

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

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES

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Letters to the Editor

Speeders endanger community

To the Editor:

The reason I'm writing this letter is to let people know that I'm real tired of people speeding up and down our hill. We live on Chase Street and I can't believe how fast people drive.

Sunday evening the 27th between 7:30 and 8 p.m. someone ran over our family puppy and didn't even have the decency to stop and see if he was OK, or knock on a few doors to see who he belonged to. Stop and think about the look on my children's

faces when we found him in the road dying.

I know it was our fault for him being in the road. But, if people would slow down when driving they could have avoided hitting him.

It scares me to think it could have been my children.

I would really like people to start going the speed limit on our hill and everywhere in town for a safer community.

(s) Jacque Hedman

Riverside gym will torpedo bond issue

To the Editor:

Saturday's East Oregonian has a front page article headlined "Irrigon voters may torpedo school bonds". What will probably torpedo the bond issue even more than the Irrigon vote is the gigantic gymnasium proposed to be added to Riverside High School. Many people have mentioned they would be willing to be taxed for necessities, but consider the large gym a frill. Why, when taxpayers are all trying to tighten their belts, is the county asking us to pay for a gymnasium that will seat 2,000 people, when the present gym is never filled for sporting events? It would be nice if every town in the county had a facility like this, if there was an abundance of funds, but that is not the case.

I also want to comment on two letters in last week's Hermiston Herald. One letter stated passing the bond levy would lay the groundwork for a future high school in Irrigon as the area continues to grow. Why would anyone think that adding a huge

gymnasium to Riverside and enlarging that school to accommodate 600 or more students would provide a favorable climate for restoring a high school to Irrigon? I don't think anyone in Irrigon believe that. The other letter states voting in this bond will lower overall taxes because of the decrease in tax rate because of Measure 5. This is totally inaccurate, voting in a 15 million dollar bond issue is not going to lower taxes. Many people in Irrigon have had their property re-evaluated and are paying considerably more tax than before Measure 5.

I have one parting thought, I don't believe any town in the county would support the bond issue if it meant they would lose their high school. Before you criticize Irrigon too harshly, stop and think how you'd feel if it were your town in danger of losing your high school, or, as is our situation, in danger of not having it restored.

(s) Annette Eppenbach
Irrigon

Chamber supports county levy

To the Editor:

Election is just around the corner with ballots being mailed out March 3. Heppner Chamber of Commerce encourages citizens to support both the Morrow County operating levy and the Medical Fund levy. It is essential that our county continue to provide those services necessary to the health and well being of our communities.

If deterioration sets in, if health facilities are inadequate, if services are cut back, then our future is also at stake. Heppner Chamber membership urges you to vote yes to insure a continuing environment where people and business thrive.

Sincerely,
(s) Steve Dickenson, president
Heppner Chamber of Commerce

Levy deserves support

To the Editor:

The school bond levy is going to be mailed out soon. That's an issue that will require some real soul searching for most of us considering the recent questions about Kinzua and resulting economic uncertainties for Heppner.

Against this uncertainty there are major changes taking place in the educational system as a result of the new program adopted at the state level, growth within our district and aging facilities which all require investments to be made. At the same time mandated cutbacks take away operating funds. Standing still isn't an option even if we wanted to.

It's a plus that the proposed

new levy would replace one we've just paid off and is actually less than that one. That means we are considering the size of the reduction in our tax rather than the amount of the increase.

I believe this levy deserves our support; we need to make this investment in our schools. Our community has always recognized the need for responsible investment in our kid's education. Now more than ever though we also need to recognize the importance of our educational system to the vitality of our community-part of what makes this a great place to live.

Sincerely,
(s) Bob Kahl

New classrooms needed

To the Editor:

In the past 18 years, I have had the privilege of teaching nearly 1,300 Boardman and Irrigon students in one or more classes at Riverside High School. My classes have always been crowded, with more students than the district wide average, and I've enjoyed having a full classroom.

Since Riverside has grown from 150 students to nearly 400 since the last remodeling was completed, every classroom, mine included, has grown as well. Every teacher tries to cope with more and more students

every year, but the task becomes harder and harder. I fear that some students will simply drop through the cracks and all students will learn less than they might.

New classrooms are desperately needed at not only Riverside High School but at all other Morrow County schools as well. I hope the voters of Morrow County will give me and all of the staff the tools we need to prepare our children for the life ahead of them.

(s) Frances Glenn
Boardman

School bond issue lean, no-frills

To the Editor:

Voters in Morrow County have the opportunity this month to improve the education for their children and future generations to come. The opportunity will present itself March 22 when voters are asked to approve a \$15,585,000 bond levy by the Morrow County School District.

As 20 year residents of Boardman and lifetime residents of eastern Oregon, we strongly support the school initiative. We base this decision on both the cost-effectiveness of the bonds and our county's need for modern new school facilities. This is a lean, no frills, package that will produce major capital benefits at minimal cost to taxpayers estimated no higher than \$1.97 per thousand dollars of assessed valuation.

At a recent school board meeting, a group of residents from Irrigon told the board they would not support the bond if they could not have a high school/middle school in Irrigon. No matter which side of the issue you believe in, the space and improvements are needed regardless where the schools end up. Let us pull together as a county to build a future for the present and future children of Morrow County.

The measure of any strong community can be determined, in part, by its support of local schools. Do we care about our young people? Do we care about their future and our community's future? The answer to both questions can be answered with a yes vote on schools March 22.

Sincerely
(s) Blair and Dalarie Philippi
Boardman

Opportunity is knocking

To the Editor:

Opportunity is knocking in Morrow County. In the Morrow County School District, 89 percent of all school building investments are paid by corporate or commercial property taxes. It is like big business chipping in 89 cents everytime you, I and our neighbors elect to spend 11 cents

on school facilities.

Big business probably doesn't think that's fair but when an opportunity to build lasting facilities knocks for 11 cents on the dollar it should be seized. Please help pass the school bond levy.

(s) Dean Mason
Boardman

South Morrow economy could depend on budget passage

To the Editor:

The upcoming mail ballot includes the Morrow County budget request to operate our county for the next fiscal year. The budget committee, which includes the three county court members and three independent citizens, met for five full days to review, question and in a number of instances cut or reconstructed the various department requests. The amount of property taxes requested is in a sufficient amount to adequately fund all essential county services and to retain all existing county employees. The retention of these jobs has become highly significant in light of the potential loss of jobs at the Kinzua Mill and the planned reduction of 30 forest service positions.

The economic base of south Morrow County could well be dependent upon the successful passage of the Morrow County budget. I urge you to please mark your mail-in ballot in favor of the

Morrow County tax request. As a member of the budget committee, I can assure you that we will continue to work for sound, efficient and responsible budgets that we can recommend to our fellow taxpayers.

Yours very truly,
(s) John A. Prag

Pilot Rock, Ione display true comradery

To the Editor:

If you attended the district playoffs this past weekend at the Pendleton Convention Center, you would have witnessed one of the most memorable events that ever took place-no not the actual basketball games, but Pilot Rock cheerleaders and a community band from Ione cheering and playing for the Heppner girls and boys basketball teams.

The young cheerleaders are true components of sportsmanship, for they possess the courtesy and generosity to set in and cheer for another school which lost cheerleaders and band to budget

cutbacks.

Along with these young ladies, the Ione Community Band came to play and show their support for the Heppner teams. The comradery between Heppner and Ione was evident and a fond appreciation of the Ione Community Band was evident everywhere in the gym.

No words can express what it meant to the Heppner teams and supporters to have the Pilot Rock cheerleaders and the Ione Community Band boost our spirits. We are grateful to both.

Heppner Booster club
(s) Marcia Kemp

County budget sound

To the Editor:

Morrow County's general fund finances the services that we locally benefit directly from.

We watched the budget committee, the county commissioners and a strong budget officer go

through departmental budgets item by item and make hard decisions.

I believe it's lean as can be, prudent, and deserves our support.

(s) Ken Turner

Act positively for our schools

To the Editor:

We are writing this letter in support of the upcoming Morrow County School District bond levy which will be coming to voters in March. The school district facilities are in need of expansion at the north end of the county. The population increase has caused all the north end facilities to be very overcrowded. When Riverside High School was built, it was expected to house 200 students. Their enrollment is double that amount, and is currently being held in the commons area, under stairwells and any other vacant space where a few desks can be placed.

The Heppner Middle School is deteriorating. It is cold in the wintertime and too hot in the spring and fall. Tiles are peeling off the floors; there was once a fire in the upper timbers and the charred timbers are still there for future potential problems.

With the possibility of Kinzua closing, and I sincerely hope and pray the new owners will not close down Heppner's source of stability, Heppner needs to look good to potential businesses in the

area. In the past, when disaster has come to Heppner, the people have a history of building up again. With this bond levy, Heppner can build a new facility which can be used by the entire community and make its schools on the leading edge of technology. Technological improvements are very important for our students today who will be adults in the next century, and doubly so because of our rural location in the state and country. Our students need to be on top of these advancements.

All facilities are in need of maintenance and upkeep, which, if not voted in with this levy, will need to come out of the general fund budget. If the funds come out of the general fund, it would mean the loss of programs and staff.

At the present time, MCSDS is not in any bonded indebtedness and interest rates are down. This is the time to act and to act positively for our schools. Vote yes in March.

Sincerely,
(s) Frank and Cara Osmin

March 3rd: Old Timers - PER Widows and Ladies Nite

Dinner at 6 p.m. Recognition during lodge at 8 p.m.

March 18th: Calcutta - St. Pat's bull riding Saturday

March 19th: St. Patrick's Celebration beginning at 10 a.m. with KUMA broadcasting program, brunch 11 a.m. dinner 6 p.m. dancing 9 p.m. with two bands.

NOW HIRING: part-time cook (lunches Tues.-Thurs. and from menu Fri.-Sat.) evenings

Bingo every Wednesday night 7:30 p.m.

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