

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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David Sykes Publisher
April Hilton-Sykes Editor

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DA's Report

Morrow County District Attorney David C. Allen reports the following business:

-Richard F. Hinz plead guilty to driving while suspended-misdemeanor and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, suspended on the condition that he not drive, unless validly licensed and insured, with 24 months probation and ordered to pay \$434 in fines, fees and assessments; another account of driving while suspended and open container and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, suspended, with 24 months probation, ordered not to drive unless validly licensed and insured and pay \$434 in fines, fees and assessments.

- John Earl LaGrow plead guilty to possession of a controlled substance and was sentenced to 18 months probation, 80 hours of community services, ordered to complete a drug package, had his driving privileges suspended for 90 days and ordered to pay \$974 in fines, fees and assessments.

-Chad William Wynn plead guilty to assault IV and was sentenced to 180 days in jail, suspended, 24 months probation, ordered to have no contact with the victim until approved by treatment provider, complete a batterer's intervention program and pay \$869 in fines, fees and assessments.

-Jeremy Bradford plead guilty to harassment and minor in possession of alcohol and was sentenced to 30 days in jail, suspended, with 18 months probation, ordered to have no contact with the victim, complete an alcohol package and pay \$684 in fines, fees and assessments.

-Robert Wade Eastep plead guilty to attempting to elude a police officer-C felony, driving under the influence of intoxicants-A misdemeanor, driving while suspended-A misdemeanor, reckless driving and criminal mischief II and was sentenced to 24 months probation, 80 hours of community service and ordered to write a letter of apology to Columbia Basin Electric Co-op, complete a drug package, DUII package and alcohol package, 180 days in jail, suspended, have driver's license suspended for a year and an additional 90 days and pay \$4,985.34 in fines, fees and assessments, which includes restitution to Columbia Basin Electric and the Heppner Volunteer Fire Department.

Correction

The rummage sale at the Heppner Neighborhood Center will be held this Friday, Sept. 22, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Benefit planned for area people

A steak feed and auction has been planned for this Saturday, September 23, at 6 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center to benefit three young adults in the community.



Angie Currin Williams

Ten days after saying her wedding vows, 27-year-old Angie Currin Williams suffered a severe head injury. Since the accident Angie has had five brain surgeries. Because Angie is in a partial coma, she is being cared for at a private care facility in Walla Walla, WA.

Approximately two months ago Audrey Homan was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer called Rhabdomyosarcoma. Audrey, who turned 22 years old just last week, is undergoing extensive chemotherapy to reduce the size of the tumors. Her doctor has indicated that the chemotherapy will have to continue for at least another four months with radiation and surgery to follow.

Marek Kopacz, a 28-year-old husband and father of three young children, was injured August 13 in an ATV accident. The accident has left Marek paralyzed. He is currently undergoing treatment at Our Lady of Lourdes hospital in Pasco, WA.

Medical bills for all three are piling up and each has limited financial support to help cover their expenses. The Hermiston community is holding the steak feed and auction to help offset some of these financial burdens.

The proceeds from this event will be divided equally among all three adults.

Everyone is invited to dine at the steak feed to show support for the three young people. The cost of the steak feed will be \$15 per person or \$25 for a couple.

After the feed, a raffle and auction of items donated by local businesses are planned.

For more information, call Sami Taylor at 567-7834, Kathy Williams at 481-2627, Monica Byrd at 567-5259 or Chrissy Nichols at 564-8545.

We Print **BUSINESS CARDS**
Heppner Gazette-Times

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.

Think positive

To the Editor:

Was really sorry to read such a negative letter about the Morrow County Fair in the Sept. 2 Gazette-Times.

Am wondering if she looked at the 4-H projects to see that all the youth from all the county participated. This is a good experience for them. It teaches them leadership, self-confidence, to complete a project, to be good sports and they cannot be a winner all the time.

There were also three clerks from the Boardman and Irrigon area, along with many people that helped with the sale and throughout the fair that should not be overlooked.

When a person enters the different departments their item tags are folded and fastened so no one knows who or where they are from.

The judges are from different counties as much as possible and have taken classes to become qualified. Each judge has different ideas as to what makes a winner.

If anyone wants to become a qualified judge, the County Extension office can supply the needed information.

Sorry you also overlooked all the volunteers in the 4-H snack shack. Boardman, Irrigon, Lone, Lexington and Heppner each have a day when they man and take care of the duties which really keep them busy and support the 4-H projects.

In the department I entered, a woman from Irrigon won sweepstakes. It is always fun to see which item wins the big prize.

Think positive and enter items in the fair that makes it more fun.

The fair board is always looking for more help and it would be greatly appreciated. The fair office phone is 676-9474.

Don't forget the Morrow County Fair is a complete county fair and we sincerely appreciate all the volunteers and everyone that participates and especially the fair board for keeping it running so smoothly.

(s) Ginger Keithley
Heppner

County hard hit with budget problems

To the Editor:

Morrow County was hit hard by the passage of ballot measures 47 and 50 a few years ago. This was partly because of the immediate loss of revenues, partly because the county had already been scaling back its budgets for the preceding six years, and partly because of the long-term effects on property tax revenues.

At first, most of the losses were limited to areas the general public wouldn't immediately recognize - things like reducing or eliminating the county's ability to deal with emergency situations through contingency funds, decreasing ending fund balances, and decreasing or eliminating reserve funding that helps to replace expensive but necessary capitol equipment such as computer systems and dump trucks.

As time went on, the county continued to make cuts and more of them began to be noticed - like reduced hours in some departments, staff reductions (perhaps causing noticeably slower service), and the elimination of geographic information systems (GIS) services.

The County Court, Budget Committee and the department administrators have all worked hard to minimize the effect of budgetary losses on the services available to the public.

The problem now is two-fold:
1) The short-term fixes have all

been exhausted - things like using more of the Finley Buttes license fees (tippage fees) to "backfill" the general fund, and discontinuing rock crushing for a year. 2) There is no place left to cut without severely diminishing services to the public, many of which the county is mandated by law to provide.

The county is facing budget projections for the next fiscal year that leave it \$1 million short of being able to maintain current levels of already diminished services. I agree with County Judge Terry Tallman, who has said, "The significance of the proposed levy to county services can hardly be overstated. We are a small local government, and the effect of a \$1 million shortfall could only be described as devastating to our ability to provide fundamental county services."

Because of the importance of the proposed local option levy to services, the county has set up informational forums at both ends of the county to help answer questions from the public about the levy and the consequences of its passage or failure. The meetings will be held on Thursday, September 28, at 7 p.m. at the U.S. Forest Service conference room in Heppner and on Tuesday, October 3, at 7 p.m. at the Riverfront Center in Boardman. We encourage everyone to attend.

Dan Brosnan
Morrow County Commissioner

Re-elect Denton

To the Editor:

To the Citizens of Morrow County:

With the November elections soon to be rolling around, most of us are wondering what initiatives should we vote for and which ones are we voting against. It all boils down to how they affect us individually and collectively as a society.

The same applies to those individuals running for public office. Who, running for office, can best represent our interests. There is one elected position on the November ballot that is of utmost importance to you and me. That position is the Morrow County Sheriff position, a very high impact position.

We have two candidates running for this position. Both men are of high integrity and are serious about the job. However, there is only one candidate, Verlin Denton who is truly qualified for the job in terms of administrative ability and in terms of professional and educational qualities.

Verlin has been in law enforcement for more than 23 years. He has worked up through the ranks of officer, sergeant, undersheriff and has been sheriff of Morrow County for the past two years. He worked under the respected Sheriff Roy Drago until Sheriff Drago appointed

him as interim sheriff upon his (Drago's) retirement.

There are few sheriff's offices in the state of Oregon that run with such efficiency and coordination as does the Morrow County Sheriff's Office. I believe that I can say this with great confidence since I was Morrow County Judge for 12 of the 18 years that Sheriff Denton has been with the Morrow County Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff Denton has demonstrated the ability to enforce the law fairly and uniformly, and to treat the public with dignity and respect. He has developed a three million dollar budget and administered it effectively. For these reasons it is important that each of you who vote in November, to carefully consider the qualities of our present sheriff, Verlin Denton --- He certainly has my vote and I hope that he has your vote as well. As an afterthought, 27 of the 36 Oregon sheriffs have endorsed Verlin Denton as the most qualified candidate for the job.

I have always said, "Morrow County may not have the largest sheriff's department in Oregon, but it has the best." Finally, as the old saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Vote Denton.

(s) Louis Carlson
Heppner

Fair judging is fair

To the Editor:

This letter is response to the commentary printed last week from Mary Garrett of Boardman. She stated that judges were from Heppner and favored Heppner residents at the Morrow County Fair. Nothing could be further from the truth. Ms. Garrett apparently does not know how the fair works and how the entries are judged.

Judges for all open class divisions are not residents of the county in which they are judging. They are certified in their area of expertise and recognized experts. Many even judge at the state fair level. For example, the clothing, quilts and needlework were all judged by a lady from Wasco.

The tags with the entrants name and address are two-part tags. At the time of entry the tag is folded up and sealed so the judge never sees the entrant's identity. Those tags are not folded down till all judging is complete. It is then that the secrecy tag is torn off by the superintendent and the item displayed. The judge is gone by then and never even sees the entrants' name.

During judging, the superintendent is the one assisting the judge by "clerking" or bring her the items and writing down her placement. As an avid sewer myself, I enter lots of items. I can never tell or indicate to the judge in any way that an item she is judging is mine. Since there are two other superintendents there at the time, they can attest to that. This is especially difficult when her first comment about a garment I've made is, "That is the ugliest thing I have ever seen." And, yes, that has happened. I just swallow my pride and pretend it's not mine.

With regards to Ms. Garrett's comment about the superintendents being from the south end of the county, has she ever volunteered? All you have to do is call the office. We have been looking for someone to take over the quilt department for several years. No one has volunteered. Before I took over the clothing, they didn't have a superintendent for several years. There may be other departments needing help. Most of them have

Sheriff only surfaces at election time

To the Editor:

Things you might consider before voting for Sheriff Denton:

1. Is he involved with the community? Others and myself go to coffee almost daily at our local restaurants in Lone. I have never seen him just stop by and visit with the local people on how his department is doing and what services they might improve on. If he is not comfortable with this, why has he not held a town hall meeting for a question and answer session?

2. Does the sheriff enforce the law with dignity and fairness? Yes, the sheriff is not always popular enforcing the law, and yes, when the law is enforced with dignity and fairness, I have no problem. What happens when it is not? When a deputy recently resigned, why was it not in the local paper? When anyone else resigns in the community it is made public information. What is he trying to hide?

When questions of the deputies performance were brought to Sheriff Denton's attention, he became very defensive without first checking the facts. Yes, he should defend his deputies but should arrange to have a face-to-face meeting with the involved parties so that all facts come out. If there are improprieties in this deputy's performance, he needs to get back with the involved parties and explain what actions

two who work together. Sometimes the number of entries is overwhelming and help is needed. Plus, if you are the only one accepting entries for a department, you can't leave during the entry time, the judging, then you have to display everything. That adds up to two long 8-10 hours or more per day without leaving the fairgrounds. The volunteers work hard, long hours and eat a lot of burgers at the snack-shack.

I understand that many north county residents don't get a lot of ribbons. The odds are against them since there are very few entries from there. Maybe if Ms. Garrett got some of her friends to bring entries down for the fair they would get more ribbons. It only makes sense. I have family in the north end and they don't want to bring entries down because, "It's too far to drive just enter stuff in the fair." Well that is how most of the north county thinks. Well, why do you people bother advertising your stupid "Music in the Park" programs down here. We're not driving up there just sit in a dirty, bug infested park being patrolled by gang members and listen to bad music. Then drive all the way back down here to home. The sentiment works both ways.

Ms. Garrett, I hope you understand a little more about the way the fair works and that it is not "fixed" in favor of the Heppner residents. The judges are totally impartial and don't even know any of us. Please come to the fair when entries are accepted next year and see how they are logged in the books and the ID tags shut. That begins at 1 p.m., Monday of fair week and lasts till 8 p.m. You are also welcome to watch the judging at 8 a.m. Tuesday morning. We have nothing to hide and you may find you like it and want to volunteer. By the way the fair office number is 676-9474. The secretary is LaRae Kindle. I'm sure she would be happy to get more volunteers.

(s) Lori E. Straley
Morrow County Fair
Superintendent, Open Class
Clothing and Textiles
Heppner

are taken to prevent this from happening again. Was a review made of other citations for similar improprieties and were they thrown out of court?

3. Does he take an overzealous approach in stopping vehicles without probable cause? Numerous people have talked to me about being closely followed at night for a lengthy distance, and then pulled over for a questionable law infraction. Is this a revenue thing?

4. The few times I have called the sheriff's office to find out details about a situation where a deputy has visited in the neighborhood, I left with the impression that it was none of my business. If there is a problem in my neighborhood I want to know about it. I thought that was what the neighborhood watch was all about. We rely on each other. The Portland and Tri-Cities television stations are able to disclose alleged violators, why can't Morrow County? I think they could be a little more forthcoming in supplying us information.

Recently Sheriff Denton was in Lone personally walking around and handing out campaign literature. I applaud him for this. Why is it the only time we have seen him in Lone is at election time? Is this the only time he will be community minded?

(s) Terry Mewhinney
Lone

September 8th - Thursday
DDGER Nolan Carnahan visitation, Dinner starts at 6 p.m.; Initiation starts at 8 p.m.

September 28th - Thursday
HUNTERS NIGHT: all-you-can-eat barbecue ribs with all the fixings! Dinner starts at 6 p.m. Win a Winchester model 70 sporter 7mm stw rifle, plus many more prizes! Get there early to purchase your tickets. Members and out-of-town guests only.

BINGO BACK ON WEDNESDAYS STARTING AT 7:00 p.m.

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