

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
Sarah Collier Editor

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**Long time worker retires from
Heppner Post Office**



Jeri Wight helps one of her last customers at the Heppner Post Office

Jeri Wight's co-workers were really surprised to hear about her retirement from the Heppner Post Office, but maybe no one was more surprised than Jeri. She had been working to process the paperwork for some time, but when she heard last Thursday, June 6, that her last day was the very next day, she went into a state of shock. It was happy shock, mind you, but the prospect of immediate retirement was still a little overwhelming for the 28-year postal veteran.

Jeri, 54, started with the Post Office in Spray in 1974. She transferred to the Heppner office in March of 1990. "That was a big step, but I had the advantage of knowing quite a few people when I came," said Jeri, whose brother and sister had also worked in Heppner. Jeri came to Heppner originally as a part-time worker and then went to full time in July of 1992 when both Ken Nairns, who was postmaster, and Floss Watkins, long time postal worker, retired from the Heppner office.

"It's been a very interesting and rewarding time here," says the petite strawberry blonde, who greets each customer with a cheerful, freckle-faced smile. "I'm going to miss my customers. It's been fun getting to know everybody and learning to be part of the community."

After 28 years with the Post Office, Jeri has had her share of both amusing and frustrating experiences, but one that comes to mind involves a somewhat bizarre parcel. "The one that stands out is when Dick Temple (a local veterinarian) came in to mail a dead cat to some laboratory for testing," laughs Jeri.

Jeri says she plans to sit on her deck for a while, but also hopes to travel with Gary, her husband

of 39 years. "My first priority is to go to Mississippi to see my brother that I haven't seen in 10 years," says Jeri. Retirement will also give her more time to spend with her mother-in-law, Velma Wight, who is "like a mother" to her, her son, John, his wife, Shelly, who Jeri says is the "daughter we never had" and their children, Adam, 16, and Riley, 14, all of Heppner.

Jeri and her husband were both born and raised in Spray. She and Gary married young, but she was determined to stay in school and graduated from Spray High School in 1966.

Heppner Postmaster Sally Larson and co-worker Barb Watkins are at once happy for Jeri and yet sorry to see her go. While someone will be hired to fill the spot, the position may be vacant for some time.

Food Handler's class

Blue Mountain Community College and the State Health Division will offer a Food Handler's class on Tuesday, June 25, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Heppner High School cafeteria. This class offers an opportunity for those planning to work at summer festivals or fairs to acquire a Food Handler's card. A Food Handler's card is required by the State of Oregon for all employees who handle or prepare food in food service facilities in Oregon. This includes dishwashers, waiters, staff and businesspersons. Additionally, the card is now required of all day care workers.

A \$10 licensing fee, payable to the State Health Department, will be charged after successful completion of the written test. Registration will be done at class.

For further information, contact Anne Morter, BMCC South Morrow County Coordinator, at 422-7040.

Obituaries

Jerry M. Dougherty

Jerry M. Dougherty, 64, of Heppner died Tuesday, June 4, 2002, at his home. Recitation of the Rosary was held June 6 at the St. Patrick Catholic Church in Heppner and memorial mass was June 7.



Jerry M. Dougherty

Mr. Dougherty was born to Cliff and Roberta Dougherty on December 8, 1937, at Heppner. He attended Heppner schools and graduated from Heppner High School.

He married Patricia Steagall on September 8, 1958, at Heppner. He worked on the family farm until he graduated, raising wheat and cattle. He lived there with his family all his life.

Mr. Dougherty loved to hunt, fish and spend time with his family. He especially liked to watch his grandchildren participate in their various activities.

He served as a Morrow County Rodeo Committee board member for several years and was a member of the Heppner Elks Lodge for 43 years. He was a member of St. Patrick Church and enjoyed cooking at the annual Valentine's Day breakfast and volunteering at the St. Patrick's Day celebration.

He was survived by his wife, Pat; daughter, Cindy Leasy of Pilot Rock; sons Cliff Dougherty of Heppner, Scott Dougherty of Lexington and Jason Dougherty of Portland; and six grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his sister, Yvonne Lovgren and his parents.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Heppner Elks 358 Foundation, P.O. Box 494, Heppner, OR 97836; Pioneer Memorial Home Health Care, P.O. Box 9, Heppner or a charity of choice.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in charge of arrangements.

Memorial service to be held

A memorial service for Douglas R. Carey who passed away in January will be held on Saturday, June 22, at 11 a.m., at the park south of the McNary Lock and Dam in Umatilla. A potluck will be included in this celebration of Doug's life. Participants are asked to bring a favorite dish and any photographs and memories of Doug. For more information, please contact DeAnna Reade at 541-278-3493 (home) or 541-969-1469 (cell).

Death notice

Helen L. Currin

Helen L. Currin, 90, of Heppner died June 9 at Pioneer Memorial Hospital. Recitation of the Rosary is Thursday, June 13 at St. Patrick's Church in Heppner. Funeral Mass will be held Friday, June 14, at 11 a.m. at St. Patrick's. Concluding service and interment will be at Heppner Masonic Cemetery. A complete obituary will be published in the Gazette-Times next week.

Correction

The Lexington town yard sale will be held Saturday, June 29 only. Sales will begin at various times.

Births

Casey Trey Fletcher

A son, Casey Trey Fletcher, was born to Andrea and Andy Fletcher of Boise, ID on May 16, 2002, at St. Luke's Regional Medical Center, Boise. Grandparents are Archie and Diana Ball of Heppner, Carolyn Fletcher of Pendleton and the late Bill Fletcher.

Justice Court Report

The Justice Court office at the courthouse in Heppner reports handling the following business:

-Shirley Elaine Happ Warnock, 54, Heppner; Endangering the Welfare of a Minor, \$100 fine.
-Zachary Dillingham, 22, Lyons; Unlawful Taking of a Deer, \$631 fine.

-Betty Gray, 62, Ione; Criminal Trespass II, \$257 fine; Telephonic Harassment, \$157 fine.

-Bonney Jo Hill, 22, Heppner; Careless Driving w/MVA, \$210 fine.

-William Joseph Kuhn, 51, Heppner; Failure to Wear Seatbelt, \$59 fine.

-Keith Thomas Hanson, Jr., 39, Heppner; Speeding/VBR 73/55, \$77 fine.

-Darlene Sue Marquardt, 55, Athena; Speeding/VBR 75/55, \$77 fine.

-Kerry P. McLain, 23, Heppner; Passing Violation, \$132 fine.

-Tessa R. Bailey, 20, Heppner; Minor on Licensed Premises, \$111 fine.

Chamber Chatter

By Claudia Hughes

Chamber Executive Director

"Welcome" to Grieb Land Company, our newest Chamber of Commerce member. It's great to have a good mix of Ag businesses as well as downtown businesses and individuals enhancing the Chamber membership mission, "a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a positive environment where business, community and people thrive."

Heppner's Strategic Plan, a combination of the plans from different entities, involving education, quality of life, infrastructure, business and economic development is in the process of revision. The people who come to the table the second and fourth Tuesday of every month want this to be your plan and have planned two public meetings which they hope you will attend. The meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, June 25, at St. Patrick's Senior Center 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (bring a brown bag lunch), or you may attend the evening meeting from 7-8:30 p.m.

Why have this plan? It simplifies the grant process for entities that wish to apply for funding for various projects; it gives the community goals and a focus; it helps us all to look together in the same direction. For an hour and a half, come, be heard and be involved. New faces, old faces, come help to plan Heppner's future. Ask questions, make suggestions, share ideas. The plan is yours.

Next week the Chamber program will be Molly Rhea, hospice program, and Rep. Greg Smith.

Thought for the week: "Nothing in life just happens. You have to have the stamina to meet the obstacles and overcome them."

School board

continued from page one

because of seniority and that could affect several schools in the district.

The Heppner community also expressed concern that Heppner High School is losing its business teacher through retirement and thus much of its business program. Some business classes, such as keyboarding, will be absorbed by other teachers. An accounting class is scheduled to be offered at HHS through a V-tel program.

Board member Gary Frederickson, Boardman, admonished the delegations opposing teacher cuts, saying that the teacher to student ratios throughout the county are "not even close to equitable," with north end schools having greater student to teacher ratios. "I think we'd better wake up or we might have to close some schools," he warned. South end community members are concerned that their schools, experiencing lower enrollment, are losing electives and will have difficulty attracting teachers and retaining students.

The board voted to postpone approval of the cuts until June 27, in order to have a better picture of school funding by the state. However, said board member Larry Mills, "There will be cuts. I don't want anyone walking away thinking there won't be cuts." The meeting will be held at the district office on June 27 at 6 p.m.

The board declined to reconsider a request from members of the Heppner-Lexington Advisory Committee to change the height of the stage that will be built as part of the Heppner Elementary bond construction from 18 to 36 inches, their original request. Advisory members Virginia "George" Nairns, Mike Armato and chair Mark Rietmann said that the additional cost of the higher stage could easily be accommodated because the HES project came in at \$450,000 underbid. They sought a higher stage so that grade school students could be better seen and heard by members of the audience during school programs.

The board also declined a request for funds to keep the old Heppner Junior High School gym operational another year, delaying its demolition so that practices could continue to be held there until construction of the new gym is complete. Board member Larry Mills said that doing so would be a waste of money that could be used better elsewhere. Postponing demolition was estimated to cost almost \$23,000. Advisory members voiced the concern that students and families would suffer because of very early and very late practices that may be required in order to work out a practice schedule to accommodate all teams during the interim period. Advisory members had earlier told the Gazette-Times that they planned to again ask for construction of a double gym, rather than a single gym because of the underbid, but the issue did not arise at the Monday night meeting. They said that they had earlier been asked by architects and the district to trim the gym project because of costs, and then later found that the project was underbid.

Also at the meeting Monday night, Mike Armato objected to the amount of money the district had earmarked as carryover, especially during the year that 17 teachers were laid off. He said that according to the district's audit, the district had sufficient monies to avoid the layoffs. The district had maintained that the amount of carryover was necessary to avoid financial ruin and keep the district

from having to borrow money to meet expenses.

In other business, the board:

-approved employment of Lester McCormick, principal at Heppner Elementary School and Heppner High School;

-approved employment of Erin Andreason, half-time Riverside High School health teacher; Shirley Donovan, three-hour Sam Boardman Elementary assistant cook; Mike Burrows, district office maintenance, replacing Ted Ost;

-accepted resignation from Christina Wahl, A.C. Houghton Elementary School English as a second language educational assistant;

-approved installation of a composite roof for new school buildings to be constructed at Boardman and Irrigon. Metal roofs were also considered, but were more expensive and the board determined that they may not last any longer than composite roofs.

-agreed to have the superintendent draft a letter to the state legislature advocating passage of an income tax surcharge in order to increase school funding. Two members voted against the proposal;

-approved \$78,250 for asbestos abatement and hazardous material removal at the Heppner and Ione construction sites;

-approved \$40,031 for a consultant agreement for material testing and special inspections at the Boardman, Irrigon, Heppner and Ione construction sites;

-approved a bid with McCormack Construction for construction of the Heppner Elementary School gymnasium and cafeteria for a base bid of \$2,198,000 with the following add-ons: translucent panels in gym-\$11,800; concrete street benches-\$3,770; curtain at cafeteria-\$8,885; salvage brick for pavers-\$3,850; install acoustical panels-\$2,090;

-approved a bid with Knerr Construction for construction at Ione for a base bid of \$2,216,700 with the following add-ons: expand gymnasium to standard size-\$254,452; library remodel-\$117,677; classroom cabinets-\$8,524; locker room remodel-\$69,917; classroom renovation-\$45,220; kitchen renovation-\$118,057; north restroom remodel-\$15,014;

-heard a technology report from Nate Arbogast that the fiberoptics project is nearing completion. The board commended Arbogast for his foresight and expertise in overseeing the project.

-approved a cooperative sponsorship between Heppner and Ione for the baseball program;

-approved the Ione High School International Club trip to Italy which uses no district funds;

-approved a job description for a special education teacher on special assignment;

-adopted the 2002-03 board calendar;

-approved the second reading and adoption of the head teacher job description, which would apply to the new head teacher position at Heppner Elementary School and head teacher positions at new schools in Boardman and Irrigon;

-heard the following announcements: budget adoption meeting and next board meeting, district office, 6 p.m., June 27; board meeting, district office, 7:30 p.m., July 8.

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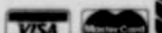
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**BURNING
BAN**

Effective June 14, 2002, the Fire Chief of the City of Heppner is imposing a CLOSED SEASON for open burning based on local fire safety concerns. This burning ban is for the City of Heppner. A reminder that open burning also includes a "burn barrel."

The closed season will remain in effect until further notice this fall as per ORS 478.960.

**As of Friday, June 14, 2002,
Norco service of gases and
welding supplies will be located
at Miller Manufacturing located
in the old Kinzua shop at 54173
Hwy. 74, Heppner, Oregon.
(541) 676-5472.**