

Bessie Wetzell
U of O Newspaper Library
Eugene, OR 97403

HEPPNER

Gazette Times

50¢

VOL. 119 NO. 3 8 Pages Wednesday, January 19, 2000 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Morrow County citizens of the year named

The Heppner Chamber of Commerce named the citizens of the year for 1999 at its annual Town and Country Banquet Thursday, January 13, at the Heppner Elks Club.



Sam Bellamy

Sam Bellamy, Lexington, was named man of the year for his "unceasing devotion and untiring effort" for the betterment of the Morrow County Fairgrounds.

Bellamy, who has been a member of the Morrow County Fair Board since 1995 and chair since 1996, has been instrumental in the building of the new Wilkinson Arena, "planning fund raisers, rounding up volunteers, clearing the grounds and putting up red iron," said presenter Bill Kuhn.

Bellamy and his wife, Mary Kay, have been married for 26 years and have three sons, Clint, Cody and Travis. Bellamy is active in the First Christian Church where he is an elder.



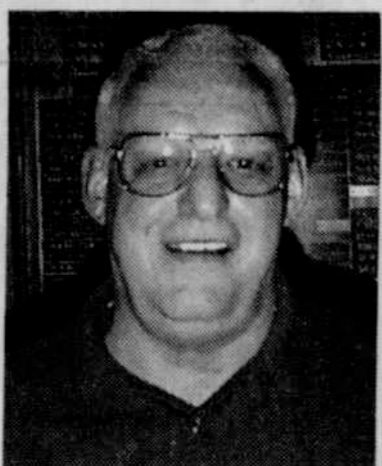
Cyde Estes

Woman of the year, Cyde Estes, is a native Heppnerite, delivered by Dr. Wallace Wolff and graduating from Heppner High School.

Estes is active in the Heppner High School Booster Club, the Blue Mountain Community College Foundation, the Morrow County Recreation District, the city of Heppner Planning Commission and the Soroptimist club, in addition to helping with tournaments at the Willow Creek Country Club and coaching girls'

basketball and softball. Estes "is committed to helping not only her own kids, but many kids, and encouraging them to do their best," said the presenter, who compared her to the "Energizer Bunny".

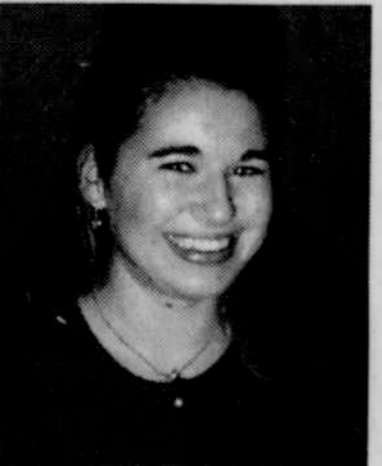
Estes, who is married to Heppner Fire Chief Rusty Estes, has two sons, Chad and Eric.



Walter Pilgrim

Educator of the year, Walter Pilgrim, was lavishly praised by 41 current and former students for his "humor in the classroom, discipline, real caring, fairness and generosity," and especially for taking a personal interest in students. In addition to his hard work in countless fund raisers, Pilgrim has chaperoned dances, ski trips, numerous senior trips and other outings and has provided assistance to student body treasurers over the years.

Pilgrim, who is from Alabama, spent three years teaching there before coming to Heppner High School, where he has taught business education for the last 28 years.



Abby Kahl

Youth Recognition Award winner Abby Kahl was praised for her contributions of "significant effort and energy to the life of our town through service and accomplishment at school and throughout the community."

Kahl, who is a senior at Heppner High School, is a member of the National Honor Society, and has received awards in drama, PE, skills contests and

citizenship. She participated in volleyball, basketball, cheerleading and track, with particular success as a long-distance runner, and is a member of student council, Outdoor Club, OSSOM and Wildhorse Club.

A student representative to the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Kahl is also active in her church and is known for singing the National Anthem at ball games, as well as community service.

Kahl is the daughter of Bob and Marianne Kahl of Heppner.



Delpha Jones

Lexington resident Delpha Jones was awarded the Lifetime Achievement award.

Jones was praised and gently kidded by presenter and former county judge Louis Carlson, for her sense of humor, directness and "take charge attitude."

Jones has been active in numerous clubs and organizations over the years, especially the Morrow County Historical Society and the Grange. Jones, who is a correspondent with the Gazette-Times, reports on Lexington events, the Historical Society and the Grange, in addition to other news items.

Jones and her husband Cecil have two grown children, Charlene Whitney and Ken Jones, and several grandchildren.

The business of the year award was presented jointly to Cal and Bev Sherman, who served the community for decades at Cal's Service Center, and Devin Oil, represented by Dick Devin and his wife, Denise, who bought the business from the Shermans.

Stressing the themes "transition and family" the Shermans and the Devins were honored for working together "to keep a service in our community which might otherwise have disappeared and created a community crisis."

The Shermans first opened the business as an Atlantic Richfield

School district forced to cut staff to balance budget

A proposed reduction in staff to help offset over a \$1 million deficit in the schools for the 1999-2000 school year will eliminate over 17 full-time teaching positions in the Morrow County School District next year, according to information released from the district following a special board meeting at Sam Boardman Elementary School last Thursday, Jan. 13.

The district is recommending district-wide cuts in PE, art and counseling positions at the elementary level and vo-ag and Spanish programs at the senior high level.

Additional cuts, particularly in south-end schools, also bring the student/teacher ratios closer district-wide. The last several years, the south end schools have had a significantly lower student/teacher ratio than the north end schools.

Superintendent Bruce Anderson said earlier that the district cannot make the schools equal, because smaller schools still require a certain number of teachers to operate, but added that the district will strive to make them more "equitable".

The board is considering seeking voter approval of a district levy option which could give the district an additional \$500,000. The consensus of the board at the Jan. 13 meeting was to make the cuts now and then add positions back, if voters do indeed approve the levy option.

A suggestion that the district spend the \$1 million ending fund to balance the budget was discussed, but the board was reluctant to do so. Anderson explained that spending the ending fund would give the district a financial "double whammy". The district would then have to borrow money with interest until tax monies come in and, at the same time, would lose around \$25,000 in interest on the \$1 million the district would have had in the bank.

Anderson said that spending the ending fund balance can be compared to an individual taking all of his money out of a saving's account and spending it all, eventually having no funds for living expenses or emergencies, which would necessitate borrowing.

Heppner Elementary School would take the biggest hit of all the schools in the district. The proposal would cut four-and-a-third teaching positions from Heppner Elementary School--two classroom teachers, one PE teacher, a half-time reading teacher, a half-time counselor and a one-third time art teacher. One full-time custodian and a three-fourths time office assistant would also be cut at HES.

HES currently has 228 students in kindergarten through sixth grade with a student ratio of 12.79 students for each teacher. The state average for a school that size is 19.5 students to one teacher. The student/teacher ratio at HES after the cuts would be 16.28 to one.

Heppner Junior/Senior High School would lose 3.5 teaching positions--a full-time vo-ag teacher, a full-time PE teacher, a half-time social studies teacher, half-time Spanish teacher and a half-time counselor.

HHS (grades nine-12 with 151 students) and HJHS (grades seven-eight with 62 students) have a combined 213 students and a 12.88 to one student/teacher ratio vs. a state average of 15.20 to one. With the cuts, HHS/HJHS would have a student/teacher ratio of 18.45 to one.

Ione Schools would lose two and a third teaching positions--one full-time tech ed teacher, one full-time classroom teacher and a

one-third time art teacher, in addition to a half-time office assistant and a half-time custodian.

Ione Elementary School (grades kindergarten-five) currently has 62 students for an 11.27 to one student/teacher ratio vs. a state average of 15.70 students to one teacher. The proposed cuts would bring the student/teacher ratio up to 14.41 to one.

Ione High School (grades/nine-12 with 67 students) and Ione Junior High School (grades six-eight with 38 students) have a combined 105 students for a student/teacher ratio of 11.03 to one. The state average for schools that size is 15.20 teachers to one student. Cuts would increase the student-teacher ratio to 12.47 to one.

Sam Boardman Elementary and Riverside High School in Boardman and A.C. Houghton Elementary School in Irrigon would each lose two teaching positions. RHS would lose a full-time vo-ag teacher and a full-time Spanish teacher. SBE and ACH would each lose a full-time counselor and half-time art and PE teaching positions.

SBE (grades kindergarten-five) has 436 students for a 17.1 to one student/teacher ratio, compared to a state average of 20.5 to one. Cuts would increase the ratio to 17.79 to one.

RHS (grades nine-12), currently with 478 students, has a student/teacher ratio of 18.38 to one, compared to a state average

of 17.10 to one. After cuts, the ratio at RHS will be 19.61 to one.

ACH (grades kindergarten-five) currently has an enrollment of 374 for a student/teacher ratio of 16.25 to one, vs. a state ratio of 20 to one. After cuts, the ratio at ACH would increase to 17 to one.

Columbia Middle School in Irrigon would lose one new full-time teaching position.

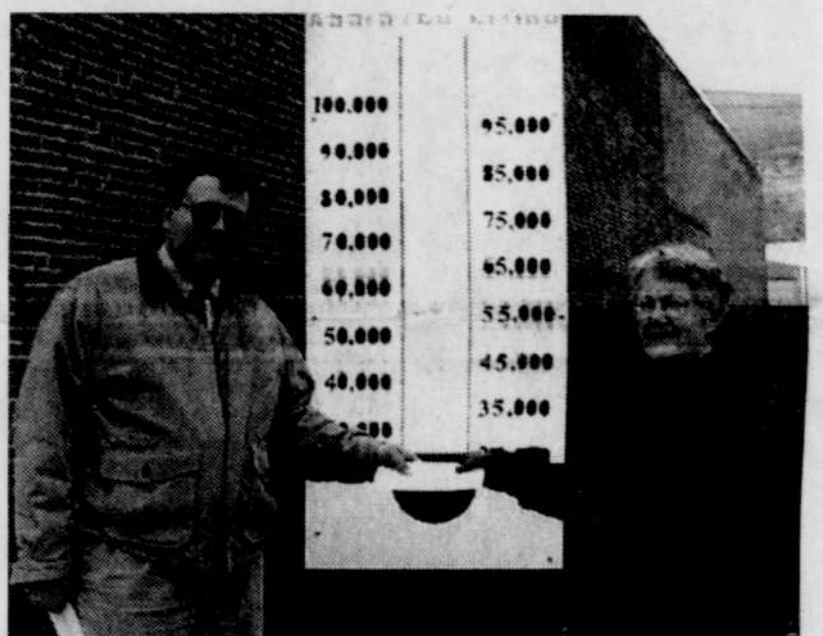
CMS (grades six-eight) currently has 364 students for a 16.55 to one student/teacher ratio. With the new position eliminated, the ratio would increase to 17.33 to one, vs. a state average of 17.3 to one.

Administration would also cut funding for one and a half positions--a half time assistant superintendent and half-time computer technology support staff, both of which will be paid in the future by the Education Service District in order to compensate the district for services ESD provides at other schools, and a half-time business manager position.

Anderson said that because the number of retirements and resignations prior to the next school year is not yet known, the district can not yet determine how many or which teachers will actually be cut. Seniority is also an issue. Some teachers may also be transferred to other schools within the district, he said.

(Student/teacher ratios do not include counselors or learning center students and staff.)

BEO donates to assisted living



Gail Hughes, vice-chairman of Willow Creek Valley Assisted Living, accepts a check from Darrell Raver, branch manager of the Bank of Eastern Oregon Heppner Branch. The bank donated \$5,000 to WCVAL, which is in the process of raising funds to eventually establish an assisted living center in the Heppner area. A new sign marking WCVAL's progress was erected downtown near the Christmas tree with the help of Raver and Tom Wolff. Nancy Vander Does painted the sign; Columbia Basin Electric donated the plywood; BEO donated the paint and Pettyjohn's donated the posts.

Colt basketball signups Jan. 23

All Heppner students in third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades are invited to sign up and be a part of the Colt basketball program on Sunday, January 23, at the Heppner Junior/Senior High School gym, from 1-3 p.m.

Some changes are being proposed to make improvements to the program. A short meeting for the parents will be held to explain the changes.

According to organizers, "the goal is to focus on the teaching of basic fundamentals and to build a strong program from grade school through high school."

All parents are invited to attend. The Colt players will participate in different basketball stations in the gym, set up and run by Heppner High School players.

Parents are asked to pick up their children at 3 p.m. A coaches' meeting and draft will follow sign-ups.

Any adults who would like to be a leader (coach) in the Colt basketball program, should

contact John McCabe, 676-5231; Chuck Matteson, 676-5250; or George Nairns, 676-9252 or 676-9970.

Anyone who has coached before and would like to continue should contact one of the above. There will be no Colt basketball on Super Bowl Sunday, Jan. 30. Coaches will contact the players on their team with a schedule that will begin on Sunday, February 6.

HEDC annual meeting

The Heppner Economic Development Corporation will hold an annual meeting at the St. Patrick Senior Center on Tuesday, January 25.

Light refreshments will be served at 5 p.m. The meeting will begin at 5:30 and include a review of the past two years, revision of by-laws, nominations of board members and proposals of goals for 2000.

Speaker will be Loyal Burns, Ione, representing ICABO.

CALKINS PARTS SALE

10% OFF

Sale Extended Through Feb. 12th

Fleetguard Filters

15% OFF

Sale from Feb. 1st - Feb. 29th

MORROW COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS

Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcg.net