

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

**Heppner**  
**GAZETTE-TIMES**

U.S.P.S. 240-420

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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## 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.

### Regulations exist for very good reasons

To the Editor:

I wanted to respond to Mr. Greenup's letter in the July 28 issue of the G-T where he expresses his frustration and disappointment with our response to the vehicle fire incident on the Willow Creek Road on July 23.

This letter is essentially the same as one which I sent to him right after the incident. I felt that our agency perspective should be offered to the community, so that people understand why we have the policies that we have. First I want to say that I certainly do understand Mr. Greenup's sentiments, but I would like to take this opportunity to explain that our "rules and regulations" are in place for very good reasons.

First let me explain that our fire fighters did not avoid suppression action because "they weren't on FS ground". The area where the fire occurred is within a cooperative protection boundary with the state of Oregon, but even within these boundaries our actions (as well as the state of Oregon's) are limited to the suppression of wild land fires only. Our fire fighters (and theirs) are only trained to deal with wild land fires and have neither the equipment or training to address vehicle or structural fires.

Structural and vehicle fires entail added risks of unknown hazardous materials, including flammable and explosive materials, dangerous chemicals and different fire effects related to burning materials not at all similar to vegetation. Structural fire fighters must have many hours of additional training in how to assess these situations,

and specialized equipment available to deal with toxic fumes and synthetic burning materials.

Fire fighter safety is our first and foremost priority. Our policy on not fighting vehicle or structural fires is nationwide and very longstanding. Our employees' objective in responding is to prevent the spread of the fire to surrounding lands, should the vehicle or structure fire escape the immediate incident area.

I sympathize with the family who lost their possessions, it's certainly a sad thing to happen. I know that the response observed is frustrating and may paint a negative picture of the Forest Service and federal employees in general. However, an unsafe response by untrained and unequipped people would be nothing short of negligent. I want each and every one of my employees home alive and uninjured at the end of every shift they work. In addition to our regular workforce, many of our fire fighters are the young men and women of our community, our sons and daughters, and I feel a huge responsibility for their safety as they are entrusted to me each summer. Any one of them could have been who might have responded that day, and I would hope they would have all done exactly as they have been instructed... that being we do not take suppression actions on vehicle or structure fires.

I'm glad Mr. Greenup cared enough to write to me, and I appreciate this opportunity to explain our position to the community at large.

(s) Delanne Ferguson  
Heppner District Ranger  
Heppner

### Applauds Garden Club beautification programs

To the Editor:

I certainly appreciate the beautification programs of the Heppner Garden Club. The work of the members makes the drive into town more delightful. Their plants on Main Street are an excellent contribution. The "Yard of the Month" program is a wonderful way to increase our

awareness of our beautiful neighborhoods. Members are especially active as the week of fair and rodeos approaches, and we are enriched by their efforts.

I know I am only one of many who applaud their successful efforts to beautify Heppner.

(s) Doris Brosnan  
Heppner

### Pre-school to begin Sept. 30, open house Aug. 31

The Heppner Pre-school will start Monday, Sept. 13, at the Heppner DayCare.

Four-year olds will attend Mondays and Tuesdays from 8:30-11:30 a.m. Three-year olds will attend Wednesdays from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Cost is \$50 a month for four

year olds and \$25 a month for three year olds.

Pre-school has planned an open house on Wednesday, Aug. 31, for sign-up and "a little hands-on for the kids to get acquainted with the center," said Merry Brannon, director of the day care center.

Brannon will teach pre-school this year with assistance from Renee Yocom.

Anyone with any questions or comments is invited to stop by during the open house or call Brannon at 676-5429.

**FAX PAPER**  
Gazette-Times • 676-9228

**DON'T MISS OUT!**  
Phone in your entries  
for the Morrow County Jackpot Rodeo  
Entries will be open Sunday & Monday, Aug. 15-16, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
To enter, call Marlene Currin, rodeo secretary at (541) 676-9771.

### Road Construction Status Report

Notice to the citizens who utilize and enjoy the Willow Creek (Coat Mine Grade) area:

The U.S. Dept. of Transportation lists its planned construction activities on Willow Creek Road for the week of Monday, Aug. 9:

This week, Tidewater will finish hauling base aggregate material from the Summerfield Ridge Quarry site to the project and start hauling the next course of aggregate material. This site is near the intersection of Black Mountain Road and FS 53 Road. There will be between 6-10 trucks utilizing the main road between Black Mountain Road and Cutsforth Park, hauling the base aggregate and emulsified aggregate base material. There has been a truck sign placed at each side of the intersection to the quarry site.

The next course will be an emulsified aggregate base, a 4" layer of aggregate mixed with one percent asphalt oil, to seal the base aggregate. After the emulsified aggregate base course has been laid, the asphalt running surface will be placed. They will continue working on the Penland Lake Road intersection and should have it completed by Wednesday.

The surveyors will continue setting stakes for the top of sub-grade as they continue towards the end of the project. There should not be any trucks hauling material to the 20 mph corner waste site this week.

Emergency access through the project will be maintained throughout the construction season.

Willow Creek Road will remain open to local traffic only, as far as Cutsforth Park. The park will remain open through the normal season. The detour route through Shaw Creek Road to the four corners, to Penland Lake and Ukiah, is and will remain open to all traffic.

During the 1999 construction season, Willow Creek Road (Coal Mine Grade) (FS 53 Road) will remain closed to through traffic, from Cutsforth Park to the intersection of FS Roads 5321 (Penland Lake Road).

Watch for travelers, campers and wood cutters, observe the warning signs, including the speed limit, on the Shaw Creek Road detour route, and observe the barricades at both ends of the construction zone. Have a safe summer and remember that the barricaded road closures are for the traveling public's safety.

Federal Highways asks the traveling public for their patience, consideration and cooperation, and appreciates input from the public.

Contact Robert G. Toops, project engineer, at (541) 676-5904 in Heppner for additional information.

### Community choir rehearsal

The South Morrow County Community Choir will hold their first rehearsal on Monday, Sept. 13, at 5:30 p.m. at the Heppner High School band room.

The choir is funded by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District and is sponsored by the South Morrow County Arts Council.

### Garden Club presents state contest awards



Poster contest award winners (left to right): Nathan Van Cleave, Kristen Van Cleave, Anna Unruh and Matthew Van Cleave. Not pictured are Nathan Kennedy, Maurica Klein and Nicole Fritz.

The Heppner Garden Club presented awards to state poster contest winners at a club meeting August 2.

The young people received awards for their Smokey Bear and Woodsey Owl environmental posters and enjoyed cookies and punch, courtesy of the Garden Club.

Award winners include: Nathan Van Cleave, Kristen Van Cleave, Anna Unruh, Matthew Van Cleave, Nathan Kennedy, Sarah Johnson, Drew Johnson, Nathan Kennedy and Maurica Klein.

### Correction

A story in the August 4 Gazette-Times was incorrect.

The G-T listed Nonnee Walters as the grand champion of the Morrow County 4-H Horse Show and Bobbie Rankin as the reserve grand champion of the show.

The story should have listed Nonnee Walters as the reserve champion of senior horse showmanship, but overall grand champion of the event and Bobbie as senior horse showmanship champion, but reserve grand champion of the event.

Rankin was high point rider overall.

The winners of the dressage, first level, test 1 were also listed incorrectly. Tracy Rankin was champion and Bobbie Rankin was reserve champion.

### Gun Club plans 'end of harvest' shoot

The Morrow County Gun Club (MCGC) will hold an "end of harvest" shoot on Saturday, Aug. 14, with a family barbecue to begin at noon and shooting to start at 1 p.m.

MCGC invites everyone to "load up the family," bring their own meat and a salad and join them for an afternoon of kids' and ladies' shoots, along with regular trap and special games.

For more information, call 676-5275 or 676-5042.

In further news, MCGC member Jeff Cutsforth won the B class singles championship at an ATA shoot in Hermiston on July 31, shooting 97 of 100 targets.

**BUSINESS CARDS**  
Heppner Gazette-Times



Poster contest winners Sarah and Drew Johnson.

### Commission to award grants

The Morrow County Commission on Children & Families is seeking community development proposals for the October-December 1999 quarter.

"The Community Development Fund was established for anticipated yet unidentified community needs and leverage funds and resources into services, advocacy and unique application projects for the children, youth and families of Morrow County," said Dar Merrill, director of the Morrow County Commission on Children & Families.

The commission is seeking new proposals for the upcoming quarter. There is approximately \$1,500 available this quarter and

the maximum grant is \$500. Examples of reasonable Community Development Fund requests include, but are not limited to: seasonal program needs; small capital expenditures (except for private property); service program staff training; one-time events and pilot projects, said Merrill.

Next quarter's proposals will be reviewed on Tuesday, Sept. 14, during the monthly commission meeting but must be received by the commission office by Monday, Aug. 30 to be considered.

Applications are available at the commission office at 120 South Main in Heppner or by calling 676-9675.

### Diversification study topic of meeting

The public is invited to meetings scheduled in Heppner, Ione and Lexington to discuss the recently completed Willow Creek Valley Economic Diversification Study. Dates and times for the meetings are as follows:

-Heppner: August 24, 12 noon - no-host lunch sponsored by the Heppner Chamber of Commerce

at Cal's Restaurant; -Lexington: August 24, 7 p.m. -Morrow County School District office;

-Ione: August 25, 12 noon - no host lunch sponsored by ICABO at Beecher's Restaurant.

Copies of the study will be available beginning the week of August 16 at the Heppner, Lexington and Ione city halls and at the library in Heppner.

**Murray's Country Rose Micro-Brewed Beer & Wine Tasting at the Morrow County Fair**  
Wednesday, Aug. 18th, 6:30-9 p.m.

FEATURING WINES RECOMMENDED BY WINE SPECTATOR MAGAZINE FROM LOCAL COLUMBIA VALLEY WINERIES

(Italian Sodas will also be available!)

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