

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

Heppner  
**GAZETTE-TIMES**  
U.S.P.S. 240-420

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper  
Published weekly and entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Heppner, Oregon under the Act of March 3, 1879. Second class postage paid at Heppner, Oregon. Office at 147 West Willow Street. Telephone (503) 676-9228. Postmaster send address changes to the Heppner Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Oregon 97836. Subscriptions: \$18 in Morrow, Wheeler, Gilliam and Grant Counties; \$25 elsewhere.

April Hilton-Sykes ..... News Editor  
Stephanie Jensen ..... Typesetting, Layout, Distribution  
Monique Devin ..... Advertising layout & Graphics  
Penni Keerseemaker ..... Printer

**David Sykes, Publisher**

### County has weed control authority

To the Editor:  
In response to last week's (2/28/96) front page article about home rule, I feel as though some clarification is needed in regards to Morrow County's authority over weed control (specifically noxious weed control).  
Contrary to a statement that was printed, Morrow County does have the statutory authority under Oregon Revised Statutes 570.505 through 570.600 to enforce noxious weed control laws.  
Violation of the Morrow County Weed Control Ordinance #MC-C-3-90 is punishable upon conviction by a fine not to exceed \$500. Also if the landowner fails or refuses to control noxious weeds, the landowner will become liable for all expenses incurred by the county for enforcement and

control of the posted noxious weeds. However, if the destruction or control of the weeds in question is impracticable because the weeds may be too far advanced, the county court may request the Oregon Department of Agriculture to immediately quarantine the infested property to prevent the movement of infested crops or of livestock from such property except under conditions prescribed in the quarantine that will prevent the spread of such noxious weeds by such crops or livestock.  
If further clarification is needed regarding the county weed control law, please do not hesitate to contact myself, or Morrow County counsel, Val Doherty.

(s) Dave Pranger  
Morrow County  
Weed Inspector

### Positions can be consolidated

To the Editor:  
It has been stated by certain county officials that the adoption of home rule would not allow us to consolidate or eliminate the elected positions of clerk, treasurer, assessor or surveyor. If this is the case, I would like to know why seven out of nine Oregon counties who have adopted home rule have done exactly that.  
For example, Lane County chose to retain their elected assessor, but they consolidated the functions of the clerk, treasurer, tax collector, finance director and personnel services under one department of human resources and management services. They also incorporated the functions of the surveyor into their public works department. The mandated functions are still provided, but they are consolidated to provide better efficiency.  
Hood River County chose to eliminate the elected assessor as well, leaving only the board of commissioners, the sheriff,

the district attorney and the justice of the peace elected. They have created a combined records/assessment office and have consolidated the functions of treasurer, tax collector and finance director under one finance department. Umatilla, Washington, Clatsop, Multnomah and Benton counties have adopted similar structural changes. Only Josephine and Jackson counties have retained all of the positions mandated by Oregon State statute.  
So, as you see, this is something that can and has been done under home rule in the state of Oregon. Home rule gives us, the citizens of Morrow County, the ability to define our own county government, and the possibilities are endless. In fact, some counties under home rule have even added the elected positions of auditor and legal council. Isn't it time we took control of our county government?  
Sincerely,  
(s) Lisa Rietmann  
Ione

### The right decision

To the Editor:  
We feel it's time to express our appreciation to the Heppner Volunteer Fire Department firefighters for their dedicated service. Recent letters to the editor regarding the Kilkenny fire have given the impression that an uncaring attitude prevails in the department and that we should be ashamed of the service they provide. While circumstances surrounding the Kilkenny fire were certainly unfortunate, we believe fire chief Rusty Estes responded appropriately by not responding to this call.

While it may not have been apparent in the emotion of the moment, his action (dictated by state regulations) protected the lives of those residing within fire district boundaries. The question should be asked: "What if the department had responded and a second fire occurred where lives were lost because firefighters were outside the district and too far away to be of any help?" Our hearts go out to the Kilkennys for their loss; members of our family lost everything they owned in a wildfire where no firefighting efforts could be made. The aftereffects were truly devastating. But thankfully, as in the Kilkenny fire, no lives were ever endangered or lost.

Firefighting is a dangerous activity. Many men and women do this for money and make a career of it. In our rural area, this service comes by way of volunteers. They contribute countless hours toward training for all types of emergency response. They are there no matter if the call goes out in the middle of the day or the middle of the night. They stay until the job is done, not because they have to but because of their commitment to serving us. We are extremely fortunate to have the number and quality of dedicated firefighters that we do. It would be to our discredit if we let them think we believe otherwise.

(s) Bob Sagely  
(s) Pam Sagely  
Heppner

### Home rule a boondoggle

To the Editor:  
I would like to add my voice and vote to urge all Morrow County voters to vote no on the proposed home rule charter. This charter would be a boondoggle that we as residents would regret for the rest of our lives and the lives of our children. Let's do the decent thing and give this monster a decent burial at the ballot box.  
There are assertions that home rule would be a panacea to our county government. They say first and foremost that it would create a more efficient and responsive government. This is simply a falsehood. Any time that more levels of bureaucracy are added to any government, it becomes more cumbersome and less responsive to the people it was meant to serve.  
There is the assertion that we now do not have the ability to adopt ordinances under the

### Judge's father built house

To the Editor:  
Regarding your Feb. 21 story on the Kilkenny house fire, it was stated that the house was built by the late federal judge John Kilkenny in 1914.  
Not likely.  
The judge was 13 years old at the time. Credit construction to the judge's father, John Kilkenny, who arrived in Morrow County from County Leitrim, Ireland in 1890, at the tender age of 21 and who later was to set up a vast sheep empire.  
(s) Bill Mitchell  
Daly City, CA

## Letters to the Editor

### Home rule can work, but not this charter

To the Editor:  
"If it ain't broke, don't fix it"; "The cure is worse than the disease"; "Don't throw the baby out with the wash"; etc.-so goes some of the adages by which we live, reminding ourselves of past lessons learned.  
We are now in the learning process as we debate home rule. Unfortunately, the data by which we are to make our choice is slanted, full of innuendo and contains unspoken agendas. It is truly the political process.

I find myself returning to the old adages for answers, to wit: Is it broke? Yes. But do we "throw the baby out with the wash" to fix it? No. We should make sure the "cure is not worse than the disease". To vote in a charter that even the advocates recognize will have to be later put to the voters (how many times?) in order to make our county government streamlined and responsive, to me, is a poor decision. It is a choice that will constantly keep the community at odds with ourselves, cost us money and may not accomplish the ends we seek. Furthermore, design flaws are usually fatal to the success of any product.

If we really want to effect the changes I have heard (seen) voiced, we can do that by just "getting involved". We do have whips to use-ballot box (budget and levy votes as well as elections), letters, attending meetings, etc. The governing body that knows, "unless they become responsive and available to us all, they will definitely not receive their funding," will either opt to the mandate or streamline and stay within the tax base. "Punitive cost cutting" can and should be addressed by voters either at election times, or, if necessary, by recall.  
Our commissioners can use these same principles (particularly funding) to encourage

### Elect Buchanan

To the Editor:  
We urge all Republican voters to elect Pat Buchanan for U.S. President in the upcoming March 12 Republican primary. Mr. Buchanan is a God-fearing, patriotic, old-fashioned American who has a great love for his country. He believes in a strong America whose vital interests must be protected.  
Only by being strong have we been able to help others countries. We have not acted selfishly and we have given other countries the benefit of our food surpluses and technology. Our system of government has allowed us to achieve all this. We stand ready to help any country in need. We hope that they want to use our same system of government to develop themselves.  
Pat Buchanan is descended from the lineage of our 15th President James Buchanan (1857-1861). President Buchanan successfully kept the peace between the North and the South during his term.  
Pat Buchanan's prior governmental experience includes

### No for now

To the Editor:  
Regarding the proposed county home rule charter and vote, I would like to suggest we lower the heat of rhetoric and replace it with cool analysis.  
The committee formulated a proposed charter which it felt would fit Morrow County's situation. They did a conscientious job and the committee members submitted a charter which might lead to cost savings and improved efficiency.  
Unfortunately we don't have any specifics about potential savings or efficiencies to consider.  
Consequently, even though "home rule" may eventually

(?) our other elected officials to accept consolidation of departments, economy, responsiveness, etc. This concept has been effectively used throughout Oregon in both chartered and non-chartered counties-all it takes is a commission with the fortitude to act in the best interests of the people they serve.

In closing, I want a strong, responsive, economical and accountable county government. All department heads with discretionary authority should be elected by the citizens whose lives they affect. To make them appointed and responsive to an appointed administrator, only adds another layer of bureaucratic fat that insulates the "system" from direct actions of the people. I do believe that home rule can work-but not with this charter. We need one that makes our government responsive and cooperative, not aloof and divisive.

As a "newcomer" to Morrow County, I offer these thoughts which are backed by over 18 years of experience in county government-eight of which were as an elected official.  
(s) Allen A. Swenson  
Lexington

### Well done, Cards

To the Editor:  
The Ione Cardinals boys' basketball team provided a good lesson at the state tournament.  
In the first half of their game with North Clackamas Christian School, our boys were 16 points behind. Instead of becoming discouraged and giving up, the Cards made an incredible rally to become seven points ahead in the second half. NCCS had to work hard for their narrow victory.  
We talk a lot about what sports teach our children, but at that game, the boys taught all of us in the bleachers a lesson about determination, persistence and passion. Well done.  
(s) The Reverend Lea Mathieu  
Ione

eight years working in the White House as communications director for President Reagan and special assistant to presidents Ford and Nixon. Mr. Buchanan is also a journalist, radio and TV commentator and author of three books. His syndicated column appears in 150 newspapers.

George Washington warned us to avoid foreign entanglements. Pat Buchanan has refreshing ideas which would help our country. America is the bastion of the free world. Read the voter's pamphlet to learn his 18-point agenda. Some people label him as an extremist. However, we are a nation of laws, not men. The founding fathers feared a king (one-man rule). They set up the three branches of government, separate but equal, which is the balance of powers. Congress will balance and temper Buchanan's policies.

Our country needs Pat Buchanan as the next president of the U.S.  
(s) J.H. Johnson  
Astoria

### Vote no on home rule

To the Editor:  
At the beginning, we were more or less neutral about the issue of Morrow County Home Rule, but have been disturbed about the treatment of a very kind, intelligent man whom we respect very much.

Hal Dinkins has had a distinguished career as a U.S. Army officer and university-level professor in economics and political science. Fortunately, for us, he has had the moral courage to stand up for what he knows to be true whether it is pleasing to everyone or not.  
When it comes to changing our county government we believe that he is telling it like it is. The personal attacks of his detractors tell you more about themselves than they do about him.

Vote no on Morrow County Home Rule.  
Sincerely,  
(s) Randy Lott  
(s) Floyd and Lorena Jones

**Come Share With Us**  
at  
**Willow Creek Baptist Church**  
Bible Study for all ages 2 p.m.  
Worship Service 3 p.m.  
Meeting in the  
7th Day Adventist Church  
560 North Minor

March 7:  
**Old Timer-PER-Ladies Night. Dinner 6-8 p.m. BBQ Chicken By Jean Ann and crew. Lodge, ladies' cards and bingo 8:00 p.m.**  
March 15:  
**St. Patrick's Celebration. Dining 6-9 p.m.**  
March 16:  
**Kuma Coffee Hour 10:00 a.m.; Brunch 11:30-1:30 p.m. Dining from 6-9 p.m.; live music 9-1:30 a.m.**  
March 30:  
**Installation of officers (new E.R. Jay and Lori Straley) and "Thank" Bob and Yvonne Lovgren for a job well done.**  
Dining room open Fri.-Sat.-6-9 p.m.  
Bingo every Wednesday 7:30-9:30 p.m.

**Heppner Elks 358**  
676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 N. Main

**FAX**  
Send or Receive  
Gazette-Times  
676-9228