

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

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
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Off the Wall By Marilyn Robinson

Whether you're shouting "Ho, Ho, Ho" or "whoa, whoa, whoa," Christmas is here, ready or not. That holiday feeling doesn't seem to blossom into reality until the cookies are baked and the packages are wrapped.

There is self-serving satisfaction in the hidden smugness and the lack of compassion given to others who have fallen behind at this task. Yet anymore I lack the energy to tackle those grandiose last-minute projects by burning the midnight oil.

It is so simple to take short cuts that were unheard of in years past. Note the ready-made pies or frozen crusts and the bakery rolls. Who will remember come New Year's? Santa doesn't seem to care anymore that my kitchen isn't filled with rolled and cut-out, hand-decorated cookies.

This house needs more time spent in rearranging the dust. Sure, I've been covering up most surfaces with holiday arrangements and greens, but it's embarrassing to watch young grandkids doodling on the coffee table using only their fingers. However, my masterpiece is an imitation Charlie Brown-type of Christmas tree inspired by Jane Rawlins. Using a spruce limb anchored in a flower pot and stabilized by rocks, with the addition of lights and decorations, it passes for the real thing. One more tree saved for necessities like toilet paper.

Fortunately in this corner of the world, we can truthfully proclaim "Peace on Earth" and rejoice in the true meaning of Christmas. Yet television brings into focus the harsh reality of warring conflicts and suffering that seems to be fueled by religious and cultural differences.

As to Christmas shopping, there is an economical advantage to that last-minute snatching. But it's hard to find an excuse for waiting until the last minute to make pillows, crafts and other homemade gifts. That inspiration seems to be motivated when one's conscience becomes weighed like a stone.

Finally I did stumble on some practical gift items in the last couple of weeks. But I'm very irked that after making these purchases, very soon after, they go on sale or are marked down in price. I propose a different shopping system. Starting in July, merchants should announce that merchandise is the lowest price of the year and from then until Christmas, all prices will increase. What does it matter if everything is marked down after Christmas when credit cards and pocketbooks are maxed out? Should you decide to prepare for next year by shopping the after-Christmas sales, it will probably go out of style, be unwanted or obsolete.

I have to hand it to parents who really go all out when it comes to toys for their kids. I remember when parents were doing battle to get their hands on a Cabbage Patch doll, one of the ugliest dolls yet. Now they're willing to mortgage their home in order to buy a "Tickle Me Elmo" stuffed creature made in China. I wonder how many underage children are working in sweatshops in China to make these sought-after toys? Most kids should be tickled with any kind of gift. If it's tickling that matters, at least my fingers still work. So thankfully I can wish you a holiday greeting straight from the heart without any marked-down value, as I prepare stuffing for the bird that in turn will lead to stuffing my face.

In the Service

Marine Cpl. Michael E. Thomas, son of Melvin Thomas of Irrigon, recently received the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal.

The medal recognizes the service member's "honest and faithful service" during a three year period. To earn it, Thomas achieved and maintained a sat-

isfactory level of performance and an unblemished conduct record for the entire period.

Thomas is currently assigned with Marine Wing Support Squadron 171, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan.

The 1992 graduate of Riverside High School in Boardman joined the Marine Corps in August 1993.

Economic fund seeks applications

Morrow County is encouraging communities, special districts and non-profit organizations to submit applications for funds through the State Community Economic Revitalization Team (SCERT) process.

The SCERT process has three categories: community and infrastructure, ecosystem investment and other. Projects will be evaluated and prioritized by the county court, in cooperation with the Economic Development Committee that consists of representatives from each community in Morrow County.

Projects within the community and infrastructure and ecosystem investment category

must be "ready to proceed" with all engineering and feasibility studies done. The "other" category will enable communities to apply for funds for marketing feasibility studies, curriculum development proposals, preliminary planning or engineering elements for projects that are not "ready to proceed."

Information and applications may be obtained by contacting Rick Minster, Morrow County Economic Development coordinator (MCEDC) at (541) 989-8200, P.O. Box 453, Lexington, OR. 97839.

All applications must be submitted to the office of the MCEDC no later than Friday, Dec. 27.

Extension honors outstanding work

The Oregon State University Extension Association (OSUEA) presented awards to Extension service employees recently.

The OSUEA's Classified-Management Staff Award went to Molly Rill of Heppner, who is the office coordinator of the Morrow County Extension office. Rill was praised for her "people skills," her "untiring dedication in getting the job done," and for her work in overseeing the upgrade of the office's electronic network, which includes computing

hardware, software and satellite receivers.

Bill Broderick, also of Heppner, a 10 year Extension veteran, received the OSUEA's Experienced Faculty Award. Broderick, OSU's 4-H and livestock agent for Morrow County, was cited for many efforts, including a nationally recognized Hispanic Youth Leadership Program, conducted in collaboration with Umatilla County. He was also praised for contributions to the resolution of natural resource management issues in the county.

Ione Booster Club meets

The Ione Booster Club met recently at Beecher's Cafe.

Secretary-treasurer Del LaRue reported the expenditures for the past month. Booster Club bought three girls' basketballs for the high school program and spend \$80 on music for the Ione community band.

Joe McElligott reported on the state champion signs that are planned for the east and west ends of town. Harold Rietmann is designing and making the signs through funds provided from the Gale Gray Memorial.

Three fund raisers were discussed. The stereo CD player raffle was Dec. 17. Booster Club

will sponsor a steak feed during the Condon game Friday, Jan. 31. Shop-n-Kart has agreed to donate several shopping carts of food to raffle off during basketball games.

The next Ione Booster Club meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 9, at 8 p.m. at Beecher's Cafe.

Market Report

Compliments of the Morrow County Grain Growers

Monday, Dec. 23	
Soft White	
Dec.-Feb.	\$4.05
Barley	
Dec.-Feb.	\$119

We'd like to thank you for your business in 1995 and wish you a **Merry Christmas** and a **Happy New Year!**



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**A Special Star
A Special Night**

Great expectations for a great Christmas... this year and every year. To our customers we wish a wonderful holiday!

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We Gather Together

As we join with all our friends in worship, we're pleased to extend our sincere wishes for a happy holiday season.

From all of us at Central Market

PSSST.... Guess what!



Bank of Eastern Oregon now has FREE CHECKS!

That's right, Honey. The free wallet-style checks are available to both current and new customers. But don't keep it a secret, pass it on!!

Bank of Eastern Oregon
"around the corner, not around the state"

Arlington	Condon	Heppner	Ione
454-2636	384-3501	676-9125	422-7466

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YAW'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

Happy New Year!

KISN RADIO'S D.J. "JEFF GALUSHA"
8:00 P.M. TILL 2:00 A.M.

CHAMPAGNE DINNER FOR 2
INCLUDES: CHAMPAGNE, PARTY FAVORS & MIDNITE BREAKFAST BUFFET & DANCE
RESERVATIONS RECOMMENDED

Door Prizes--Raffle-Games & More

\$5.00 admission INCLUDES BREAKFAST BUFFET included in Champagne Dinner Package

For Reservations or Information Call: 676-9489