

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

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES

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David Sykes Publisher
April Hilton-Sykes Editor

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Gazette-Times will not publish unsigned letters. Please include your address and phone number on all letters for use by the G-T office. The G-T reserves the right to edit.

Have compassion for young people and their families

To the Editor:

On Wednesday, June 16 there was a tragic accident on Clarks Canyon Road in Lexington, Oregon, involving young people from the Heppner and Lone communities. The accident resulted in loss of life. Dead are Elizabeth Sue Baker, 16, John Roy Blake, 21.

Richard Cockle of The Oregonian might have printed these facts. Yet he chose to speculate, use creative license, interview grieving teenagers on the streets of Heppner and fuel rumors among our communities, causing additional pain and anguish for all the families involved. Richard Cockle needs to meet a deadline. We need to lay the dead to rest, mourn our loved ones, comfort the survivors, forgive the young and foolish who will answer to the law-not to me, not to you.

Families in anguish. Bill Baker, Glorine Wright, Sarah Baker, parents, sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles and big brother Michael.

Jim Blake and all of John's brothers and sisters, friends who opened their hearts to this shy young man and included him with acceptance and compassion.

Newspapers throw items together and convince us that all that is written is truth. It's only news to them. Impersonal sensationalism. Big story. We're at home here with the Heppner Gazette. Let's state facts.

1. Three vehicles. In the pick-up that failed the turn. Driven by Caleb. John is in seat belt, dies at hospital (Pioneer). Beth is thrown from the vehicle, and dies at the scene. Caleb has minor injuries but a lifetime of guilt, remorse, accepting the legalities and punishment and missing two dear friends for the rest of his life.

2. In the second car is Tori Odinet. Her passenger is Camille Sykes.

3. In the third car is Elizabeth Allen. Her passenger is Rosanne Baker.

4. Caleb passes Tori and Liz. Tori passes Caleb. Liz backs off. Caleb again passes Tori. Unable to negotiate the turn at such speed he rolls the pick-up.

Seven young people. Two dead.

5. Rosanne and Liz run to Lee Wagonblast's ranch home and call 911.

6. They return to the scene and wait. Caleb, Tori and Camille comfort John. Rosanne sits by Beth, in a pool of blood, patting and comforting her cousin until help arrives.

Kids are screaming and crying. Their friends are dying or dead. The stupidity and foolishness of teen-age independence and rebellion has ended with the cold reality of death. Childhood ends for some with terror, and for two, John and Beth, forever.

7. These young people were not drinking. Poor choices, not intoxication, were the factors.

In an ideal world teenagers would not grow up with their own actions, thoughts and decisions. We as parents would keep them perfect and safe and, God knows-alive.

So for accuracy in journalism- question. Always question- stop the rumors. Talk to Glorine. Talk to Scott and Joan. Talk to Jim Blake. Don't spread rumors. Speak only compassion. Support your co-workers, your family, your neighbors, your acquaintances, your friends. Let's stop the judgmental attitudes and gossip.

Love these people in their pain. Love Caleb and Tori. Recognize the pain and grief in these young people.

Acknowledge the pain of Liz, Rosanne, Camille, innocent of racing cars, but in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Acknowledge the parents of all these young people. Tragedy is not contagious. Neighbors, family, friends could take a meal instead of a rumor, a hug instead of being ignored.

When you touch tragedy, experience it, try to heal from it. You need to say to yourself softly, "There but for the Grace of God go I."

We buried Beth yesterday. We memorialize John today.

And sadly, life goes on, with deadlines for all of us.

(s) Robin Baker
Lone

Fight for passage of fair pesticide act

To the Editor:

There is controversy brewing in our nation's capitol and across the country that I think deserves the attention of area residents.

A coalition of food, agriculture and pest management interests is concerned that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is unfairly implementing the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). This 1996 federal law significantly changes the way pesticides are evaluated and registered for use. While those of us who depend on pesticides support the fundamental goals of the law, especially the additional protections for infants and children, we fear that the EPA will base future decisions on pesticide availability on "worst case" theoretical assumptions, not on actual use and scientific principles.

Such decisions won't just affect me, it will also affect consumers. Unfair implementation of the FQPA could mean that I will lose important pesticides that protect the public from disease-carrying mosquitoes and ticks and other pests such as spiders, and will lose products that enhance outdoor recreational areas. This would also affect my business by not being able to continue using the proper pesticides needed to maintain a good, safe and healthy quality of life for my customers.

The Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act (H.R. 1592) would ensure that the FQPA is implemented according to the most modern, scientific standards. Introduced by a bipartisan group of congressional representatives, the bill would mean those who use pesticides will have continued access to effective, reliable pesticides, as long as they meet rigorous, scientific safety standards, after a full and fair review by the EPA.

H.R. 1592 is a sensible and balanced approach to fairly implementing FQPA. It will avoid unnecessary disruptions in food production and, most of all, ensure protection of public health. I urge residents to fight for its passage. Contact your senators and representatives.

(s) Jean Jepsen
Jepsen Pest Control, Inc.
Dba: Dobyens Pest Control
Lone

Fire season declared

Closed fire season was declared on the John Day Unit within the Central Oregon District of the Oregon Department of Forestry on Monday, June 21.

During closed fire season, open burning is restricted except by permit.

The following requirements for forest operations will be in effect:

- equipment must be equipped with spark arresters and fire extinguishers;
- fire tools must be carried;
- watchman service is required;
- smoking is prohibited within an operation area.

These restrictions apply to lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry, Central Oregon District, in Morrow, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Umatilla and Wheeler counties.

To obtain a burning permit or for more information, contact the Department of Forestry-John Day, 575-1139; Fossil, 763-2575; Monument-934-2300.

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Heppner Gazette-Times

Mountain men and their ladies rendezvous in Heppner



Photo by Allison Sykes

Left to Right: Doug DesJarlais, 48, Ardyce DesJarlais, 47, Dick Blankenship, 50, Rita Blankenship, 52, all from Montana, Mary Dement, 44, and Rick Dement, 45, California, enjoy some ice cream while walking through downtown Heppner. All three couples have participated in the Mountain Men Rendezvous for the past 20 years. The Rendezvous is taking place near Heppner this week.

Support the senior center

To the Editor:

This is written in support of the St. Patrick Senior Center.

To those who may not know, this center is unique among senior centers in Oregon in that it combines three entities to provide services for seniors.

1. The city council (now the Housing Authority) manages 19 apartments for seniors and is funded by the rent from those.

2. The Area Agency on Aging (under CAPECO) provides nutrition in a meal on Wednesdays and some frozen meals, and is funded by federal and state money and supplies and donations from the recipients of the meals.

3. Heppner Senior Center Board of Directors, Inc., provides the place (most of the first floor) where the meals are served and various other social, educational and health activities for seniors. They pay for utilities, insurance and maintenance and are funded by fund-raising projects, rentals, and donations-no tax support. Volunteers do the work. Their office is also unique, the only senior center in the area kept open five days a week entirely by volunteers.

Senior transportation buses and vans is a separate system, funded by the state with the STF (Special Transportation Fund) from cigarette taxes. It is administered by the Morrow County Court.

Now a problem is growing that the community needs to know about. Although the Housing Authority has been very helpful in sharing housekeeping in the front rooms, the Senior Center Board has experienced a declining income. Some traditional fund-raisers have been dropped and income has lowered for others. For months expenses have exceeded income. After 11 years of wear the place needs repairs and replacements. The time has come for us

seniors (anyone over 55), and others who believe Heppner needs this center, to get on a path to better fund-raising. The board is taking a first step by giving a yard/rummage sale July 16-17. They hope for donations of help and items of all shapes and sizes that will attract buyers.

For free pick-up, call the center, 676-9030, or R.G. Watkins, 676-5393.

Quoting President Bush on his parachute jump on his 75th birthday, "Old folks can do stuff."

(s) Jane Rawlins
Heppner

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55 gal. can or drum \$5.00
Pickup load \$10.00
Minimum \$3.00

Loveseat, sofa, large chair, mattress, \$8.00 each;
console t.v., washer, dryer, stove, water heater, \$6.50 each;
refrigerator, freezer, \$12.00 each. Tires: car \$4.00;
with rim, \$6.50 each; truck \$9.00 each; truck with rim \$15.00;
tractor/duplex \$20.00 each; grader \$37.00 each.

NEW MINIMUM EFFECTIVE July 1, 1999

Pilot Rock man dies in motorcycle accident

A Pilot Rock man, Gary Leon Sells, 55, died in a one-vehicle accident on Friday, June 18, around 2:30 p.m. on Highway 207, milepost 20, south of Ruggs.

According to a report from the Morrow County Sheriff's Office, Sells was riding a motorcycle south on Highway 207 toward

Spray when he went off the left side of the roadway.

The accident was discovered by a passing motorist who called the sheriff's office. Sells was pronounced dead at the scene.

The accident is under investigation by the sheriff's office.

RECYCLE TODAY

Morrow County Transfer Station Accepts: Aluminum-Glass Bottles-Scrap Metal-Newspapers-Tin Cans-Tires

Finley Buttes Accepts: Aluminum Batteries-Cardboard/Brown Bags-Glass Bottles-Tires-Scrap Metal-Tin-Newspapers-Used Motor Oil

Lone & Heppner: Newspapers

Boardman & Irrigon: Aluminum-Cardboard-Glass Bottles-Scrap Metal-Tin Cans-Newspaper

For more information call 541-989-9500
Morrow County Public Works

**Sixth Annual
LONE 4th of JULY CELEBRATION**

Best Ball Golf Tournament

Saturday, July 3rd

10 a.m. until approx. 3 p.m.
Please be at the course at 9:30 a.m.

Cost is \$25 per person (18 holes of golf)

This year, proceeds go to the Jason Halvorsen Memorial Scholarship Fund

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