

HEPPNER



50¢

Gazette
Times

VOL. 120 NO. 14 10 Pages Wednesday, April 4, 2001 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Raymond French named 2001 fair & rodeo grand marshal



Raymond French
By Sue Gibbs

Dedication, involvement and service are words that describe this year's grand marshal of the 2001 Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo. This honor is one more title Raymond "Ray" French can add to his many accomplishments in our community.

Ray was born and raised on the family ranch on Big Butter Creek. One of his first commitments started with the marriage to his wife.

Ray married his wife Norma in 1946. The couple had three daughters, Karen, Verina and Susan. Ray and Norma presently have nine grandchildren who live in different parts of the country with their parents. Karen Wood lives in Tigard. Verina Schiller, the 1967 Heppner rodeo queen, lives in Pflugerville, TX, and Susan Ward, the 1972 queen, lives in Heppner. Susan and her husband, Jim Ward currently run the family ranch.

In the 1950s and 60s Ray began his service and dedication to Morrow County. He served as chairman of the Morrow County Livestock Growers and was a member of the Heppner Soil and Water Conservation District for 16 years and served as chairman for 12 years.

In 1964 he was elected as Morrow County Cattleman of the Year. Ray also volunteered his time and service on the board of directors of the Heppner Rodeo during the 60s. He dedicated 10 years to the rodeo by heading both the roping chutes and flagging the timed events.

In the 80s Ray held more elected positions in the Oregon Cattleman's Association. He served as first and second vice president, and then was elected president. He spent two years in this position while he was also a director of the National Cattleman's Association. His dedication and service to the livestock industry earned him an honored award of Distinguished, Service, Devotion and Loyalty by Oregon State University. In 1985 he was elected as a State Representative for District 59 and served in this position until 1989.

The 90s brought Ray's experience and skills back to his community.

He was a Morrow County Commissioner for two terms starting in 1992. Other local organizations and services Ray has committed himself to in the past or present include the American Legion, Heppner Coordinating Council, Heppner's Elk Lodge and the board of trustees, school board, chairman of the Columbia Blue Mountain Resource and Conservation Development Association, director of the Pendleton Production Credit Bank, Heppner's Chamber of Commerce and St. Patrick's Church. His dedicated service to our community was awarded in 1997 with the Lifetime Achievement Award presented by the Heppner Chamber of Commerce. The 90s concluded with Ray's retirement in 1999.

"The Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo is honored to have Ray French as this year's grand marshal," said a rodeo spokesperson. "His dedication, service and commitment to Morrow County have had a huge impact on our local economy and way of life. Ray's involvement in our community will have a lasting impact for those who call Morrow County home."

First-ever high school rodeo set in Heppner April 20-22

Oregon High School Rodeo kicked off the spring season at Corvallis on March 30-31.

Heppner's Ryan Matteson took second in steer wrestling with 12.07. Jerid Penturf, Heppner, placed sixth in the bareback riding with a 58 ride.

Ione was represented by Katie Bacon, who placed second in barrel racing with a 15.266 and Ann Shear with a 22.916 pole bending time, which was good for seventh. Condon's Marnie Wilkins took ninth in goat tying with a 11.92.

The first annual Morrow County High School Rodeo will be held on April 20-22. The action will feature high school-aged competitors from throughout Oregon, who will be accompanied by their parents.

Auschwitz survivor to speak

The women of the Heppner United Methodist Church invite the community to one of the "most riveting evenings you may ever experience."

Holocaust survivor Alice Kern will speak about her experiences at Auschwitz Concentration Camp on Monday, April 23, at St. Patrick's Parish Hall in Heppner.

A salad buffet will be served at 6:30 p.m. in the parish hall, with Kern speaking after.

Kern, who now lives in Portland, wrote a book on her experiences,

Hearing set on co-gen air quality

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will host a public hearing on Tuesday, April 17, in Heppner to share information and take public comment on a proposed Title V air-operating permit renewal for Boardman-based Frontier Energy.

The permit will be used to operate a 10 mega-watt cogeneration boiler at the former Kinzua Resources mill two miles north of Heppner.

The public hearing will begin at 7 p.m. at the Bank of Eastern Oregon, 275 Main St., Heppner. An information meeting will be held at the same location prior to the hearing, from 6 to 7 p.m.

Copies of the proposed permit can be obtained by contacting DEQ in Pendleton at 276-4063, or in Bend at 388-6146.

Written comments on the draft permit will be accepted by DEQ until 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 18. Comments may be sent to DEQ, Attention: Bonnie Hough, 2164 NE Fourth St., Suite 104, Bend, OR, 97701.

DEQ will review all comments received during the public comment period before issuing Frontier Energy a final Title V air-operating permit.

The rodeo schedule is as follows:

Friday, April 20-cow cutting contest at the Wilkinson Arena, 6 p.m. (this is a double-header event).

Saturday, April 21-performance beginning at 9 p.m. at the rodeo arena, will a dance at 9 p.m. at the fairgrounds.

The dance will be put on by the fair committee and is open to the public.

Sunday, April 22-slack at 8 a.m., with performance at 1 p.m.

Cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under.

The event will be hosted by the Columbia Basin High School Rodeo Club, which has members from Morrow, Gilliam and Sherman counties.

Grains meeting

"Tapestry of Hope," which will be available for those who wish to purchase it.

There is no admission charge. Interested persons are asked to RSVP by Sunday, April 15, to 676-9408 or 676-9278.

Grains meeting

A meeting of the Oregon Grains Commission will be held this Friday, April 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Crop & Soil Science Building, Room 119 OSU, Corvallis.

Ione-Boardman road development in question

By Merlyn Robinson

What could be a closer link between the north and south ends of Morrow County is a proposed road through uninhabited land between Ione and Boardman. However, that road development is in question. The proposed route would cross an area designated as habitat for the supposedly endangered Washington Ground Squirrel.

At a public meeting in Ione on Monday, March 26, roadblocks preventing the acquisition of an easement for 2.5 miles for this road through that area were discussed.

About 93,000 acres of land were leased by the State of Oregon to Boeing in the 1960s. Prior to World War II, a country road did exist between Ione and Boardman. That road was closed and the area became off-limits when the bombing range was created. Currently rezoned for exclusive farm use, that land is now for sale. Private ownership of this land would add it to the county tax rolls with approximately 23,000 acres of this area deemed squirrel habitat.

"These squirrels have been machine-gunned, bombed, dove and grazed over and roasted by range fires, but they are still there," said Port of Morrow Commissioner Marvin Padberg. He added that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife "is driving this thing."

Mandated by state statutes, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife was required to map the squirrel habitat after environmental groups litigated for squirrel protection, said Bob Krein, Heppner, of ODFW.

A state listing was done in hopes of precluding a listing by the federal government that could include private property. Presently the department has been informed that there will be no public hunting on this ground under new ownership, Krein said.

Currently PGE coal fire plant workers drive 13 miles over a limited-access road from Ione to

their workplace—only those workers have keys to a locked gate. If that road were permanently closed, the drive from Ione to the coal fire plant would be 53 miles. A parallel north-south route for a proposed road through that area is platted farther west, but still crosses 2.5 miles of squirrel habitat area. PGE is opposed to a road that crosses coal-fire plant property.

According to local farmers and residents, this road proposal isn't solely to benefit those coal fire workers who choose to live in the Willow Creek Valley. Road advocates claim this shorter route would benefit the entire county. An estimated 1200 new jobs are anticipated in the north due to the forthcoming dairies, the cheese plant, an additional coal fire plant, a proposed racetrack development and other industries. A shortcut road would allow direct access to that job market, therefore allowing families the option of living in the south end of the county. This road would also provide a shorter transport of crops to port facilities. Another strong argument presented at this meeting is that it would boost south end school enrollment thus offering some relief to crowding in north end schools, while helping small south-end schools and towns to remain viable.

"It's social outrage to not have access to those jobs," said farmer Eric Anderson. "It smells worse and worse." As a community, we should continue to fight and hope that common sense prevails, he said.

A consensus of people at this meeting vowed to continue the fight by making trips to the State Legislature. Jerry Rietmann, who has met with different involved entities and has made trips to Salem, said that Morrow County Commissioners failed to notify Ione representatives of a meeting concerning the land sale and road issue that was held in Salem last week although the county court had received advance notification of this meeting.

If R.D. Offutt Co., a large out-of-state corporation, is successful in an attempt to purchase this land, the squirrel habitat area will be managed by the Nature Conservancy. After meeting with Nature Conservancy representatives, Rietmann said their people were worried about being sued by environmental groups if a road easement was granted and they are also of the opinion that the squirrel area should be protected, "no matter what." Presently there are six lawsuits pending against Offutt by different environmental groups in an effort to limit other land developments.

The final decision is up to the State Ways and Means Committee, Rietmann said. Freshman State Representative Greg Smith has determinedly vowed to try every means to prevent that committee from signing off on this sale unless it includes a road easement.

"We need to stick by our guns and hammer them," as it's the only leverage we have said Ione resident Don Bristow. Others agreed that the only alternative now is to try to block this sale if their conditions aren't met. So far, efforts to solicit help from both Governor Kitzhaber and Senator Ted Ferrioli have fallen on deaf ears.

Health district plans meeting

The regular meeting of the Morrow County Health District will be held at the Boardman Ambulance Hall on Monday, April 9, beginning at 7 p.m.

The agenda includes: bond resolution, budget meetings, audit bids, critical access, nursing staffing policies and procedures, nursing respite are policies and procedures, health future leadership conference, new board members, CEO report and executive session.

Memorial donations good for health district



Shari Stahl (center), who was injured in a motorcycle accident, was benefited by equipment donated to Home Health.

By Molly Rhea

Someone recently asked me, "What does the health district do with the money they receive for memorials?" Since the person I was visiting with was somewhat surprised by the answer, I thought others may also be wondering.

First of all, when donations are received, the money is deposited in a restricted account, and earmarked for the area intended. Unless the funds were designated toward a specific project, such as the recently purchased CAT scanner, funds are utilized as needs arise.

Most generally the moneys are used to purchase equipment. The Home Health department has purchased pulse oximeters, which enable the RNs to measure patient's blood oxygen saturation, as well as equipment to be used in the home to enhance the patients' safety or comfort. Donated funds have also been utilized to pay for continuing education and hospice start-up costs.

Home Health also accepts used durable medical equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs. The agency stores the items and is then able to place the items with

individuals in need of them.

Money donated toward the nursing home has been used to purchase specialized equipment for residents who would otherwise be unable to afford it. Furniture, paint, curtains, as well as some remodeling, has been accomplished with these funds, all of which have helped improve the physical environment and atmosphere.

South Morrow County EMT Association has been able to buy pagers and two-way radios. They have replaced dysfunctional ambulance gurneys and have purchased teddy bears that are given to youngsters when they are transported by ambulance or are involved in an emergency.

The hospital in general has used donations to help accomplish a variety of projects. Memorials have provided equipment throughout the facility, recently to include a portable suction machine for an emergency crash cart, as well as remodeling of the patient rooms and the visitor's waiting area. The nursing staff is looking forward to having the upstairs nurses' station remodeled soon - all with donated money.

The items mentioned are only a fraction of what donations have provided to Morrow County's health care system. These improvements or upgrades were made possible because people have reached into their own pockets to ensure our local health care not only survives, but is able to provide comfortable, quality care to the residents and visitors of Morrow County.

Smith to speak

State Representative Greg Smith will speak at Willow's Grange in Ione on Sunday, April 8, beginning at 1 p.m.



ATV SPOT SPRAYERS

(14 & 25 GALLON)

at

Morrow County Grain Growers

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