

HEPPNER

# Gazette times

50¢

VOL. 118 NO. 25 8 Pages Wednesday, June 23, 1999 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

## Alcohol not a factor in tragedy

# Two Heppner youth die in auto accident

A tragic automobile accident around 10 p.m. Wednesday, June 16, near Lexington left two young people dead and their families and the Heppner-Lexington-Ione communities grieving.

Elizabeth Sue "Beth" Baker, 16, Heppner, was thrown from a vehicle driven by Caleb McDaniel, 19, Heppner, and died at the scene. John Roy Blake, 21, also a passenger in McDaniel's automobile, was removed from the vehicle by Heppner Fire Department personnel and transported to Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner. Life flight was activated, but he died at the hospital. Blake was wearing a seat belt.

According to Morrow County Undersheriff Larry Sample, alcohol was not a factor in the accident.

Sample said that McDaniel "had no measurable blood alcohol." Sample said that McDaniel blew a .00 on a breathalyzer test taken after the accident.

The sheriff's department initially had said that alcohol was involved. According to the Morrow County Sheriff's log, McDaniel was initially charged with two counts of Manslaughter II and driving under the influence of intoxicants.

McDaniel was also transported to Pioneer Memorial where he was admitted for observation, but was released with minor injuries.

According to the sheriff's report, the vehicle driven by McDaniel and another vehicle, driven by Victoria Odinet, 17, Ione, were driving on Clarks Canyon Road about a mile from Lexington, when McDaniel's vehicle passed Odinet's car, failed to negotiate a curve and rolled several times. Odinet's



John Roy Blake

vehicle was not in the crash.

A third vehicle, driven by Elizabeth Allen, 16, Ione, followed Odinet's car. The vehicles were all headed back toward Lexington when the accident occurred.

Camille Sykes, 16, Heppner, was a passenger in Odinet's vehicle. Rosanne Baker, 18, Ione, was a passenger in Allen's car. None of the teenagers was determined to have been drinking.



Elizabeth Sue "Beth" Baker

A graveside service for Beth Baker was held at the Heppner Masonic Cemetery on Monday, June 21. A memorial service for John Blake was held at the Heppner City Park on Tuesday, June 22.

Beth was the daughter of Glorine Wright of Heppner and Bill Baker of Tillamook. She had attended Heppner High School where she was a sophomore this last year. John was the son of James Blake of Heppner and the late Pam Blake. He was a graduate of Heppner High School.

## St. Pat's committee donates \$2,000 to scholarship trust



St. Patrick's Day Chairman Claudia Hughes (right) presents check for \$2,000 to South Morrow County Scholarship trust fund treasurer Sharon Harrison. The trust accepts money for scholarships for Heppner and Ione graduating seniors.

## Health district plans meeting

The Morrow County Health District board will hold a special board meeting on Wednesday, June 23 at 6:30 p.m. by telephone conference call.

The public may participate in the conference call at the Morrow County Health District administrative offices, 564 E. Pioneer Drive, Heppner.

## Knapweed biological control program shows success

A tiny visitor from Greece, who has been living on the range lands of south Morrow County the past seven years, is proving to be a welcome immigrant in our fight against knapweed.

Introduced to Morrow County in 1992, the seedhead feeding weevil has been doing its job and reproducing so well Morrow County Weed Control Supervisor Dave Pranger is planning to harvest the little bugs.

Knapweed came to the United States from the Mediterranean, and quickly flourished because it had no natural enemies here. In an effort to control the weed through means other than spraying, scientist went overseas to inspect the targeted weeds for natural predators.

The weevil was brought to the United States after extensive study, making sure it would not jump to other plants, and that it would survive the weather and other conditions here.

After testing and cleaning, so no small parasites are attached to the bugs, they were first studied and then released in South Morrow County on property belonging to Claude and Happy Graham in 1992.

After seven years on their own, Pranger says the bugs are doing well. Reaching down to pull up a knapweed plant he shows how the weevil's larvae borrow into the plants seed pods and virtually eat the weeds seeds away leaving it with no way to multiply.

The weevils, on the other hand, have multiplied quite well, and Pranger said anyone in Morrow County who would like to collect some of the insects for distribution on their knapweed invested land, can contact him for instructions on how to collect them. He says other counties and states are also coming to collect the seedhead feeding weevils in the next few months.

"Larinus Minutus (the official name of the insect) is just one of seven different insects being used to battle diffuse knapweed, but it seems to be the one showing the most promise as a long term solution to the knapweed problem in Morrow County," Pranger said.

He said the insect has established itself well in the Cecil and Rhea Creek areas of the county.

"The damage caused by this insect is very noticeable," he says. "So much so that once landowners affected by this weed see the results of this weevil they begin to collect and distribute them as well."

He emphasized the safety of using the tiny bugs. "These insects have all gone through a screening process by the USDA-Ag Research Service before receiving approval for release. It may cost as much as \$500,000 to get an insect cleared for distribution in the states. Some of the insects we have released have come from as far away as Turkey, Greece and Eurasia. All are checked first to make sure they will not cross over to other crops, nursery stock or native plants," he says.

All in all it seems to be a pretty successful project. "Populations have finally reached a level to which visible damage to the knapweed plants is obvious. There have been more than 50 new releases from this site to other areas around the county to help aid them in covering the entire county," Pranger said.

June, July and August are the months to collect and redistribute these insects, so anyone wishing to learn more about biological controls or help with collection and distribution should contact the Morrow county Weed Control office at 989-9502, Pranger said.



Morrow County Weed Control Supervisor Dave Pranger collects insects with a net.



A couple of the small insects that have been helping to control knapweed in Morrow County.



A knapweed damaged by seedhead feeding weevil

## Sen. Gordon Smith to present award to Nikki McElligott

Oregon Senator Gordon H. Smith will be in Pendleton and Umatilla Friday and Saturday, June 25 and 26, to speak on salmon recovery and present an award to Nikki McElligott of Ione.

Smith will present McElligott with an American Red Cross Certificate of Merit.

In 1997 McElligott, who will be a senior at Ione High School this fall, was working on her father's farm when she witnessed Lee Ansoategui, an employee of her father's, fall off his horse into a pond. Ansoategui had suffered a stroke several months before and was unable to swim. McElligott was aware of this fact and pulled

him from the water, saving his life.

The Certificate of Merit is the Red Cross's highest award for lifesaving.

On Friday, Senator and Mrs. Smith will host an open house at the new field office location in Pendleton from 4-5:30 p.m. Smith's new office is in suite #3 of the Jaeger Building, located at 116 South Main Street, Pendleton.

## Shrine game tickets available

Tickets are still available for the East-West Shrine Game. For tickets contact Gene Orwick, Lexington.

Season Ending **MOWER SALE**

**Snapper and MTD**

Limited to Stock on Hand ~ Sale through June 30th

**MORROW COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS**

Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at [www.mcgg.net](http://www.mcgg.net)

