

Gazette Times

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Rodeo court a dream come true for princess



Princess Shelly gives Krystal Temple award at horse shoe

It's a busy summer for Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Princess Shelly Ashbeck. But it's a terrific experience that she said she has been looking forward to ever since she was a little girl.

Shelly is the 16-year-old daughter of Mitch and Terry Ashbeck of Buttercreek. And this summer, when she's not busy waving at crowds during the court's many appearances, ranch work is first on her agenda.

Her brother Rob, 21, and her sister Angie, 22, have handed down chores to their younger

sister. Along with helping with the cattle and sheep, Shelly has become an old hand when it comes to running the swather during haying.

Besides her court duties and ranch chores, she is busy fitting two lambs to show during the fair. It's no secret that sheep from the Ashbeck herd have traditionally won some of the top honors. Shelly's hard work has resulted in two reserve championships. She has also shown sheep at the June show at Tygh Valley.

Shelly will be a junior this year

at Heppner High School. She rates English high on her list of favorite subjects. As an active FFA member, she won a proficiency award for poultry and wildlife. Along with tending to chickens and rabbits, she can be seen feeding a noisy lot of chukars in a large enclosed pen at the ranch.

Her penchant for court life comes naturally. Her mother and her grandmother, Colleen Kilkenny Greenup, were also on Heppner's fair and rodeo courts. Shelly also has several cousins, including this year's Queen Jenni, who take to royalty roles.

Shelly's mount for court appearances is an eight-year-old black quarter horse mare, Imperial Jet. Horseback riding tops her list of hobbies, she said, and is something she has done ever since she can remember. When it comes to barrel racing and pole bending, she seldom misses a play day at the Wrangler Riding Club grounds. In the April series of gymkhanas she churned up the dust to win first place in her age group.

Future plans are indefinite, she said. Finding a rich rancher to marry might be a possibility, she joked. But she is seriously considering a career as pediatrician or veterinarian.

Of the court's many out-of-town trips this summer, she said the Sisters rodeo was exciting. It rained that day which made fast riding in the grand entry more treacherous with many other courts all participating in a small arena. But the best part is yet to come, she said, as the court presides as this year's fair and rodeo.

Walker pleads guilty to theft

Rick Dennis Walker, 32, Heppner, entered a guilty plea to first-degree theft on July 17 in Heppner, according to Morrow County District Attorney Jeff Wallace.

Walker plead guilty to theft by receiving involving a \$2,080 check which had been taken earlier in a burglary of the Howard Pettyjohn residence at Rt. 1 Box 601 Heppner.

Walker was indicted in December, 1991, on additional charges of burglary and theft in

Circuit Court Judge Pro-Tem Richard Courson suspended imposition of sentence on the theft by receiving charge and placed Walker on two years' formal probation. He also fined him \$500, ordered him to make \$240 restitution to the state for court-appointed attorney fees, continue alcohol treatment, make full disclosure to law enforcement authorities of his knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding his obtaining the check and to submit to polygraph examination.

Football camp Aug. 10-14

The first annual South Morrow County Football Camp will be held at Heppner High School, Aug. 10 through 14. The camp will feature instruction from both Heppner and lone junior and senior high school coaching staffs.

The non-contact camp will run

Motor home catches fire en route vacation

A Lexington family escaped injury Monday when their motor home caught fire while they were en route to a family vacation on the coast.

Chuck and Lisa Nelson and their children, Justin and Courtney, had pulled in at the Memaloose rest area and stepped out of their motor home around 11:30 a.m. when they noticed smoke coming from the engine. When Chuck lifted the hood to check out the problem, flames began shooting out of the engine.

The Nelsons called 911, but the

Two retire from Post Office



Ken Nairns

There are big changes in sight for the Heppner post office. Two longtime postal employees, postmaster Ken Nairns and postal clerk Floss Watkins will retire on July 31.

Ken Nairns came to Heppner in February 1980. He transferred from the Bend Post Office where he was supervisor of mails and delivery. He started his career with the Post Office as a casual worker in July of 1962. After 30 days in that position he was appointed to a part time clerks position. From there he became a regular clerk and after four years, was made a supervisor. He has worked for 30 years with the Post Office. Since he moved to Heppner, he has worked in five different Post Office locations. The first was next to Peterson's Jewelers. The next was at the former Kroll's Department Store location. A fire destroyed the post office, the S & J Market a second hand store and the Shoe Box on May 3, 1983. The Post Office was moved to city hall for six weeks and the union hall for 18 months until the new postal building was completed in the fall of 1984.

Boardman man sentenced

Mitchell Drury, 33, Boardman, pled guilty to driving under the influence of intoxicants, attempting to elude a police officer and driving while suspended in front of Judge Pro-Tem Richard Courson. Drury was sentenced on July 17 in Heppner following his conviction, according to Morrow County District Attorney Jeff Wallace.

According to Wallace, the charges arose as a result of a high speed chase on January 30 in Irigton. Drury was reported to have stolen a car and police were attempting to stop him when the chase ensued. A charge of unauthorized use of a motor vehicle was dismissed when the alleged victim failed to appear for trial.

Judge Courson sentenced Drury to one year in the county jail and fined him \$500. The judge suspended all but 30 days of the jail sentence on the condition that Drury undergo alcohol evaluation and treatment, pay \$350 in assessments and fees and undergo a standard range of DUI-related probation conditions. Drury's license was also suspended for a period of three years, said Wallace.

Ken was born in Shamokin, Pennsylvania on May 2, 1934. Growing up in a coal mining family, his father and grandfather were coal miners, Ken began working in the mines when he was 16. At 17 he enlisted in the Navy and was in Korea from 1951 to 1955 during the Korean war. At 21 he returned to Shamokin and worked four more years in the mines. He then got a job at Brooks and Scanlon, a lumber mill in Bend, which was bought out by Diamond Lumber Co., where he worked until he was hired by the Post Office. He married his wife, Loretta, in July of 1959 at Niagra Falls, NY.

Ken and Loretta, who is a homemaker, have a home in Bend as well as one in Heppner. He says plans are to spend most of their time in Heppner and "take it free and easy." Ken says he enjoys camping and hunting. The couple have two children, Robert Nairns, who lives in Heppner with his wife, Ginni, and children Krystal, four and Kiel, six; and Ken Jr., who lives in Bend with his wife, Patti and children Nathan, six and Dane, three.

Of his retirement, Ken says, "It will be different. I like to work."

Floss Watkins ends a 25-year career with the Post Office, all of it in Heppner. When her children were a sixth grader and a freshman in high school she got a job as a two-hour-a-day clerk. As people left and retired she moved up, and, after eight years as parttime clerk, moved into a fulltime clerk's position, which she has held ever since. "I've worked here for 25 years," commented Floss, "and I still love it."

Floss was born in Pendleton and raised in Pilot Rock. She



Floss Watkins

married her husband, R.G., in 1950 at Walla Walla and they came to Heppner in August of 1953. Their children, Gary Watkins and Chris Lewis were raised in Heppner and are still living here. Chris has two children, Tim and Tina Davidson, who also live in Heppner. Gary and his wife, Barbara have two children, Jeff and Julie.

The Watkins have sold their home in Heppner, bought a motor home and plan to travel. They will spend the winter in Arizona and then travel to North Carolina in the spring. R.G., who retired in 1986 at 55, after 33 years with Kinzua, is from North Carolina. They also hope to take in a few side trips, to the Statue of Liberty, Disney World and New Orleans. But, "we still love Heppner," added Floss. She says that they may decide to buy a smaller house in Heppner after they have traveled for awhile.

While the positions at the Heppner Post Office may not be filled for six weeks to five months, Mike McGuire, who is postmaster at Tygh Valley will serve until a new postmaster is appointed.

Players gear up for Shrine game

Jim Kindel, along with 59 other kids from the top AAA, AA, and A football players of the class of 1992 reported in Portland on July 29 in preparation for the 40th Annual East West Shrine Football. The players and their families joined the East-West coaches, and the East-West Executive Committee for a tour of the Portland Unit Shrine Hospital for Crippled Children. This gives the team members, their parents, and the coaches a chance to see the real purpose of the East-West Shrine Football Game.

Wednesday afternoon the teams were bused to their training camp at Eastern Oregon State College in LaGrande. That evening the teams will be taking physicals and having "chalk talks" with their coaching staffs.

Thursday starts nine days of intense preparation for the big game at Baker City's High School Stadium. A great deal must be learned in a short period of time. Players from high school football programs all over the state must learn common terminology, new plays, and new offensive and defensive signals and sets. They also must learn to work with new teammates they have just met to



Jim Kindel

form solid football teams.

Sunday August 2 the teams will enjoy a barbecue and softball game at LaGrande, organized by the Union County Shrine Club.

By the time Saturday, Aug. 11 rolls around, East coaches and West coaches will have molded these two groups of all-stars into two fine football teams.

"This is Oregon football's finest hour. Strong bodies strain, so little burned bodies can heal. Strong legs run, so that little weak legs may walk," said a Shrine spokesperson.

connection with the break-in at the Pettyjohn residence. He was also charged with first-degree forgery in connection with the check. The forgery charge was previously dismissed pursuant to a civil compromise between Walker and another victim. The burglary-related charges were dismissed on the basis of insufficient evidence, according to Wallace.

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