

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

Published weekly and entered as periodical matter at the Post Office at Heppner, Oregon under the Act of March 3, 1879. Periodical postage paid at Heppner, Oregon. Office at 147 W. Willow Street. Telephone (541) 676-9228. Fax (541) 676-9211. E-mail: gt@heppner.net or gt@rapidserve.net. Web site: www.heppner.net. Postmaster send address changes to the Heppner Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Oregon 97836. Subscriptions: \$22 in Morrow County; \$16 senior rate (in Morrow County only; 62 years or older); \$29 elsewhere.

David Sykes Publisher
April Hilton-Sykes Editor

On the HEPPNER WEBSITE: www.heppner.net

- Start or Change a Subscription
- Place a Classified Ad • Submit a News Story
- View Real Estate for Sale
- City Council & Planning Minutes
- Local Businesses • County Park • Willow Creek Park Reservations
- Free Digital Postcards • Senior Housing • and more!

**Engagements
Picka-Shaw**



Barb Picka and J.J. Shaw

The parents of Barb Picka and J.J. Shaw have announced their engagement to be married.

Barb is the daughter of Grace and Ed Picka of New Prague, Minn. J.J. is the son of Linda Shaw, Heppner, and John Shaw, Condon.

The bride-elect graduated from New Prague High School in 1988 and Mankato State University in 1992. She is employed by Northwest Technical Institute, Eden Prairie, Minn., as a math instructor.

The groom-elect graduated from Heppner High School in 1989 and the University of Idaho in 1994. He is employed by Thermo King Corporation, Bloomington, Minn., as a test engineer.

The couple lives in Savage, Minn., and will be wed at Minnehaha Falls, Minneapolis, on June 24, 2000. The couple became engaged on a recent rock climbing vacation at Smith Rock in Central Oregon. Ms. Picka didn't dare say "no" with Mr. Shaw holding the rope to rappel off the 350-foot tower.

Briggs-Barrett

Phyllis M. Briggs, Ione, and David K. Barrett, Ione, announce their engagement to be married.

The bride-elect is the daughter of Don and Lani Briggs, Pendleton. She is a homemaker.

The groom-elect is the son of Betty Waterberry, John Day. He is employed with Lexington Auto Body in Lexington.

The couple plan an April 1, 2000, wedding at the Ione Legion Hall at 3 p.m. Friends and family are invited to attend.

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.

In memory of Jimmy Farley

To the Editor:

In memory of a successful businessman of many years in Heppner: Jim Farley.

I appreciate Jimmy for starting our Heppner St. Patrick's Celebration in 1982. Our whole community was sorry that Jimmy could not be here to enjoy it with us. Judging from the number of people on the sidewalks to view the parade, it was the largest crowd ever. It is such good clean fun and entertainment for all ages and is drawing larger crowds every year.

Cheers and congratulations to Bob Kahl, who managed the great, long, interesting parade in grand style. Not a break in the line, just the way a parade should roll by.

Heppner can be very proud of the young school children's band.

Thanks to the band master and children for what they have accomplished. A marching band is a very important part of a parade, to pep up the crowd. Just what Heppner needs.

My wish is that someone would start some kind of a project to raise money to put band uniforms on the band master and his great kids. At my age (91), I'm too old to promote the deal, and besides I have a full-time job speaking up for those that can't speak for themselves, the animals.

I appreciate all the churches and organizations who worked so hard to prepare food for the large volume of people who came to visit our quiet little town.

May Heppner have this popular celebration forever.

(s) Lois Winchester
Heppner

Support your local hospital

To the Editor:

I would like to say something about your local hospital: I do not live in your community but I work in your hospital. I have seen how important this facility is not just to those who are employed there but to those whose lives have been saved or stabilized in order that they could be safely transferred to a facility with more technology.

To lose this hospital could mean the loss of lives and a warm caring place for your sick and elderly to die since there is no hospice here.

My intent is to advocate for greater support from you. I have lived in 76 different places in my life and one commonality is that "the grass is greener..." Most everyone thinks the hospital in the next town is better. Heppner

is not Hermiston or Pendleton or Portland, but can you imagine what the quality of life would be like for your children, your parents, your grandparents if it weren't here? (Especially with all the accidents from rodeos, snowmobiles, automobiles, sports injuries?)

Who better to care for your loved ones than you? Improvements are in the process of being made, but we need dedicated, efficient care givers. If you join the team there will be work but there will also be excitement and joy and a sense of fulfillment in making the difference in someone's quality of life (or in the case of the terminally ill, the tender farewell called death).

(s) Shannon McDonald, RN
Stanfield

Fiddlers win Kapers division

"A Little Bit o' Irish" Fiddlers took first place in the elementary division of the Kiwanis Kapers Competition in Pendleton on March 11.

The group, directed by their teacher, Peg Willis of Pendleton, included six Heppner area students: Alex Carlson, Eric Jepsen, Kate Kendrick, Blaine Maley, Seth Morgan and Brynna Rust.

The entire group of 18 fiddlers, string bass, guitar, and drum, performed an Irish song entitled

Oops

What a difference one little letter makes-it can even change one country into another.

This year's Wee Bit O' Ireland Celebration Parade Marshal Bill Mitchell informs us that he has never been to Iceland, but he has, however, been to Ireland several times.

The Gazette-Times, justifiably, has endured more than a little bit of kidding during the St. Patrick's festivities. We apologize for our very non-St. Patrick's boo-boo in the March 15 issue of the newspaper.

As he suggested, maybe we were finally giving the local Scandinavians their due.

**Have compassion, vision,
return to five-day week**

To the Editor:

At a recent meeting where the school board was seeking public input for a tax levy, one question under "challenges" they offered us was "What needs to be done to improve student achievement?" Seated around tables, we were to write our ideas on a large sheet to be given to the board and those present. At our table my answer was to return to a five-day week. This was ignored (two teachers had the pens). Here it can be printed.

Initially, the four-days was supposed to save \$200,000 (now they claim, \$300,000), a very expensive cut, considering the harsh effects it produced.

Although it cramped all grade levels, the most crucial was on children kindergarten-third. Children this age simply are not old enough to take or be subjected to that extra long day. At age five-eight, a child gains (or loses) the basic foundation for academic success in grades four-12 and beyond. Here he develops attitude toward school, healthy self-concept and other traits, but probably most important, basic reading skills. A child that cannot read by the third grade will have trouble from then on. He cannot be computer competent, cannot fill out a job application (much less prepare an effective resume'), is more likely to be a drop-out, and will probably never know the joy

of reading a good book.

Two years into the four-days here, the state tests on third grade reading showed that virtually every school in Oregon on the four-days was lower than before and were also below the state average. Our school board was presented with this information directly from the state department and with over 200 signatures of people wishing the five-day week and willing to display their names to the public, in the Heppner area alone. The board ignored us, their chairman even ordering one of our spokesmen to sit down.

Now, just take a look at the state test scores for fifth grade.

Finally, we deceive ourselves to think that all the administrators, teachers, parents and school boards (supposedly representing the county at large?)--all the king's horses and all the king's men--can stress, disrupt or change the natural physical and mental development of children five-eight with impunity.

Sadly, the punished are our children who are at our mercy. The four-day-week is Morrow County's acceptance of one version of child abuse.

How can we improve student achievement? One important way is to have the compassion and vision to return to the five-day week.

(s) Jane Rawlins
Heppner

**Assurance needed that school
district spending prudently**

To the Editor:

Reading a newspaper can oftentimes be detrimental to one's blood pressure. Especially if it's difficult to understand the reasoning behind some actions.

As I understand it the school board was legally compelled at the March meeting to approve extension of teaching contracts for next school year including some of the positions that were previously scheduled to be cut. Otherwise these teachers could not be hired. But Catch-22 is that there may not be any money to fund those positions.

And whose to say that if a \$1 million five-year levy passes, the school board will honor such a commitment. It certainly leaves those teachers in a precarious position as well as high school students who like to plan ahead for classes.

How much trust can the public place in this board, when the school board chairman publicly

stated that the reinstatement of one teaching position at Ione was for "political reasons." Although he reiterated that a small school requires a certain staff level, the focus doesn't appear to be on the quality of education. It seems more like a blatant strong-arming of Ione area voters and others concerned about the quality of education.

Adequate health care facilities and good schools are the core of our rural communities in south Morrow County. Higher property taxes on top of rising fuel costs and other operating expenses is not a happy thought for rural property owners in this agricultural-dependant area when commodity prices are below par. While farmers and ranchers continue to tighten their budgets, they need to be assured that their tax dollars are being spent prudently.

(s) Merlyn Robinson
Heppner

Legion, Auxiliary plan meeting

The American Legion and Auxiliary will meet Monday, March 27, to celebrate the Legion's 81st birthday. The meeting will be held at the

Methodist Church basement with potluck at 6:30 p.m.

Cake and ice cream will be furnished by the Auxiliary.

Members are welcome to attend.

SCHEDULED POWER OUTAGE

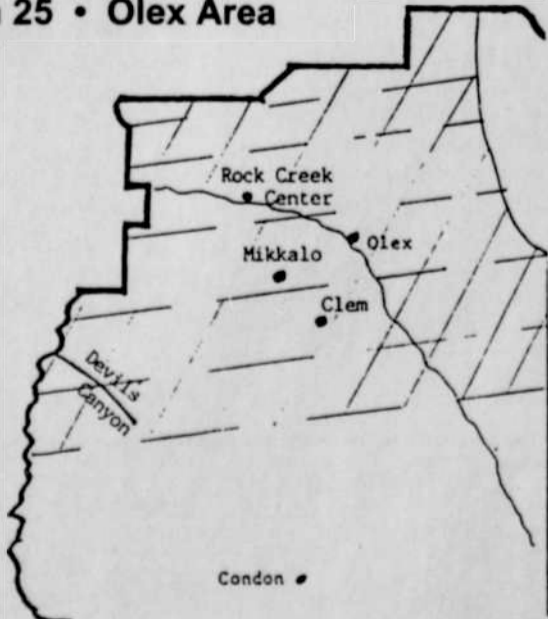
Saturday, March 25 • Olex Area

Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative has a power outage scheduled at the Olex Substation, Saturday, March 25, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for maintenance work.

Reenergization will occur when the needed maintenance is completed, which could be earlier than 6:00 p.m.

This will include all consumers served from the Olex Substation, encompassing Mikkalo Lane, Upper Rock Creek, Lower Rock Creek, Baseline Road, Cedar Springs Road, Highway 19, Barnett Road, French Charlie Road, Four K Road, and Shuttler Flat areas.

Thank you for your patience.



We regret any inconvenience this will cause; however, it is very important we complete this repair work.

IT'S GOOD TO LIVE IN OREGON.



Reason # 77:

There's a bank here that would happily answer all your questions about IRAs. (Even the really silly ones.)

AM I ELIGIBLE FOR AN IRA?

Actually, almost everyone is qualified to invest their retirement dollars in an IRA. Even people who are over 70 1/2 years of age can make contributions. The real question is which kind of IRA

- if any - is the right one for you. Our friendly people are more than happy to answer that or any other burning question you might have. Why not stop in some time soon and ask away.

GOOD PLACE TO LIVE. GOOD PLACE TO BANK.



Member FDIC • Equal Housing Lender