

Bessie Wetzell  
U of O Newspaper Library  
Eugene, OR 97403

HEPPNER

# 50¢ Gazette times

VOL. 119 NO. 44 10 Pages Wednesday, November 1, 2000 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

## Myren Challenges Denton for sheriff

When Morrow County voters cast their votes, they will decide between two candidates for Morrow County Sheriff--challenger Steve Myren and incumbent Verlin Denton.

Following is a forum featuring the two candidates.

Voters are reminded that the mail-in ballots must be received at the Morrow County Clerk's Office by Tuesday, November 7, by 8 p.m.



Verlin Denton

Verlin R. Denton, 54, Heppner, is the incumbent candidate for Morrow County Sheriff. Denton, who is married, has two daughters, 18 and 30 years old. Denton came to Morrow County in 1983.

Denton graduated from Brookings-Harbor High School in Brookings and attended college at Blue Mountain Community College and Southwestern Oregon Community College. He has had two years of education in criminal justice. He has been with the Morrow County Sheriff's office for 17 years with two of those years as sheriff.

Denton is a member of the First Christian Church, is BENT Board chair, a member of the Oregon Judicial Dept. Citizens Review Board, the local Public Safety Coordinating Council, the Oregon State Sheriff's Assoc., the BMCC Criminal Justice Advisory Board, CSEPP Executive Review Panel, L.E. Administrative Council and the Morrow County Prevention Team.

He has received executive certification by Oregon's Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (the highest awarded out of six certificates) and is a graduate of Northwestern University Staff and Command School. He has completed 102 college quarter hours, and 2300 "DPSST" training hours.

Why would a voter select you over your opponent?: Life-long

resident of Oregon. Law enforcement is my profession and career and not just a job. I have the education, experience, and training to be Morrow County's Sheriff.

If elected, what is the biggest challenge facing you?: Morrow County's budget shortfall and how the sheriff will be able to maintain peace and security of the county if the county levy fails and results in deputy layoffs.

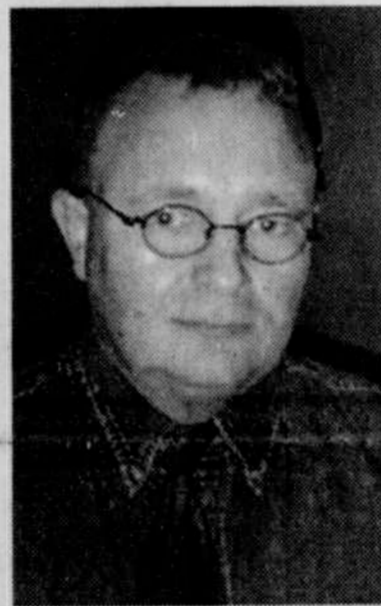
What major project would you like to see accomplished. What is your first priority?: I would like to hire a school/community resource deputy to work with the schools on drug and alcohol abuse as well in the communities with programs such as Neighborhood Watch and block homes. I would also like this deputy to work with families that have problem children by finding resources support them.

BENT and the focus of Morrow County drug investigations have become an issue as of late. Please comment: In 1991 the BENT member agencies came together to pool their resources to fight an increasing problem of drugs coming into Morrow and Umatilla counties. It was recognized that we had to go after the sources of the illegal drugs coming into our area and in Morrow County's case, we did not have the resources to fight this problem alone. It was also recognized that this was only one way to attack the drug problem. The task force has had to prioritize its efforts in order to be the most effective with the resources available. The focus is on getting the sources of the drugs coming into the county regardless of which county they are in. There are some who say this is not the most effective way to work. Over 200 drug arrests last year by the task says differently.

How do you plan to provide services for a growing population and subsequent increase in criminal activity in north Morrow County and yet maintain adequate patrol in south Morrow County?: Recognizing that our budget problems were only going to get worse in the next few years and could result in deputy layoffs, I started a program to increase our reserves. Two years ago we had only five reserves. We now have nine reserves and are aiming for 15 to 16 reserves. In the event of layoffs these reserves will be come more and more important to the county.

About a year ago we instituted specific patrol area assignments

continued page 8



Steven L. Myren

Steven L. Myren, lives with his wife in Boardman. He graduated from Silverton Union High School in Silverton and attended Chemeketa, Portland, Mt. Hood and Blue Mountain community colleges.

He has been a Warrant Officer-1 with the Oregon State Defense Force, Medical Command, under six months.

Myren has been employed with the Department of Human Services, Health Division, as a medical preparedness officer for the last two years.

He has been president of the Columbia River EMT Association for past three years a volunteer EMT for the past 17 years and is currently an EMT with the Morrow County Health District., a volunteer fire fighter for nearly 20 years and is a founding member and training officer for OR-1 DMAT Team (Disaster Medical Assistance Team).

Myren's current job involves interaction, consultation, negotiation and problem resolution with federal, state, county and municipal representatives. "While not political by definition, these contacts are almost always driven in some form by politics. I have developed an ability to effectively deal with all of the involved parties. The sheriff's race in Morrow County is my first time as a political candidate."

Myren was employed 12 years full-time in law enforcement and had reserve officer experience previous to that. He has received training in the following areas: incident command, operations, safety officer, street survival, domestic terrorism, chemical weapons, hazardous materials, Oregon Regional Forensic Academy, forensic photography, Reid method of interview and interrogation, sexual abuse interviews and investigations, deputy medical examiner, gang

continued page 8

## MCGG annual meeting Monday



Ross Shafer

The Morrow County Grain Growers annual stockholders' meeting will be held this Monday, November 6.

The evening will get underway with dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds pavilion in Heppner.

Entertainment will feature Ross Shafer, humorous keynote speaker.

Free babysitting will be available in the dormitory next door to the pavilion.

A host and actor on Seattle's weekly comedy/talk show, "Almost Live," Shafer is a six-time Emmy winner.

He is also known to television viewers as a host of Match Game and Days End on ABC, The Late Show on Fox, Love Me--Love Me Not on the USA Network and the internationally syndicated broadcast of the Miss America Pageant.

His television credits also include guest appearances on 21 Jump Street, Hollywood Squares, Bloopers and Practical Jokes and Win, Lose or Draw.

As a comedian, Shafer performs in Las Vegas, Reno and Atlantic City and for cruise ship engagements.

On the corporate lecture circuit he is an after-dinner entertainer, keynote speaker and seminar presenter. In his seminar, "How Anyone Can Overcome the Fear of Public Speaking," Shafer reveals secret techniques used by entertainers, politicians and trial attorneys to overcome stage fright and capture an audience.

## CBEC plans annual meeting

The annual dinner meeting of the Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative, Inc., is planned for Thursday, Nov. 2 at the Gilliam County Fairgrounds in Condon. Registration starts at 5 p.m. with dinner served at 6 p.m.

The annual meeting and election of directors for zones #1 and #7 will follow the dinner.

Door prizes and fun for the whole family is in store for the evening. This will be the swan song for director Herb Wright who has served on the board for 28 years.

Wright has earned state and national prominence for his efforts in rural electric affairs and legislation.

## Creativity flourishes in Condon



A work in progress

By Merlyn Robinson

Creativity flourishes in Condon inside Mary Cernyar's School of Studio Arts located in a historic old building on Main Street.

Cernyar, formerly of Portland, opened her studio in late September this year. Thirteen students are now taking courses in drawing and painting. She will be accepting new students at the beginning of the next semester in January. For those students who wish to receive college credits, her studio is now accredited with Eastern Oregon University in LaGrande.

One doesn't have to be an artist to appreciate the variety of original art forms, often capturing the spirit of the West, that are created by Cernyar's talented hands. Inside her shop is a large mobile. Suspended from the high ceiling is a wooden single tree. Dangling from it is a whimsical arrangement of painted cow bones, hobbles, a shoe and other objects harmoniously united by her unlimited imagination.

Both inside and outside her studio are large earthy-looking clay sculptures made to grace garden areas. These weather-proof sculptures have heavy abstract textures in muted tones that often feature birds, pine

cones and other decorative objects. Cernyar plans to also offer courses in pottery and sculpturing in the coming year.

The walls inside her studio background large paintings, some that portray an emotional embrace of pioneer life. She uses a variety of techniques and materials when painting with oils or acrylics. For instance, broken bits of straw are embedded in the background of an old homestead scene.

Another favorite medium is charcoal, where she captures portraits of people. Some of her collages are historical figures sketched on dated newspaper that also have small photographs or memorabilia from that era.

Cernyar, master of Fine Arts, has attended various colleges in the Northwest. She has also held teaching positions at Northwest community colleges, universities and art schools. Cernyar's shows at exhibitions, installations and art galleries, including the Portland Art Museum, have drawn praise by art lovers. Currently she is busy working on paintings to be shown at a solo exhibition entitled "The Pioneer Spirit", to be seen at the Center of Visual Arts in Jackson Hole, Wyoming in June 2001.

Cernyar says her move to

continued page 8

## District discusses WCVAL contract

The Morrow County Health District Board Monday night discussed a proposed contract for operation of the Willow Creek Valley Assisted Living Center, once the center becomes operational next year.

Under the proposed agreement the health district will be responsible for operation of the center, a move officials think should provide income for the cash strapped health district.

The center will have room for a total of 16 elderly residents who need some care, but not as much as a nursing home.

The center recently received government funding and is now able to move ahead with construction. The center is expected to be completed in November of 2001.

In another proposal to help generate revenue for the health district, administrators will accept an invitation from Wheeler county officials to discuss the possibility of providing some health care services in the Fossil area. The talks are only in the preliminary stages, but the district is exploring possible additional revenue sources.

In other money discussions at the Monday board meeting, the board voted to change nursing home charges from the current \$105 per day plus add-ons, to a flat \$130 per day which would include add-ons. Add-ons are additional services requested or needed by residents.

The board also voted to start charging interest on accounts past due by 90 days. The rate will be 1.5 percent per month or 18 percent annually.

In the financial report the board heard that the district lost \$15,122 in September. The loss is down from \$49,730 in August, however, there is still an average monthly loss of \$40,652 recorded over the past three months.

## Voters to face four-year option levy

A no vote on the county's four year \$1,500,000 option levy facing voters in the upcoming election will result in further cuts to county services, Morrow County Commission Dan Brosnan has said.

The county is asking voters to approve a levy of \$1.50 per thousand of valuation to raise about \$1,500,000 each year for the next four years.

The county is facing a serious shortfall of funds this year and Brosnan says if voters say no, the county will have no choice but to "take cuts across the board" in county services.

After compression, uncollectible and city road tax distributions, it is estimated the county will collect approximately \$1,100,000 from the levy.

The money will be put in the road fund and used for road operations only. This would free up money in the general fund that had previously been transferred to the road fund.

The levy money is also needed because the county is receiving less and less federal timber receipts money, Brosnan says, from a high of \$369,768 in 1993, to an estimated \$45,000 for the year 2000.

To make ends meet the county has recently laid off 13 full and part time employees, as well as made cuts to the road department.

To deal with the shortfall the county has also taken money from "tippage fees" (money received from the Finley Buttes landfill) and placed it in the general fund. This was a one time transfer and won't be done again, Brosnan said.

**BE READY FOR WINTER!**

**ANTI-FREEZE SALE**

By the Gallon: \$4.89/gal. or Bulk: \$4.29/gal.

**MORROW COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS**

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

**MCGG will be CLOSED**

**Friday, Nov. 10th**

**for Veteran's Day.**

**We will be open**

**Saturday, Nov. 11th**

**until noon.**