

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

**Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES**

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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. The G-T is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters.

Join Chamber, HEDC

To the Editor:

I encourage residents in and near Heppner to join two organizations: the Chamber of Commerce and the Heppner Development Corporation. Though we might not think we have an interest in either of these groups, we really do.

The Chamber office is Heppner's central source of information for people with questions about our community, people who are considering Heppner as a place to live or visit or as a place for a business. It is the link often necessary between someone with a question or need and the source of an answer or assistance.

The chamber sponsors local activities that bring us out and bring us together for celebration and for learning. The chamber helps to keep us informed of "what's happening" around town and around the area and it has Heppner's well-being as its main focus.

I am certain that the chamber president Sharon Harrison can explain much better than I the many and varied activities of the chamber.

The Heppner Economic Development Corporation works with agencies, businesses and individuals to keep Willow Creek Valley citizens in step with technology and to get Heppner into the consciousness of companies and individuals who might have an impact on our

area.

The board members are on the front lines of finding answers to our community needs because HEDC is committed to helping our area persevere and thrive. I know that the new president of the board, Tom Wolff, can explain better than I the importance of HEDC.

All of us who fall into any of these categories truly do have an interest in these two organizations: taxpayers; parents/grandparents of school children; shoppers; users of medical facilities; people who like living in or near Heppner because it is... a great place to live for a huge variety of reasons. I think our involvement is critical.

I encourage readers to "check out" Chamber meetings, at noon on Tuesdays at Kate's Pizza and to do the same with HEDC board meetings on first and third Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. at the Forest Service building.

I encourage readers to ask questions of the organizations' leaders, to support either or both of these organizations by becoming members. The efforts in which they are involved take time and, of course, funding.

A call to the chamber office, 676-5536, and a call to the HEDC treasurer, Gayle Gutierrez at 676-5052 in the evening, can get you enrolled.

(s) Doris Brosnan
Heppner

Eliminating vo-ag, FFA not in students' best interest

To the Editor:

Eliminating the vo-ag departments at Heppner and Riverside would be a detriment to our agricultural-based economy. Today's emphasis in education is to prepare students for the future. Even though some students do not pursue careers in agriculture or agri-businesses, this program provides an opportunity to learn skills that can be utilized in every walk of life. However the opportunity for gainful employment, based on these skills, continues to grow due to the increasing agriculture related industries in the county.

Through hands-on experience, students develop proficiency in the safe use of tools and shop equipment, enabling them to do home or business repairs regardless of future occupations. Those students involved in FFA volunteer for community service, develop leadership qualities, learn how to keep records and acquire public speaking skills--not always accomplished in other areas. Through attendance at field trips, district meets and conventions these students are exposed to different cultures, vocations and lifestyles.

Due to scheduling conflicts, enrollment in vo-ag is limited due to state-mandated required courses leaving little flexibility for choosing electives, particularly for freshmen and sophomores. With today's emphasis on environmental concerns, those who are able to take advantage of vo-ag classes learn about soils, horticulture, livestock and farming operations;

thus they become familiar with the stewardship involved in natural resource management.

Too, the loss of this program would delete scholarship opportunities for some students. These schools would each lose about \$4500 dollars awarded from the Perkins grant.

Through the years thousands of taxpayer dollars and grants have financed a well-equipped vo-ag building, a greenhouse and pole building in Heppner and similar facilities at Riverside. These assets would become useless. An elimination of this program would prevent students, beginning with seventh and eighth graders, from becoming aware of the advantages of vo-ag programs and the importance of agriculture to our society.

The board is faced with some difficult choices, particularly with the growth in north end schools and the shortage of financing. Temporarily eliminating teachers and valuable elective programs hints at leverage to gain approval for a proposed bond measure. I wonder if the budget committee or the school board has considered other options such as reduction of administrative positions including vice principals.

(s) Merlyn Robinson
Heppner

**We Print
BUSINESS CARDS**

Heppner Gazette-Times

Eliminating vo-ag would be detriment

To the Editor:

This letter is to inform you of the current intentions of the Morrow County School District to eliminate the vocational agriculture classes and FFA program from next year's class offerings.

The ag classes have been an integral part of the Heppner and Riverside high schools' course offerings for many years. Is eliminating one of the few classes that still teach hands-on skills in the best interest of the youth of Morrow County?

When you have to cut a million dollars out of the schools' budget, someone's ox is going to get gored. The Morrow County Livestock Growers are not blaming anyone for these cuts. We are just asking, is there any other way of handling this situation?

Many of you local farmers probably went through the ag programs at Heppner or Riverside. Think of the shop skills, parliamentary procedure, public speaking, plus all the vast classroom knowledge you gained from the ag classes.

Ione has not had a vocational agriculture program, but they have had an excellent shop program over the years. If we lose these hands-on classes, where are youth that choose not

Obituary

James G. Simpson

James G. Simpson, a Prineville resident, passed away on Tuesday, January 25, at the Carriage House. He was 57 years old.

Graveside services were held at the Spray Cemetery, in Spray on Thursday, January 27. Pastor Paul Chisolm officiated. Vault interment was held at the Spray Cemetery.

Mr. Simpson was born on August 11, 1942, in The Dalles, to Gilbert and Ada (Anderson) Simpson. He moved to Spray when he was three years old. In 1960, he graduated from Spray High School.

In 1961 Mr. Simpson moved to Hermiston and the Pendleton area and then moved to Prineville in 1986. He worked for his brother as a general manager for the A-1 Glass in Bend for nine years, retiring due to health reasons.

Mr. Simpson married Sara Burnside in Pendleton in 1965. She preceded him in death in 1975.

Mr. Simpson loved to fish, hunt, collect guns, reload bullets, raise roses, and, more than anything, he loved his family. He also enjoyed visiting Spray and socializing with his old friends. Mr. Simpson will be remembered for his wonderful sense of humor.

Mr. Simpson is survived by his parents Gilbert and Ada Simpson of Prineville; son Randy T. Simpson of Vancouver, Washington; twin daughters, Rene "Tina" Marie Simpson of Bend, and Nova "Tammy" Mary Danielson of Umatilla; step-son Norman Sherman of Echo; brother Dale Lee Simpson of Prineville; sisters, Rene Simpson-Fisher of Prineville, Nova Rae Sweeney of Heppner; and six grandchildren.

Mr. Simpson was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, A.W. and Venic Anderson, and paternal grandparents Cass and Helen Simpson.

The Prineville Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements.

Taco feed to benefit Elguezabal family

A taco feed will be held this Saturday, Feb. 5 at Heppner High School with all proceeds to benefit the Juan Elguezabal family. The dinner is to be in the school cafeteria during the games between the Heppner Mustangs and the Sherman County Bulldogs, with serving beginning at 3 p.m.

Diners may choose one taco, dessert and drink for \$3; two tacos, dessert and drink for \$5; or a family meal for \$15. Pie and coffee will also be sold.

For more information, please call Sherry Matteson 676-5250 or Karen Smith-Griffith at 676-5168.

to go on to college going to learn skills that will enable them to provide for themselves and a family?

If you have a concern about losing these classes, please contact your school board members to see if there is any other way of handling the budget shortfall. We also urge you to attend a school board meeting being held Feb. 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Sam Boardman Elementary School's gymnasium.

The Livestock Growers plan to have pertinent information made available to the board which we hope will be included in an informational packet at the meeting.

Board members are: Dwayne Carroll, 77402 Desert Road, Hermiston 97838, 567-5767; Gary Frederickson, Rt. 1 Box 73D, Boardman 97818, 481-6225; Keith Lewis, 440 Terrace Drive, Heppner 97836, 676-5233; Barney Lindsay, P.O. Box 483, Lexington 97839, 989-8205; Pat McNamee, 76272 E. Oregon Lane, Irrigon 97844, 922-4786; John Rietmann, P.O. Box 313, Ione 97843, 422-7123; Julie Weikel, 70362 Kunze Lane, Boardman 97818, 481-2545.

(s) Kyle Robinson
President, Morrow County
Livestock Growers

Choir seeks more members

The South Morrow County Community Choir is beginning rehearsals for their spring program and is "desperately, lacking bodies to sing," according to Darlene Marquardt, director.

The choir is working on patriotic and American music and some traditional music. Practice is every Monday evening from 5:30-7 p.m. in the Heppner High School music room.

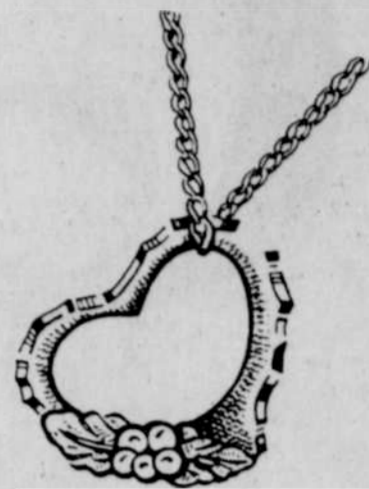
"The choir invites anyone who enjoys singing, ages 12-120, to join," she says. The only requirement is that participants live or work in Morrow County. The goal is to have 30 choir members.

Marquardt, who directed the choir during the fall season, is the choir and band teacher at Ione schools and has directed other adult choirs in the past.

ATTENTION PROPERTY OWNERS

Reminder notices due February 15, 2000 will not be mailed out for the second trimester. Payments are still due February 15, 2000. If you have any questions, call toll free in the Irrigon area 922-4103 or Boardman area, 481-2112. Heppner residents, call 676-5628 or stop by the Morrow County Courthouse.

For Valentine's Day...
give the gift
to cherish a lifetime



Valentine's Day is almost here!

Order gifts now to be delivered on February 14 at home, school or work in the Ione-Heppner area.

- There are two choices, \$10 each:
- 1) a stuffed animal, small box of candy and stickers (all with a Valentine's theme)
 - 2) a single red rose with a small box of chocolates

To order, call Shelly, 422-7243

All proceeds benefit Creative Care Preschool of Ione

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