

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.

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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 C-T office. The C-T reserves the right to edit. The C-T is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. (Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$5.)

Rowling (Harry Potter author) accusations unfounded

To the Editor:
In the Dec. 20 Gazette, Jason Just referenced the London Times in a scathing attack on J.K. Rowling, author of the phenomenally popular Harry Potter series. In his letter, he said Rowling worshipped Satan, made fun of Christ, taught real spells and was responsible for some huge increase in the "church of Satan." His accusations were evidently believed by other Christians concerned about what children are reading.
I found much of his letter hard to believe, so I did some research. Mr. Just did not get his information from the London Times, nor from any other

reputable source. The origin of his vicious attack was from a rag called The Onion, "a weekly satirical magazine" published in Wisconsin. The entire article, which Mr. Just quoted from in all seriousness in this paper, was meant as an ugly joke. Unfortunately, it was taken seriously by some people, such as Mr. Just, who then spread the lies.

If I were J.K. Rowling (who seems like a very nice person), I'd sue The Onion until it went out of business. And if I were Mr. Just, I'd apologize - and learn to do research.

(s) Lea Mathieu
Ione

Engagement

Bocol - Huff



Jacqueline Bocol and William Huff

Jacqueline Bocol and William Huff of Bend announce their engagement to be married.

The bride-to-be is the daughter of Don and Joann Bocol of Walla Walla, Washington, and is a flight attendant for Alaska Airlines.

The groom-to-be is the son of Nola May and the late William Huff of Lone Rock, and is a pilot for Bax Global.

A summer wedding is planned at St. Francis Catholic Church in Bend.

Obituaries

Paul Hisler Sr.

Paul Hisler Sr., 92, of Heppner, died Friday, December 29, 2000 at the Abundant Care Facility in Echo.

Funeral Mass was held Wednesday, January 3, 2001 at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Heppner. Concluding service and burial followed at the Heppner Masonic Cemetery.

A lifelong Morrow County resident, he was born April 15, 1908, to Paul and Minnie McCullough Hisler on the family ranch on Little Butter Creek near Heppner. He was raised at Heppner and attended schools at Heppner, graduating from Heppner High School.

On November 14, 1928, he married Kathleen Monahan at Heppner. The couple lived at the Hisler Ranch on Little Butter Creek from 1929 until 1995 when they moved into Heppner.

Mr. Hisler was a stockman with a special interest also in horses and birds.

He was a member and past chairman of the Morrow County Fair Board for 15 years; a charter member and past director of the Pendleton Production Credit Association; was Morrow County Cattleman of the Year in 1975; and was grand marshal of the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo parade in 1985.

He was a member of St. Patrick Catholic Church, the Morrow County Historical Society and a life member of BPOE 358 in Heppner.

Survivors include his wife of 72 years, Kathleen Hisler of Heppner; daughters, Joan Sumner of The Dalles and Francine Bristow of Portland; son, Paul Jr. of Heppner; eight grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a sister, Marguerite Chapin in 1999, and a grandson, Shad Hisler in 1997.

Memorial contributions may be made to Pioneer Memorial Home Health Services, P.O. Box 9, Heppner, Oregon 97836 or to a charity of choice.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner was in charge of arrangements.

Charles Cleatus Thomason

Charles Cleatus Thomason, 70, of Irrigon, died Wednesday, December 27, 2000, at the home of his son, Dustin, and daughter-in-law, in Irrigon.

A gathering for friends and family was held Friday, December 29, 2000, at the Irrigon Senior Center.

He was born November 13, 1930, at Gooding, Idaho, to Harmon and LaNora Points Thomason. He grew up in Idaho and moved to Oregon in 1962.

He was a longtime Morrow County resident, living in Heppner for many years, then in Boardman, and for the past year at Irrigon.

He had worked at many sawmills and on area farms including the Jerald Ray farm, Far West Farms and Eastern Oregon Farm Company.

He loved being retired so he could fish and visit with family members. He also used to drive the Senior Center bus.

On October 1999, he was diagnosed with brain cancer and given six months to live. He was 69 years old but said he would live to see 70 and he did. His motto was, "I'll do it my way" and, according to the family, he always did.

Survivors include his children, Wyoma, Kenny, Scott, Alvin, Calvin and Dusty; brothers, Marvin, Larry and Jasper; sister, Nadine; 18 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by two children, a grandchild, and a sister.

Burns Mortuary of Hermiston was in charge of arrangements.

Court discusses lack of bids for Freightliner

By Doris Brosnan

CSEPP Emergency Director Casey Beard reported to the Morrow County Court, at their Dec. 27 meeting, that there were no bids for a Freightliner to be used for the mobile command post. Commissioner John Wenholz and Beard agreed that to get bids, the amount would have to be increased. Beard said he would discuss with county counsel whether the option exists of buying a vehicle when no bids are received.

Beard displayed a draft memorandum of agreement between the county and the fire departments, fire districts and the Morrow County Emergency Medical Services for funding support to participate in the CSEPP program. He also described some problems procuring telephone service for the Nextel system. Commercial telephone companies have no plans to extend the service to this area, Beard reported, because it is not commercially viable. Discussion focused on other communication systems, including the Oregon State Police microwave system, on repeaters and timing problems.

Beard reported plans for Incident Command System trainings and indicated hopes of some funding for training from FEMA.

Morrow County Behavioral Health Director Kelly Sager informed the court of an Oregon Together grant for prevention programs. He also reported problems of too little office space in Wheeler County and his hopes of a solution. He noted that space at the Boardman Annex is less than needed and explained some options and his ideas for increasing office space there. He added that the telephone system is antiquated and Judge Terry Tallman suggested his discussing that issue with Education Services District.

Sager broached the subject of timing problems with purchasing office supplies and equipment and the need to go through the pre-authorization process with the court. He and the court discussed Sager's desire to perform contractual obligations in a timely and efficient manner, problems that can arise without the checks-and-balances process and uniformity of requirements for all departments.

Sager and Morrow County Juvenile Director Carolyn Holt explained to the court that they have been discussing ways to utilize some funds from the Juvenile Crime Prevention plan for after-school prevention efforts. The court heard details of their plan to use the funds to increase the hours of Alcohol and Drug Counselor Jesus Rome, to work with students from the alternative school program and young people coming out of the residential program. Holt informed the court that the governor's budget plan includes funding for two more years for this grant that targets removal of barriers to service for juveniles and provision of specialized services. The court approved increasing the position of alcohol and drug counselor from half- to full-time, as long as the grant funding is available.

Public Works Director Burke O'Brien informed the court that he is completing some suggested changes in the land-use permit forms, which he will present for their approval when completed. His hope is to clarify requirements for the permittee, require better design drawings and specify time limits.

O'Brien informed the court that the crew's time has been used mostly for plowing and sanding and that as much sand has been used so far this season as was used all of last year. O'Brien

described the damages to the Bell Canyon Bridge's head wall and reported that repairs are in progress. He updated the court on the status of the County Line Road agreement, which he has sent to county counsel for review.

Other actions of the court included the following:

- Approval of permits for CenturyTel to upgrade lines on Strawberry Lane, Alpine Lane and Kilkenny Road;
- Approval of an approach permit on Fourth Street West and an approach permit onto Eastregard;
- Approval of County Assessor's Greg Swee's order of back-up tapes.

Off The Wall
By Merlyn Robinson

So how many folks have managed to keep their New Year or new millennium resolutions are track? Most of us resolve to improve our lifestyles, perhaps be more productive or merely clean out closets. Then there are thoughts of, "Come spring, I'll get around to that."

Presently I'm trying to find somewhere to store Christmas decorations. Besides toilet tissue, some of the best things ever produced are plastic storage tubs of all sizes. The mention of changes in bathroom accessories brings to mind those "low boys" like the throne in one bathroom at our daughter's house. Sure, these newer models conserve water, but unless you're a midget, the seat shouldn't be inches from the floor. In my childhood days, our feet usually dangled when seated in the "two-holer" out back. Occasionally there was the luxury of a homemade stool to accommodate shorter legs. Until indoor facilities came about, that was called progress!

Rural lifestyles have been greatly improved during my lifetime. However continued progress for rural communities was also supposed to be on Governor Kitzhaber's agenda. Our governor seems to forget that Oregon's economy is based on agriculture because he is proposing budget cuts for the agriculture department and major fair funding cuts. During his tenure, he has proposed reductions in county fair general fund allocations in all four biennium budgets. Each time the legislature has come to the rescue.

The proposed reduction in fair funding might not have a major impact on large fairs where off-season revenues generate up to 90 percent of those budgets. But for small fairs, particularly in Eastern Oregon, the general fund dollars can be as much as 80 to 90 percent of a total county fair budget.

County fairs not only showcase a county's productivity and community pride, but they involve hundreds of our youth through 4-H and FFA and open class. Led by many volunteers, 4-H'ers learn responsibility, leadership and goat setting, whether it's in home economics, the arts, animal science or other project areas.

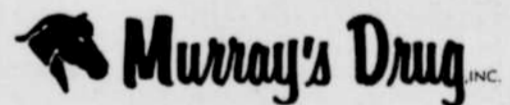
Our governor doesn't seem to be aware of the importance of our natural resource-dependent areas. According to Assistant Agricultural Director Chuck Craig, more than \$98,000 is the proposed cut from the agricultural department's budget, which would directly impact the department's marketing budget. With commodity prices below par and agriculture striving to develop new markets and value-added products, it's hardly the time to cut funding of the agricultural department.

Now would be a good time to back up our Eastern Oregon legislative representatives with a letter writing campaign to the governor. Letters are effective and a stamp is affordable. I hope that every 4-H'er, parent and anyone who cares about his community will hop on a letter writing bandwagon. It's time to stand up for our rural communities and a great way of life.

Along with writing my letter to the governor, I intend to step up my efforts to conserve water and electricity. No, I'm not recommending a return to the lifestyle of those good old days when the plumbing was out back. But a resolution to become a more fastidious housekeeper does seem to be counterproductive.

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January 4th - Thursday LADIES NIGHT:

Dawna Dougherty and crew will be serving spaghetti dinner starting at 6 p.m.



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



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