

CHAMBER CHAT LINE MAIN STREET NEWS  
WEEK OF AUGUST 11, 1997

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MAIN STREET WEEKLY REPORT

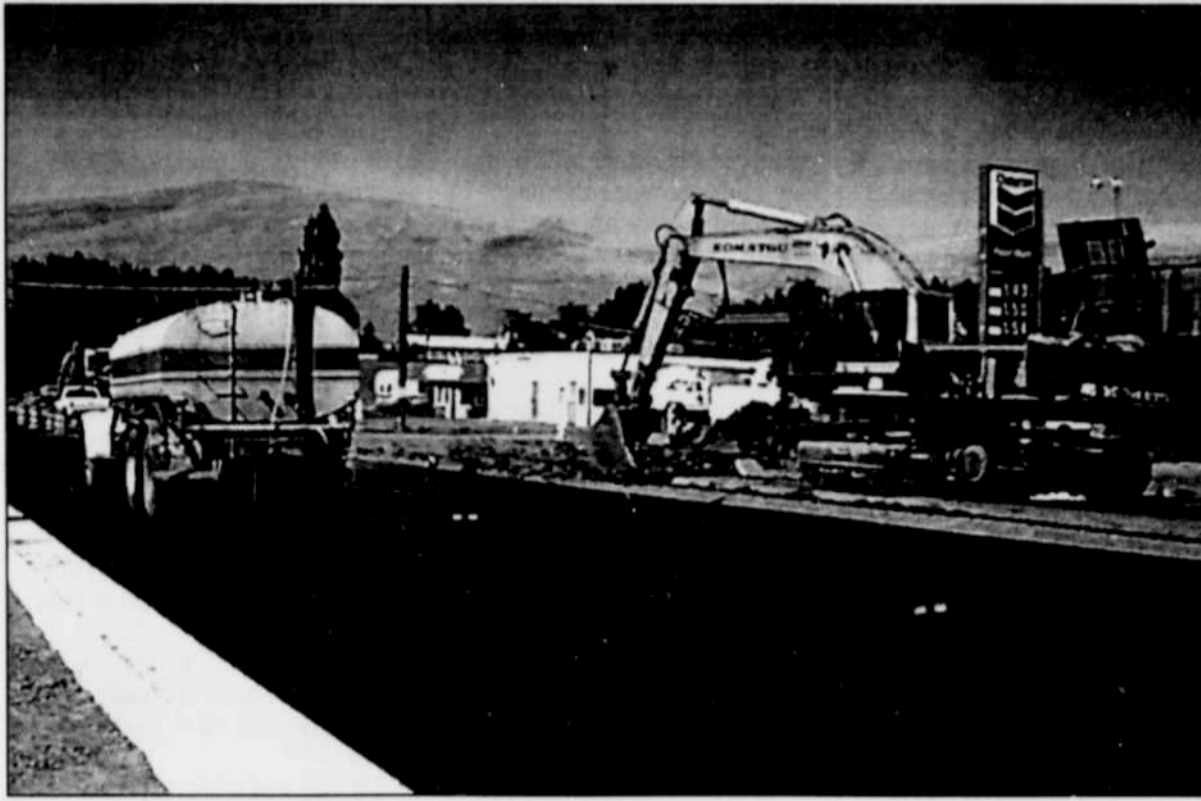
**Vision:** During this week of 'cowboy dreams' remember what Main Street will look like next year...ornate light posts, four varieties of trees, brick pavers along the utility strip, landscaped bubbles on the corners, flowers, shrubs, and the city logo in the center of the intersection of Willow and Main. Heppner will be known for this unique emblem.

**Bubbles/bumpouts:** we have been assured that there will be nearly 12 feet on each side of the center line between the landscaped bumpouts. They will slow traffic and make crossing at intersections safer.

**New paving** should be ready for traffic by Tuesday or Wednesday. The specs must be met before traffic is allowed. A cylinder break will be made to test for compression strength.

**Eastside** will be torn out this week, that includes the street and most of the sidewalk with the exception of vault areas. Hitching posts were suggested to handle the horses during Saturday's parade.

**Westside** driveways will be poured this week. Weaver had them ready to go as promised last week, however, there was a sub-contractor hold up. With so many projects all over the state, this can be expected. City responsibilities are completed and three feet of concrete is poured adjacent to the curb.



Drivers may now use the west side of Main Street in Heppner. Oregon Department of Transportation workers will now begin construction of the east side. Construction has begun on both sides of May Street.

Line dance demo added for fair

A line dance demonstration has been added to the Saturday entertainment schedule at the Morrow County Fair, beginning at 2 p.m. April Dyntera of Pilot Rock and a group of her intermediate line

dance students will demonstrate their skills and, time permitting, will offer interested onlookers a chance to participate.

Dyntera teaches a variety of country dance classes in Pendle-

ton and Pilot Rock for Blue Mountain Community College. She will offer a line dance and western couples class this fall term in the Heppner area beginning in late September.

Local wells tested for nitrate levels

Combine "watermelon" and "water testing" for a festive and educational event. More than 45 private wells were tested for nitrate contamination at the 1997 Watermelon Festival in Irrigon.

Of the wells tested, five had levels of 10 or higher milligrams nitrate-nitrogen per liter (mg/L) of water. Levels of 10 mg nitrate (or higher) exceed the state and federal health limit standard, and should not be consumed by infants, pregnant or nursing women, according to Carol Michael, Oregon State University Extension agent.

The majority of wells tested had nitrate levels of 0-2 mg/L, which is within the naturally occurring nitrate level. According to Michael, many private well owners participating in the free tests are new residents of the Columbia Basin. "I am glad to see new residents learning the importance of testing private water wells annually for nitrate contamination," she said. "If high nitrates were detected at our testing activity, owners were advised to get the well tested again at a testing lab certified by the state of Oregon. Owners of wells within the normal range received educational material, '12 Simple Things You Can Do To Protect Your Well,' and encouraged to have the well checked annually."

The nitrate testing was conducted by Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardeners and other volunteers. Louis Knaak and Katherine Anderson of Hermiston; Mary Ellen Coleman of Irrigon, and others conducted the testing under the supervision of Rich Topeliek, Master Gardener coordinator. Water collection bottles and testing chemicals were provided by Oregon State University Home\*A\*Syst Groundwater Education program.

The Umatilla River Basin has long been noted for nitrate contamination in groundwater, said Michael. Natural soil nitrogen may be the source of some nitrate, although concentrations greater than three parts per million usually indicate sources such as septic tank effluent, fertilizers, animal manure, industrial waste or sewage sludge, she said. OSU Extension Service has been offering free baseline indicator nitrate tests in the Umatilla Basin at the Watermelon Festival since 1995.

For information on protecting private drinking water wells from contamination, contact the Morrow County office of Oregon State University Extension Service, 676-9642 or (800) 342-3664 outside Heppner.

Closure to begin in John Day Unit

A regulated closure on all protected lands in the John Day Unit of the Central Oregon District of the Department of Forestry will go into effect on Thursday, August 14, at 12:01 a.m.

The lands include all private, county and state lands in Morrow, Grant, Gilliam, Harney and Wheeler counties.

Regulated closure requirements include: no smoking except in vehicles or buildings; open fires prohibited, including campfires, charcoal fires, cooking fires and warming fires, except at designated locations. Portable cooking stoves using liquified or bottled fuels are allowed; full size shovel, axe/pulaski and one gallon of water or 2-1/2 pound fire extinguisher are required while traveling except on state and county roads; no motorized vehicles off improved roads; cutting, grinding and welding of metal is prohibited after 1 p.m.; non-industrial chain saw use is prohibited after 1 p.m. and there must be at least a one-hour fire watch; fireworks are prohibited.

For more information, contact the Oregon Department of Forestry office at Fossil, 763-2575; John Day, 575-1139; or Monument, 934-2300.

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