry Festival

This weekend, April 11, the Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Court will participate in their first parade on their mounts. They will travel to The Dalles for the Northwest Cherry Festival. This is the first time that Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo has been represented at the Cherry Festival.

The rodeo court had a busy St. Patrick's weekend. Queen Jenni Ashbeck and her princesses, Staci O'Brien, Angie Partlow and Shelly Ashbeck, took part in the KUMA Coffee Hour at the Heppner Elks, participated in the St. Patrick's parade down Main Street, and made their annual visit to the residents of the Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home where the girls presented a shamrock to the home for their solarium.

The girls especially enjoy sharing their time with the residents and this visit has come to be a most memorable time for the court. On Sunday the Court served as hostesses for the lamb

barbecue sponsored by the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo committee. Many people were on hand for the barbecue, enjoying the meal, the sheep dog trials, and the music of the community band.

On March 29 the court traveled to Portland where Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo sponsored a race at Portland Meadows Racetrack. Queen Jenni and her princesses gave a blanket to the winning horse, "Gravelly Meadow". A former Heppnerite, Marcy Tanory, also had a horse running in that race. Marcy was last year's "Trainer of the Year" at Portland Meadows.

### Ackley Carpet Cleaning

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## Turkey Season Opens

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and

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Old Columbia Highway - 481-9248

**BOB CALLOW**  
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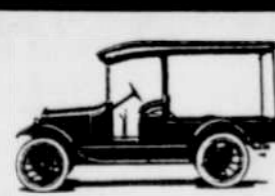
### Court Street Market

111 N. Court Heppner 676-9643

GROCERIES - MEATS - PRODUCE

Frozen	Western Family 4 pack	
<b>Turkey Hind Quarters</b> 49' lb.	<b>Bathroom Tissue</b> 95' pk.	
Oregon Grown	Western Family Augratin-Scalloped-Sour Cream & Chives 4 1/2oz. to 5 1/2 oz.	
<b>Whole Body Fryers</b> 69' lb.	<b>Potatoes</b> 2 for \$1.49	
Pork Shoulder	Cheerios 15oz.	
<b>Roast</b> 99' lb.	<b>Cereal</b> \$3.29 ea.	
Pork	Choice	
<b>Sausage</b> \$1.39 lb.	<b>Oranges</b> 25' lb.	
Boneless - Skinless		
<b>Chicken Breast</b> \$2.39 lb.	<b>Cucumbers</b> 2 for 79'	
Beef	5 lb. Cello Bag	
<b>Top Round Steak</b> \$2.39 lb.	<b>Carrots</b> \$1.39 ea.	
Dorito 15oz.	10lb. Bag	
<b>Tortilla Chips</b> \$2.29 ea.	<b>Potatoes</b> 69' ea.	
Western Family Assorted 14oz.		
<b>Cookies</b> 79' ea.		

Prices Good April 8th through 13th






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