

Candidates Forum

an intelligent choice for the best interests of all.

What is your position on maintaining Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner? Is there a future for the hospital?

Because of the geographical location, there is no question that a hospital is needed in Heppner.

What is your position concerning the current plans to build a medical clinic in Irrigon?

The medical board has already made the decision to do this. My personal opinion has been that we needed more trained EMTs and emergency transportation available and that we needed to provide some sort of senior transportation so that they could continue to see the same doctors they've seen for years. However, the decision has been made and I will support it and give it every chance to work.

What would you like to see changed in road maintenance or the road department?

I hate to see change just for change's sake. I think we all feel that the roads everywhere should be better than they are. That is human nature. However, the question becomes one of paying for what we want versus what we can afford. There are just too many factors involved to have a simple answer to this question. Where there are problems, we must look at them and solve each one individually.

How would you encourage the separate county departments to be more accountable to the public?

I think the departments as a whole are trying to be accountable. In a case where one department isn't, we can influence some positive changes with strong leadership on our part and through some budget decisions if necessary.

Do you feel north Morrow County is well served in the area of county services? If not, how can this be rectified?

I don't like this type of north-south question. It only adds fuel to a situation that doesn't need to be. For starters, Measure 5 put a limit on revenues and the money just isn't going to be there to meet the "wants" of everyone in the county. The commissioners will have to work hard and study each situation to be as fair as possible in meeting everyone's needs and not just the needs of a special group, individual or squeaky wheel, and that doesn't matter where in the county it is.

How can you assist in healing the anger and resentment that exist between north and south county residents?

I think that there is some anger between some factions in the county, but I also think that most residents of Morrow County can, do, and will continue to work together for a better county. Representation from a wider geographical area in the county will come about as a result of this election and this should help broaden the informational base from which the commissioners make their decisions. This broader base of information for decisions is important for a healthy county.

Should county commissioners be elected from districts or at-large? Why?

This is a question with no easy answer. I feel that it is best for a county-wide election so that the commissioners are responsible to the county as a whole. However, with population growth, there is a danger that some areas of the county may end up with no local representation. That isn't good either because we need a broad base of information in order to make sound decisions. I don't have the magic ball to give me the solution to this problem at this time.

What are the other major issues facing you as a county commissioner?

I see two major issues right now. One issue is the discussion over building our own county jail or continuing to

try to rent space from other jails. Renting hasn't worked well in the past because, according to our sheriff's department, 75 percent of the time those that should be jailed are turned loose because there is no bed space for us to rent. It isn't going to be free, but I feel that it is the obligation of the commissioners to do as much as possible to protect the good citizens of our county.

A second issue is that some of the measures coming up for a vote in our general election could cause some serious funding and local control problems for our cities and the county and we will need someone with the time and energy to deal with these issues and Salem. I would be committed to helping our whole county in this effort.

Why should the voters elect you over your opponents?

There are several reasons why I, John Wenzel, should be elected. First, I am not obligated to any person or group. I will make my decisions based on the best information I can get and on what I feel is best for the needs of the county as a whole. Another main reason is that I have resided in, owned a business in, and have worked in and for Morrow County for the last 23 years. As a long-time, permanent resident, I have a real vested interest in us having a positive, successful county government for now and the future. I will spend whatever time and energy it takes to ensure that we have one.

Bill "Whisker Bill" Marren, 42, Boardman, has lived in the county since 1981.

Marren, who is single and has one grown child, is the former owner of "Whisker Bill's" restaurant and bar. He is now employed with the TACX hay cubing operation. Marren graduated from Caldwell Senior High School at Caldwell, Idaho. He has been involved with Operation Graduation, which is a golf tournament which raises funds for the Riverside High School's drug and alcohol-free graduation party. He has also worked with Boardman Police Chief Greg Sayles on a community watch program for Boardman.

What do you feel is your role as Morrow County Commissioner?

I'm not going to pretend that I know everything about Morrow County. Basically, I want to make decisions to decide what is best for Morrow County.

As a board member, do you feel you represent the county as a whole or the area from which you were elected?

Definitely as the whole county. The county has to operate as an entire unit, rather than as bits and pieces of a whole.

How can you help accommodate the growth and industry, and accompanying problems, in the north end of the county, while maintaining quality of life in an insecure economic situation in the south end of the county?

By promoting business in the north end of the county and promoting industry in the south county. The more industry we bring into the county as a whole will increase the tax base, which will help the county operate.

What do you feel is the commissioner's role in the ongoing problems concerning the Morrow County Health District? Should the health district remain as a county-wide entity or should the district be divided?

I don't think all the channels have been exhausted to find a means to come up with a solution that will satisfy the needs of all concerned. I believe in Morrow County and want to work with the other commissioners to find ways to maintain the quality of life here and explore all possibilities.

What is your position on maintaining Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner? Is there a future for the hospital?

There's got to be a future for the hospital. That end of the county needs major medical care.

What is your position concerning the current plans to build a medical clinic in Irrigon?

From talking to a lot of people in Irrigon, they don't seem to feel a need for it. I guess I'll have to go along with the citizens of Irrigon.

What would you like to see changed in road maintenance or the road department?

We need more road maintenance service to the north end of the county.

How would you encourage the separate county departments to be more accountable

to the public?

Consolidate some of these different entities into one office area, if possible, and get them together so they have to work together. As far as accountability to the public, the elected or appointed officials have to make themselves accessible, and people have to get involved in voting their opinions.

Do you feel north Morrow County is well served in the area of county services? If not, how can this be rectified?

With many county services we're very well covered in the north end of the county, but in many we're not. This can be rectified by letting the entire county know the problems that

each community has, by opening up lines of communication so that everyone is aware of what's going on everywhere. The past is the past. Looking toward the future of Morrow County, rather than dwelling on the past, we can open those lines and get on with keeping Morrow County a wonderful place to live.

Should county commissioners be elected from districts or at-large? Why?

I believe at large. It would make it easier to represent the entire county rather than individual areas.

What are the other major issues facing you as a county

commissioner?

Issues are out there today, most likely won't be there come January when I take office if elected.

It's a matter of getting everyone together, making them look at the county as a whole, rather than looking at it as an individual person or communities.

Why should the voters elect you over your opponents?

I have a willingness to listen to what people want and finding innovative ways to make things work. I care about Morrow County. I choose to live here. I could have lived anywhere I wanted to. I hope Morrow County chooses me.

Births

Carson Matthew Morter - a son Carson Matthew was born to Roger and Carla Morter, Heppner, on Wednesday, October 16, 1996, at Kadlec Medical Center in Richland, Washington. The baby weighed 6 lbs. 4 oz. and measured 18 1/2" long.

He joins brothers and sisters, Julie, 10, Brian, 9, Chelsie, 6, Kailey, 4 and Preston, 2. Grandparents are Dexter and Corinne Miles, Heppner, and Perry and Kathy Morter, Ione. Great-grandmother is Ethel Dunbar, Lexington, and great-grandfather is Melvin Siggelkow, Scobey, Montana.

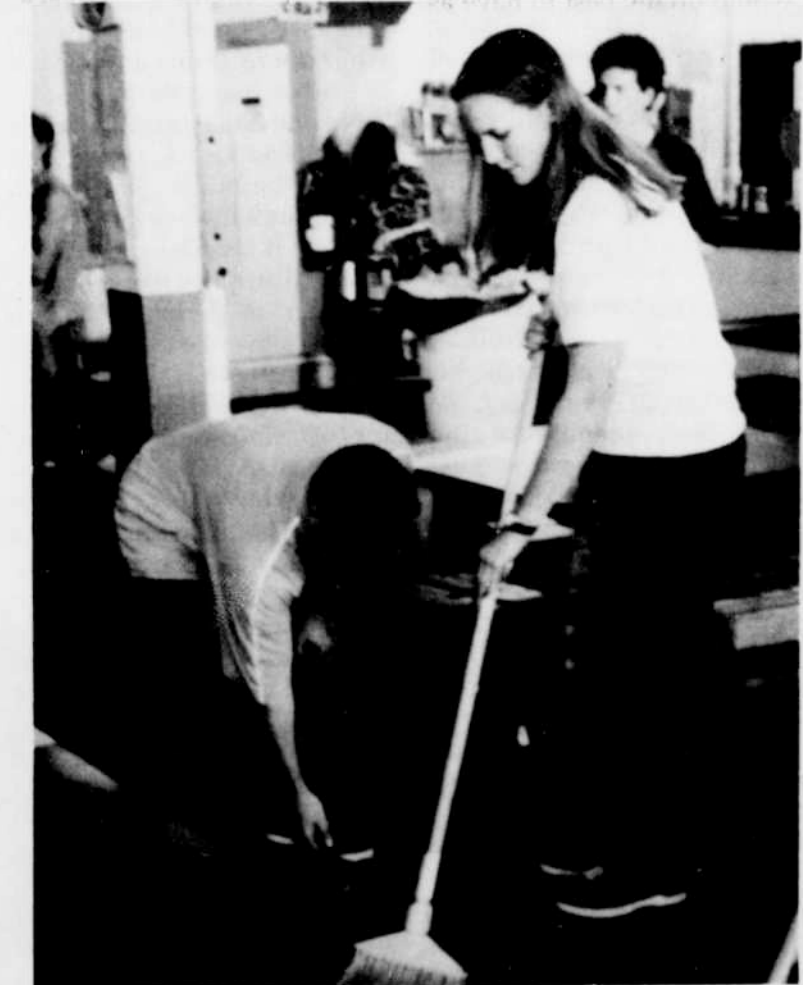
Hans Isah Jordan Rockwell - a son Hans Isah Jordan was born to Natasha and Richard Rockwell of Boardman on October 7, 1996 at Good Shepherd Community Hospital in Hermiston. The baby weighed 7 lbs. 5 oz.

It's trick-or-treat time



Judie Laughlin presents Heppner Elementary School children with trick-or-treat bags on behalf of Soroptimist International of Heppner. The students are members of Karen Clough's kindergarten class.

Lone Youth Group help homeless



Eric Walters and Suzie Heideman sweep the floor after serving the meal at Blanchet House

Seventeen Lone Youth Group members and six adult leaders traveled to Portland recently for a Burnside service trip.

The day started early at Blanchet House, where the group made preparations to serve lunch. Because so many people are fed each day, everyone has a specific task to do. The jobs included helping in the kitchen, handing out spoons at the door, keeping the coffee and water pitchers filled, serving the salad and stew, handing out bread and dessert and cleaning up and resetting the tables.

"We had a counter to keep track of how many bowls of stew we filled in the kitchen and we counted 587," Youth Group members Marc Orem and Jake McElligott reported.

Don Liebendorfer, Blanchet House manager, said there aren't many places for the homeless to eat on Saturdays because most agencies are closed.

The line waiting to get in for the free meal is usually several blocks long. The crew at Blanchet serves breakfast and lunch to the needy 365 days a year. All of the food served comes from store donations or is paid for by private donations. Blanchet does not depend on state or federal funds.

"We served a good meal of stew, tossed salad, bread and ice cream," Youth Group leader Jeri McElligott noted. "The people can eat as much as they want and a few even brought containers so they could take food with them. I was really proud of our kids. Feeding so many people so fast isn't easy. They really had to stay focused and do their jobs well to keep up. Everyone was really tired by the time we finished."

The lone group stayed and ate lunch with the crew, and then walked to Outreach Ministry. Sister Maria Frances, director of Outreach, showed a



Senior Luke Swanson who made his first service trip as a seventh grader, helps Lorie Sullivan hand out spoons at the door



Mark McElligott and Kelly Morgan clean tables at Blanchet House

video of the ministry work they do and then talked to the group about her commitment to help the poor. She asked the students to help the poor when they become adults. "You may be able to come down here and help out, or you may only be able to send money. Perhaps all you will be able to do is to offer a poor person a smile or a kind word. You must do what you can do," she said.

Youth Group members mak-

ing the trip were Luke Swanson, Kelly Morgan, Steve Allen, Suzy Heideman, Eric Walters, Patrick Eberhard, Jake McElligott, Jenny Sullivan, Marc Orem, Niki Sullivan, Tori Odinet, Nikki McElligott, Amber Miles, Mark McElligott, Miranda McElligott, Adrienne Swanson and Corey Morgan. Adult leaders participating were Virgil and Debbie Morgan, Jim and Monica Swanson, Lorie Sullivan and Jeri McElligott.