

# Gazette Times

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VOL. 111 NO. 27 6 Pages Wednesday, July 8, 1992 Morrow County Heppner, Oregon

## Large crowd enjoys Ione's Fourth of July celebration



Don Bristow shows his 4th of July spirit

By Anne Morter

The Ione Fourth of July celebration proved to truly be "the Biggest Celebration in the Littlest Town Around" for a large crowd of people. Despite threats of rain and blustery winds, large crowds enjoyed the day full of events starting with the parade and ending with the 234th Oregon National Guard Army Band, the fireworks show and the dance.

Both sides of Main Street were lined with people to see the parade, presided over by grand marshals Del and Linda LaRue. Highlights included a dance roun-

time by the Ione cheerleaders and a group of junior dancers, several antique cars and pieces of farm machinery, the Morrow County DARE car and a familiar sight in this election year, several politicians running for office. The Willows Grange "Galloping Grange Gals" in their '65 Mercury were easily the crowd's favorite.

After the parade, activity in the city park moved into full swing. On tap were treats from the food booths, kids games and several sporting events.

The popular frog-jumping contest drew 103 contestants. Travis Maisteu coaxed an 82" series of jumps to win that contest followed closely by Johnny Collins with 80". The frogs made it through the contest with no injuries and were later returned to a local farm pond.

The first annual Ken Snider Memorial Tennis Tournament drew a good turnout, raising \$85 for the scholarship in Ken Snider's name. Brent Sheirbon

topped all singles' players and then teamed with Eric Pointer to win the men's doubles. Cathy McCabe and Gail Gutierrez won the women's doubles' competition.

In the three-on-three basketball tournament held Friday evening, Dorian Forrar, Dan Abrahamson and Scott Abrahamson teamed up for the win. David Wagenblast, Mike Garrett and Brandi Ball combined to win the three-on-three volleyball tournament held Saturday in the park.

The defending bed race champions from the Port of Morrow were unable to repeat when the team consisting of Dustin Padberg, Darren Padberg, Brent Martin, Gary Rea and Dick McElligott raced to the win. Marie Rudisill was a repeat winner as the women's cow chip throwing champ with a strong throw of 114' 6". A Pendleton man won the men's division with a record throw of 189' 7". Complete results will be available next week.

As usual the evening events drew large crowds. Around 450 people enjoyed the Cardinal Club's barbecued chicken dinner and then headed to the football field with blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy a spectacular performance by the 40 piece Oregon National Guard band. As dusk fell, the Ione Legion lit up the skies with a grand fireworks display and the evening was topped with a spirited dance at the Legion Hall.

## PMH alarm malfunctions

An alarm system at Pioneer Memorial Hospital malfunctioned and caused the city fire alarm to sound Sunday, July 5, according to Heppner Fire Chief Forrie Burkenbine.

The alarm went off around 9:39 a.m.

Burkenbine said that the fire department has had a respite from the lightning-caused fires that plagued the area last week.

Grass and wheat fires, however, were reported in the

Arlington area on July 1 and the Arlington, Condon and Boardman areas July 6.

## Weather Report

by City of Heppner

June 30 - July 6, 1992			
	High	Low	Prec Rain
Tues.	74	50	.T
Weds.	76	51	.0
Thurs.	79	51	T
Fri.	84	57	.07
Sat.	76	58	.T
Sun.	74	49	.0
Mon.	73	50	.05

## Swim lessons schedule change

Because of small class sizes, the Heppner swimming classes for beginners at the Ione pool will begin 15 minutes earlier than the original schedule. The new schedule will be as follows:

Advanced beginners, same time; beginner I-10:30-11 a.m.; beginner II-11:15-11:45 a.m.; beginner III-12 noon to 12:30 p.m.

For more information contact Shane Palmer 422-7115.

## Plans underway to correct hospital revenue shortfall

Revenue at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner has dropped by about \$350,000 below budget expectations for the fiscal year ending July 1, 1992. That loss in income is attributed to a mild winter during the season when the patient load is normally higher than other times of the year, said Kevin Erich, hospital administrator.

"We will turn this thing around. I have high expectations for the coming year," Erich said. But for the long haul, this hospital depends on community support and patronage by local people.

Erich came on board as administrator in March of this year. He is an employee of Western Health Resources, a management firm that holds a \$62,000 contract with the Morrow County Medical Board.

Hospital employee salaries average about \$130,000 per month plus benefits. There will be no cutting back on employees, Erich said, but there will be some staffing adjustments. The hospital employs around 89 people. A union contract with non-professionals that allows for a four percent wage increase effective July 1 will be honored, Erich added.

Some of those employees, on their own, have cut back on hours, he said, but state requirements mandate the level of staffing. The local facilities are some of the finest anywhere with a highly qualified and very supportive staff, Erich said. Erich

formerly managed a large nursing home in Illinois.

Nursing home rates for that portion of Pioneer Memorial Hospital were increased as of July 1 from \$73 to \$78 per day. The average occupancy is about 29 residents with a current capacity for 34. About 50 percent of those residents are private care patients.

Conversion to a swing-bed system, pending state approval, would allow some of the hospital beds to be used for nursing home patients requiring skilled care. It would also maintain 10 hospital beds as required for hospital certification. Adding a skilled care level would allow patients to remain at the hospital instead of being transferred to other facilities, Erich said, which in turn would increase hospital revenue.

Capital improvements to upgrade the hospital as mandated by state standards was a large expenditure during the past year, Erich said. Ultrasound has been added that is used in diagnostic procedures as well as therapy. And the hospital now has a licensed therapist, Sharla Erich.

A new computer system has been added through the WHR contract. This allows a more efficient billing system that helps to obtain faster payment returns from insurance companies.

A new payment collection account is to be handled by the Heppner branch of the Bank of Eastern Oregon. The bank would pay the hospital and clients with overdue accounts would make

payments to this account, therefore taking the hospital out of the banking system, Erich said.

A new wing on the nearby Heppner medical clinic is planned which is to be completed this fall. More patient examining rooms are planned for Drs. Ed and Jeanne Berretta and the newly acquired physician's assistant, Marc Goodboy.

The building plans tentatively call for space for the home health and public health offices. It may also provide space for physical therapist, Sharla Erich and psychologist Bob Clark.

The addition of the clinic is expected to generate enough revenue to pay for itself and provide health services at one location, according to the medical board.

Good health service is the key to retaining a stable work force in the area plus keeping senior citizens at home in familiar surroundings, Erich said. He said they have applied for a \$50,000 grant that is available to help senior citizens in remote areas.

Hospital room rates are currently \$375 per day per patient which is comparable with other hospitals in Eastern Oregon, Erich said. Keeping the hospital facilities available to the people means that residents have to use the facilities instead of going elsewhere, he said.

## HHS classes '66-68 plan reunion

The Heppner High School classes of 1966, 67 and 68, have planned their reunion on Saturday, July 25.

Golfing will begin at 8 a.m. at the Willow Creek Country Club. A social hour has been planned for noon at the city park. Those attending should bring their own snacks. Family friends and former teachers are welcome to attend.

A no-host buffet will be held at 6 p.m. at the Heppner Elks club. Dancing will follow at 9 p.m. Music will be provided by "The Henchman".

For more information call Roger Leonnig, 666-7996, Sheridan Tarnasky 676-5059 or Susan Johnston 676-5562.

## HIT Theater group to meet

Heppner Intergenerational Theatre group (HIT) will present the "Chapeau Show" recognizing this year's fair theme, "Hats Off to Morrow County" on August 19, opening night of the Morrow County Fair. The show will begin at 7 p.m. on the outdoor stage in the fair park area.

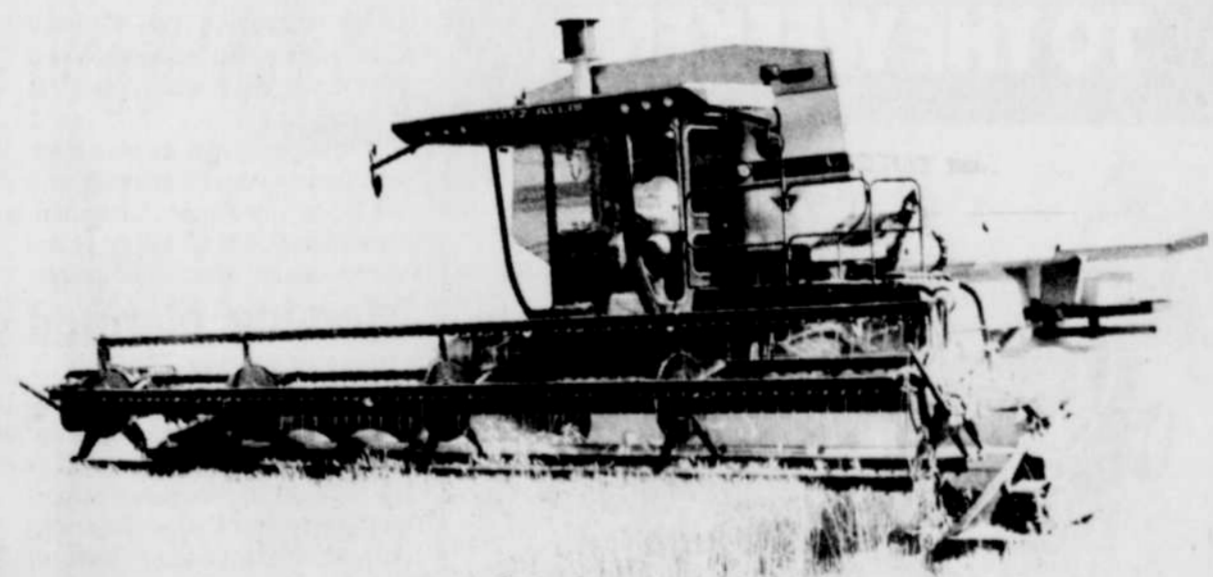
Focusing on the hat theme (chapeau is the French word for hat), the show will feature talented players from all areas of the county doing skits, music, dancing, a short one-act play, "Fishing Hat" and a children's story, "The 500 Hats of Bartholemew Cubbins." The show is intended to have something for everyone.

HIT is sponsored by the Mor-

row County Children and Youth Services Commission for the purpose of encouraging all ages to work together in theatre arts. Donations for earlier performances, "No, No a Million Times No" last October, and "Erin Came to County Morrow" on St. Pat's Weekend, have been used to assist pre-school programs in Morrow County.

Anyone wishing to participate in the Morrow County Fair show should meet at the St. Patrick's Senior Center at 7 p.m. Wednesday, July 15, or contact director Jane Rawlins. Children wanting to try out for the children's play, "The 500 Hats of Bartholemew Cubbins", should also attend.

## Wheat harvest down, prices up



Keith Rea was harvesting his land near Ione Tuesday. Rea said the yield was "not too bad", off some double summer fallow he was cutting. Pictured above is Keith's son Gary driving the combine.

As expected, local wheat harvests do not look promising. "It's sure not going to be a big crop," commented Morrow County Grain Growers manager Larry Mills. He said that the crops were hurt by the long dry

spell in May and early June.

The price for wheat, however, is looking up. "The price prospects are more encouraging than in the past," added Mills.

Mills said that a few people on the north side of the county

started their harvests the last part of June. He said that harvests are beginning around the north Lexington and north Ione areas, with those in the Heppner area expected to begin next week.

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