

The Official Newspaper
of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES

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David Sykes Publisher
April Hilton-Sykes Editor

News deadline is Monday at 5 p.m.

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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 G-T office. The G-T reserves the right to edit. The G-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.)

Parents need to re-think priorities

To the Editor:

The last SAT scores were recently released by the Morrow County School District as follows:

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)
School Year (2000-2001)
Senior Results

State/District/School	Verbal	Math	Percent & Number Taking the SAT	Total
National	506	514	-NA-	1020
State of Oregon	526	526	55% (19,306)	1052
*Morrow County School District	493	499	48.2% (out of 139)	998
Heppner High	479	466	60% (18 out of 29)	945
Ione High	495	494	61% (14 out of 23)	989
Riverside High	505	519	39% (35 out of 87)	1,025

* MCSD average scores are not true district averages. Since the schools receive the individual and school scores, the district computes a school average to figure the district average. A true district average could only be computed by using individual scores to compute an average.

The previous year's average at Heppner High School was above both the national and Oregon averages. It would appear that the current low average is a result of the excessive staff cuts over a period of years that accelerated in the 2000-2001 school year. The absence of a sequential math program up to and including calculus was particularly harmful, as these courses are available at most other schools in the state including Riverside and Ione.

The drop in averages is also an indictment of the 6/6 junior high/senior high program. High school teachers have been called upon to use their time teaching seventh and eighth grade. This reduces curriculum offerings in high school and effectively locks out many students from the courses they need to compete in college and the work place today.

Heppner High School has developed a good technical/computer program. They recently received a grant that will help further advance this program. However, their agriculture program, which would be significant for South Morrow, was one of the cuts, and with it went the FFA program, which taught extremely valuable leadership and communication skills. Heppner had too many students for the hatchet approach applied to staff at both schools.

The 6/6 system has developed into an economic development problem as well. People who would have otherwise stayed here have moved away and others who would have liked to live here have not done so because of the problems with the Morrow County School system.

All parents in South Morrow need to re-think their priorities so their children benefit from the broadest educational advantages that could be possible for them.

(s) Meg Murray
Ione

Low cost solution to funding problem

To the Editor:

Education reform is a big topic these days. As a teacher, parent, and taxpayer, I'd like to add one more (low cost) idea to the pot: Free education as a universally offered honor, not a universal right.

Here's how it would work: All children would be guaranteed a public education through the sixth grade, by which time they would (hopefully) attain basic reading, writing, science, and math skills. After that, the privilege of attending school at taxpayers' expense would be contingent on student performance and behavior. Students of all ability levels who evidenced care about learning, about themselves, and about others would be generously supported throughout a quality high school education.

However, students of junior high age or older who felt school was a waste of their precious time, who demonstrated little respect for themselves, their future, or others, would be shown the door. Their parents would then be totally responsible for them and for providing whatever education their children were capable of learning. At the age of 16 they would be allowed to work full-time. If as adults they wanted to know more about the world or

improve their skills, they could pay for further education themselves.

This is the way private schools operate: They have the right to exclude students who do not appreciate being there. It would make an unbelievable world of difference if public schools were able to do the same.

(s) Lea Mathieu
Ione

Births

Jazmin DeAnn Barrett-a daughter, Jazmin DeAnn, was born to Krystal Baker and Chris Barrett on January 1, 2002. The baby weighed 8 lbs. 10 oz. and was 21 inches long.

Grandparents are Jerry and Sue Baker of Lexington, Dave and Phyllis Barrett of Ione and Michelle Rhodes of Vancouver. Great-grandparents are Dennis and Doris McLaren of Pilot Rock and Dale Baker, Lexington. Great-great-grandmother is Virginia Groshens of Hermiston.

Emmanuel Barrera-a son, Emmanuel, was born to Graciela and Santos Barrera of Boardman on January 20, 2002, at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston. The baby weighed 7 lbs. 14 oz.

How far do we go with circus sideshow

To the Editor:

To school board members and administrators:

A different hairstyle caught my eye the other day as an individual walked by my house on her way back to school. Bright blue was the color, Mohawk cut and the sides of the head were shaved. Various piercings adorned parts of her face. It looked great. Too bad she didn't save it for our Fourth of July Celebration.

At first I thought it was a dress-down day at school only to learn, no, this was the real thing. Willamette Valley, yes, I could understand, but Morrow County? I made a call to the lone principal and asked about the school's dress policy. Mike Stuart walked me through the policy and enlightened

me on the different court cases where schools have lost cases trying to enforce dress codes. I was informed this hairstyle and color did meet the dress code, so in school she stays.

I guess my question is how far will parents go to let their children express their individuality? How far will the school board and administrators go in letting students create a circus-like sideshow, versus the learning institution I thought our schools represented. Yes, schools are being sued and yes it costs the district to fight these suits. But what are the alternatives? Do we just throw in the towel and lose all local control of our school? I hope not.

(s) Terry Mewhinney
Ione

Obituary

Lorine Toll

Lorine Toll, 73, formerly of the Heppner-Lexington area, died Friday, January 18, 2002, in Woodburn.

A memorial service will be held in Heppner at a later date.

She was born January 16, 1929, at the VanWinkle farm in Lexington. After graduating from Heppner High School in 1947, she married John Ledbetter. They had three children: Jeanette Sunseri (deceased), June Bennett of Dallas, Texas and Judy Lathrom of Portland.

In 1975, she married Leonard Toll; he had three children: Toni Chitty of Heppner, Tami Johlke of Pendleton and Terry Toll of Prineville.

Mrs. Toll is also survived by seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

She enjoyed traveling, gardening, raising roses, playing cards and visiting casinos with her husband. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society.

Mildred I. Hurtt

Mildred Irene Hurtt, 69, of Heppner, died Saturday, January 26, 2002, at Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home in Heppner.

A graveside memorial service will be held Saturday, February 2, 2002, at 1 p.m. at Riverside Cemetery in Siletz.

She was born April 22, 1932, at Talmage, Saskatchewan, Canada, to James and Amy Orr Spires. The family later moved to Woodstock, Iowa, where she attended school, graduating in 1950 from Woodstock High School.

On September 3, 1950, she married Thomas Merle Hurtt, at Woodstock. The couple moved back and forth between Iowa and Oregon numerous times before settling in the Lincoln County area of Oregon in 1974.

She was baptized at the Church of Christ in Toledo, Oregon, where she was a member.

Mr. Hurtt died in 1986, and in 1988 Mrs. Hurtt moved to Heppner.

She enjoyed gardening, sewing, crafts, reading, cooking and volunteering at the senior meal site.

Survivors include sons, James Hurtt and Thomas Hurtt, Jr., both of Lakeside, Oregon; daughters, Shelley Fultz of Lafayette, Oregon, and Cherrie Clark of Heppner; brothers, Lester Spires of Zepherhills, Florida, and Charles Spires of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; sisters, Evelyn Larson of Mitchellville, Iowa and Eleanor Williams of Woodstock, Iowa; and grandchildren, Jeremy Clark, Joshua Clark, Jerrod Clark, Joseph Fultz and Everett Peoney. Besides her husband, she was preceded in death by an infant daughter, Thearesa; brothers, Irvine Spires, Ralph Spires and Maurice Spires; and her parents.

Memorial contributions may be made to Pioneer Memorial Home Health or Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home, both at P.O. Box 9, Heppner, Oregon 97836, or the American Cancer Society, 0330 SW Curry, Portland, Oregon 97201.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in charge of arrangements.

Frontier Energy fined by DEQ

According to a state of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality news release, Frontier Energy, LLC, in Heppner was penalized \$7,800 for illegal discharge of wastewater in Willow Creek from the Heppner Power Plant (\$3,600 fine); and violating air contaminant permit by failing to operate its monitoring system from June 11 through Sept. 11, 2001 (\$4,200 penalty) by the Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality in December.

The release also stated that on December 27, DEQ levied \$13,400 in civil penalties against Union Pacific Railroad for failure to comply with state hazardous waste management regulations at its Hinkle railroad maintenance facility, located at 77879 Hermiston-Hinkle Road near Hermiston. Union Pacific has appealed the penalty.

According to the news release, DEQ assessed a \$5,400 penalty for failing to determine whether various residues of unknown wastes produced at the facility (used solvent filters, used oil filters, parts-washer sludge and several waste drums) were hazardous wastes. The released said that the railroad received a \$6,000 penalty for failing to immediately clean up spills or releases including used oil from a leaking solid waste dumpster, and multiple releases of used oil and diesel fuel from open containers. DEQ assessed a \$2,000 penalty for improper labeling of containers of used oil and failing to ensure that the containers were closed, covered or located under cover, according to the release.

DEQ said that the agency had noted that "there was a history of similar violations occurring at the Hinkle facility and/or at other Union Pacific facilities in Oregon."

Justice Court Report

The Justice Court office at the courthouse in Heppner reports handling the following business: Craig Scott, 18, Heppner, Possession of Firecracker, \$157 fine; Charles Delmer Treon, 33, Ione-Illegal U-turn, \$87 fine; Marie E. Henrichs, 48, Hermiston-No Operator's License, Defective Equipment, \$118 fine; Gary Lee Nolan, 52, Lexington-Violation of the Basic Rule, 80 mph in a 55 mph zone, \$132 fine; Steven J. Doyle, 35, Condon-Driving while License Suspended Infraction, Driving Uninsured, \$474 fine; Dennis Duane Dima, 18, Heppner-Operating Without Required Lighting (License Plate Light), \$77 fine;

Bill J. Eubanks, 79, Arlington-No Big Game Tag, \$157 fine; LaRoy L. Cline, 43, Lexington-DUII, 180 days in jail, or 45 days electronic surveillance, 160 days suspended, 36 months probation with no further violation of law, complete alcohol education program, complete electronic surveillance, \$2798 fine plus court appointed attorney, \$1000 suspended; Driving while License Suspended Misdemeanor, 36 months probation with no further violation of law, complete alcohol education program, 10 days in jail to run concurrently with DUII sentence, \$1131 fine, \$500 suspended; Driving while License Suspended Misdemeanor, Giving False Information to a Police Officer, \$431 fine.

County court discusses tobacco law enforcement

At the January 23 meeting of the Morrow County Court, Morrow County Public Health director, Laura McElligott, asked the Court for thoughts on the tobacco-related legislation, which makes local public health agencies responsible for enforcement. She described the enforcement process and said she shared the Court's concerns about "policing" responsibilities and responsibilities added to an already busy department. She suggested the code-enforcement officer as possibly a better choice. Commissioner Dan Brosnan added that unless the state provides training and other funding; it is another unfunded mandate from the state. Judge Terry Tallman explained that the Court was issuing a directive that that staff not conduct enforcement activities.

McElligott also described to the Court a grant received and another for which she plans to apply for use in filling gaps in public health. She explained the pending grant requirements and identified the money as being for a wide variety of things.

County assessor, Greg Sweek, brought to the Court's attention an easement for a sewer line granted by the city of Heppner in August 2000 across a piece of county property obtained through a foreclosure, property not ever owned by the city. Sweek described the property and line location, and its lack of effect on future use of the property. The court agreed to an easement for the sewer line.

Sweek also submitted the appraisal report on the above-mentioned property. The Court then set a minimum bid for the sheriff's sale and agreed to find out if the city wants to buy the property instead.

The Court discussed two Irrigon issues with economic development specialist Martin Davis. They agreed that Commissioner John Wenholz will speak to the representative of the Irrigon Fire District to clarify the need for no further delay in use of tippage fee funding awarded for use in the rebuilding of its fire hall. Davis also reported on the status of the multi-agency building plans, indicating that the county's need for space could be accommodated in the building also.

Davis presented the Court a revised agreement with the Port of Morrow for attorney's fees for the speedway project, requesting a cap on the projected cost. After discussion, the Court approved the revised agreement and Davis agreed to speak to the port about negotiating any additional fees, should any arise.

Davis also agreed to check on possible coordination of his schedule and the monthly business meeting dates of the Heppner Chamber of Commerce.

At a public hearing on the county supplemental budget, accounting budget officer, Lianne Currin, provided a detailed account of budget adjustments to the various funds. Hearing no comments, Judge Tallman closed the hearing. The Court adopted the supplemental budget. Currin read a resolution for additional funds in three departments' budgets, to add grant moneys, and the Court approved the resolution.

Currin also explained two intrafund line-item transfers, one in the building permit fund and one in the fair fund. The Court approved the transfers. Currin presented the audit report, in which no material weaknesses were noted. The management letter suggested improvement in three areas, but Currin reported that two had already been addressed and the third deals with one department's collection of bad debt, which will be examined with an eye to improvement. The audit report she described as "clean," an unqualified opinion. Currin shared with the Court some concern about the indirect-cost study, regarding need for federal approval or only state approval. Currin and the Court discussed aspects of a biennial budget compared to those of a yearly budget, with members of the Court expressing more confidence in the yearly approach, and Currin explaining some benefits of the biennial perspective. She will report

to the Court on an upcoming meeting about biennial budgeting. Executive secretary, Andrea Denton, reported the accounting supervisor's observation that the Court needs to handle the tippage fee award to the Heritage Trail in the same manner as for other tippage fee awards, requiring invoices before release of funds.

Assistant public works director, Bob Nairns, reported that grading had been completed on Nolan and Campbell Roads and Lindsey Feedlot Lane. The crew has burned weeds on Gus Road and Kincaid Lane and has plowed snow and sanded on Willow Creek, North Fork of Willow Creek, Sunflower Flat, Upper and Lower Rhea Creek, Dee Cox, Ione-Gooseberry, and Dry Fork Roads. They finished culvert installations on Bunker Hill Lane.

Nairns said that the pickup spray unit is prepared. Carolyn Proebstal has completed required training and will assist Dave Pranger with the weed spraying. Nairns briefly reported on a meeting to discuss the Boardman Transportation Plan and on a meeting regarding the Irrigon school.

Other actions of the Court included the following:

- appointment of Corrine Lindsay as chair and Andrea Denton as vice chair of the Commission on Children and Families;

- appointment of Wayne Downey, Leann Rea, Travis Harrison, Bev Bridgewater, Dave Pranger, Jim Van Winkle, Steve Rhea, Bob Krein (advisory), Lee Palmer, Mark Rietmann, Dick Wilkinson, Joe McElligott, Chris Rauch, Bill Broderick (advisory), Larry Luther (advisory), and Commissioner Dan Brosnan (ex officio), as recommended by the Morrow, Soil and Water Conservation District, to the local Willow Creek Watershed Advisory Committee;

- acceptance of a \$50 donation to the Special Transportation Fund from the Heppner Elks organization in thanks for the use of the bus shed as they prepared their first-place-prize winning float for the light parade;

- approval of the subscription agreement with the Oregon Teamster Employers Trust for health insurance for the Sheriff's Association.

Garden Club plans meeting

The Heppner Garden Club will hold a meeting on Monday, Feb. 4, at the St. Patrick's Senior Center at 7 p.m.

A Valentine party in honor of "Yard of the Month" recipients is planned. Hosts will be Verna Brinda and Dorothy Jackson.

Suzanne Jepsen will also present a proclamation that the month of February is designated as honoring the Heppner Garden Club.

The program for the evening will be "Culture of Roses", presented by Mary Goheen.

Everyone is invited to attend.

40th BIRTHDAY!

Janice I. Huddleston
January 31st



In her memory,
please come and
help us celebrate
the passing of her
youth on Saturday,
February 2nd at
Bucknum's Tavern
after the basket-
ball games.