

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
Katie Wall Editor

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Superintendent responds to letter

To the Editor:

I would like to present a few facts regarding a Letter to the Editor in the Oct. 30 issue of the Gazette Times. The Board of Directors has a policy regarding school entrance for kindergarten students, Policy 5200. It says, "Any student whose fifth birthday falls on or before Sept. 1, may enter kindergarten at the opening of the same year."

Although district policy does not have any provision for a waiver to this policy, the Board did listen to the Taylors' request for a waiver at the September meeting of the Board of Directors. They voted six - zero with one abstention to not grant a waiver. In October the Superintendent of the Arlington School District, called and asked me about approving an inter-district agreement for an attendance variance to allow the child to attend Arlington as a resident student. After reviewing the policy, I explained that I did not feel that I could grant such a request to the Taylors if they asked, because to do so would have the effect of reversing the Board's September decision. At that time I also reminded Mr. Keown of Board policy 5210 that deals with a student's age for entering first grade, "Any pupil whose sixth birthday falls on or before Sept. 1, may enter the first grade at the opening of the same year." This policy also does not have a provision for requesting a waiver. In both cases the policy does not allow for waivers because the board does not wish to allow them. They feel very strongly about the issue, for a variety of reasons. I reminded Mr. Keown that both policy 5200 and 5210 had a sentence which states, "When parents or guardians who reside in the Morrow County School District enroll their underage child in a private or parochial school for a short period of time in an obvious effort to avoid this policy concerning age of entrance, the child will not be permitted to transfer into the Morrow County schools during the current school year." This also said to me that the Board was serious in its intent and that they felt strongly about what age a child should be to enter Kindergarten or first grade.

In all the years I've been involved in this issue, the vast majority of the parents I've talked to regret enrolling their child early. This issue is never about a child's ability to do academic work. It is about the social problems that may arise in middle school and high school when it is too late to hold a child back.

I would also like to include the Morrow County School District Board Goals for 2002-2003:

1) The goal is to create a budget that each year can be sustained with the new yearly income equaling or exceeding the yearly expenses. This is to include a cash carry over of a minimum of \$1,500,000.

-The Board expects to have the "created budget" 50% implemented for the 2003-2004 school year.

-The Board expects to have the "created budget" fully implemented for the 2004-2005 school year.

-The Board wants to establish an equity per student with an eye to where it is created. (weighted students)

-Exceptions to the above to be approved by the Board.

2) The Board supports the States Standards. The Board's goal is to raise the total number of students who meet and exceed the Reading and Literature, Writing, Mathematics and Problem Solving Standards by 5% over the number who met and exceeded the standards in 2001-2002 school year in grades 3, 5, 8 and 10.

3) The Board's goal is to improve communication within the district in the following manner:

-The Board will host a face-to-face visit with the faculty and staff at each building once a year.

-The Board will provide written communication to the district patrons.

-The Board will host a spring meeting/assembly at each building to celebrate the State Report Cards.

4) The Board's goal is to review/update/rewrite the Morrow County School District Policy and Procedural Manual.

-The Board's goal is to review/update/rewrite the Elected Advisory Committees policies, 1131-1131.7 to bring them into compliance with ORS 330.425-330.435.

(s) Jack H. Crippen, Ph. D.
Superintendent of Schools
Morrow County School District

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 \$7.)

Nelson offers his side of the story

To the Editor:

Unfortunately I feel that this letter needs to be printed to correct some statements printed in a letter to the editor in your edition Oct. 30, 2002, with a signature of Mr. Robert Taylor.

Comments were made as to the availability of parking at the Lexington City Hall being taken over by the adjoining property owner. For a fact the Lexington City Hall/Fire Station does have limited parking; this has existed since the building was erected. The door to the fire hall on the front of the property makes for a situation where no one can park in that area. The rest of the area in front of the building is bordered closely by a ditch which mandates that parking is limited and patrons must either be the first to park at the city hall or park off the city property. I am the owner/purchaser of the adjoining property. The previous owner of the property allowed the parking in the area adjoining the City Hall in exchange for a "free" water bill on this property; this looks like a small trade since the business on the location had limited or non-existent use of the restrooms on the property during the past five years, since the building was closed down the majority of that time. I allow the city patrons to park on my property and have even offered to turn on the lights on the property for when there are meetings of the volunteer firemen and the city meetings.

Comments were made questioning my donations of effort and time to the city and cleanup activities involved related to the removal of old pipe after the project of installing some new pipes within the city. The city does rely on the volunteers, elected unpaid volunteers and citizens to perform and help in many of its activities due to lack of funds and a desire or commitment to keep taxes and commitments for further funding at a minimum.

The statement was that if the city worker (and helper) just did his job no volunteering would have been needed for the cleanup after the construction. Unfortunately the City of Lexington does not have a dump truck, semi or other means to haul larger and longer items than can be carried in a pickup. Just like the cost of the work performed by the Port of Morrow crews during construction, I did use my trailer and my pickup to haul the items at no cost to the city. The movement to the location outside the city proper did serve to put the items in one place, out of sight and off the areas in front of peoples houses and what few businesses that we do have in town. This will allow for easier transfer, sale or recycle of materials at a future later date when funds and/or equipment are available.

The accusation of use of the city equipment on my private

property is in error. I did use my pickup, which has a dump bed, to assist the city in cleaning up of the areas around the trenches beside the roads (left over fill dirt/rock) after the water line construction project. Some of this material put in my vehicle, which was then dumped in at the back of my property and the equipment was used to level this so that more could be deposited. Unfortunately if Mr. Taylor would have asked concerning this activity more information would have been available to him, or he could have provided alternate sites for disposal of this material. I have donated to the city in the past, providing gravel in some of the alley areas, at my own cost. I have cleaned up other city property (clearing weeds, hauling off this mess to the transfer station—at my own cost, putting down dust control in the form of plastic with a bark dust covering—at my own cost). In the past I have raised and donated time, effort and funds for the benefit of the city creating a fund to support the Fire Department. The real value of the deposited fill may be a liability since foundations on fill are more expensive if I ever develop any area involving the fill material.

In closing he made poor remarks about another individual that has expended great amounts of his time and effort for the City of Lexington, the Lexington Fire Department, the Morrow County Ambulance services and the citizens of this town. He accused Mr. Anderson of some self-dealing in the matters and business of the City of Lexington. Unfortunately these hints at misdeeds are in error and the "no problem" comment he tries to paint on Mr. Anderson does ignore the limited amounts of funds available to the city. Some of the people of the city did remove portions of funding available to the city, which was transferred to the benefit of the Rebekah Lodge. I was under the impression that this property that may not be even available for use of the citizens of the town, but if this location was to become available for community use and projects, more help could and should be sought for this project. Interest and effort of the city should be used to attain grants and other funding to preserve and protect some of our heritage. The old telephone building is another building that also needs some attention and a more suitable home.

(s) Jim Nelson
Lexington

Former resident impressed by town updates

To the Editor:

In September, along with friend Cathy Ingalls from Salem, I vacationed in Ione for several days. I grew up in Ione,

graduating from high school there in 1963 and have always considered it my hometown, but rarely have I been able to be there for more than a few hours in the past 20 years or so. This time we were there for several days and had a fabulous time. We will always remember Jim, Monica and Adrienne Swanson's gracious hospitality, Marv Padberg's expertise as a tour guide in and around Ione, and JeanAnn Turner's "highlights of Heppner" tour.

While one may assume things are at a slower pace there, it was not so for us. There was so much to see, so many people to visit with, and lots of activities such as the Friday night football game where Ione High School was presented the Oregon School Activities Association Gold Cup for their outstanding academic and athletic achievements; and the Back-To-School celebration at the Legion Hall where Jeri McElligott organized the 02-03 site council with remarkable finesse, and the selection of mouthwatering desserts along with the freshly grilled hamburgers were a definite highlight.

The improvements in Ione are impressive, including the beautiful new Wheatland Building. Sunflower Junction makes the best ever espresso drinks (Cathy and I visited several times a day) and I could not get enough of the peach smoothie-like drink they make there. The "Virgil Morgan" drink is also awesome. And I never thought I'd live to see the day when one could get a pedicure in a nail salon in Ione. The enlarged City Park is beautifully maintained and the amphitheater stage is a work of art and a wonderful asset for the City's July Fourth celebration.

Heppner has many changes and improvements also since I last visited and Main Street is very attractive and inviting. For the first time I got to see the dam and the lake formed behind it, which is a beautiful extension of the city. I enjoyed shopping at Murray's where there is a wide selection of gifts, and at Gardner's Men's Wear where women's outerwear can also be found. Inadvertently, owing to my forgetting my suitcase at home, I discovered that one can not purchase women's lingerie anywhere in Morrow County so I will always be grateful that Gardner's carries boys' wear.

Probably the most significant business addition to the Ione area is the Tillamook Dairy operation. It is huge and state-of-the-art and I hope it will be an economic asset to the community and to all of Morrow County.

(s) Tass Morrison
Sublimity

Chamber Chatter

By Claudia Hughes

Chamber Executive Director

Being in the business of promoting Heppner, brings a variety of calls to both my home and office. Today when I answered a gentleman asked; "Is this the Pink Feather Restaurant?" Of course, I had him repeat the question; then we checked the number - he had tried the 503 prefix previously. This guy from

Portland seemed totally serious; either that or I am more gullible than he! Could it be that someone really thought they were in the Pink Feather Restaurant in Heppner during hunting season? If anyone out there has any insight on this, please share your story!

Heppner Merchants are offering customers the chance to shop on Thursday evening, Nov. 7, during the "Customer Thanksgiving Sale" from 6-8 p.m. Many residents are hard at work during the day and have to rush home right after work or the stores are closed by the time they get off work. Your retailers and their employees, as a way of saying "thanks for your business", are holding this special sale for you to take advantage of the "turkey specials" and get a jump on the holidays. Have fun!

While this is not a book review column, there are often books that I'd like to share with others. Books are part of who we are and available to anyone who is able to read, no matter what their walk in life. Sometime ago I read "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom. I reread it on the way home from my Oregon Chamber Execs. Conference because a friend, who also has Lou Gehrig's disease, has been on my mind, and because it has many valuable life messages. Let me share one of Morrie's wisdoms from this humorous and touching book about real life:

"So many people walk around with a meaningless life. They seem half-asleep, even when they're busy doing things they think are important. This is because they're chasing the wrong things. The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning."

Heppner and the Willow Creek Valley are so fortunate to have so many people who have learned the secret that service to others and volunteerism gives meaning to life and allows people to connect with others. This often comes through seeing others go through difficult times or experiencing them ourselves or working together to achieve a difficult goal. Stop and think about all the unpaid volunteers who have touched us throughout our lives from 4-H leaders, to neighbors, firemen, hospice workers, event workers, organizations, churches, and the list goes on and on. It is all of you who have made our small town a community.

And by the way, it's time to think about nominating these people, who give meaning to your life and your community, for Man, Woman, Educator, Youth and Business of the Year. Those folks don't wish to have attention called to them, but let's do it anyway! To be thanked is a good feeling. Town and Country is Thursday, Jan. 16, 2003.

Thought for the week: "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

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Heppner Gazette-Times
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**November 7th ~ Thursday
LADIES NIGHT.** Karen Wolff, Ginger O'Brien and Crew will be having a Tailgate Party with German sausages, hot dogs, veggie wraps, beans, coleslaw and more. Dinner starts at 6 p.m. Veteran's Remembrance and Lodge starts at 8 p.m.



HEPPNER ELKS 358
676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 North Main

BINGO PUBLIC BINGO PARTY

**Lexington IOOF Hall
Saturday, Nov. 9th
(NOTE Date Correction)
at 7:30 p.m.**

Benefit for new card table and chairs

**Pie and Beverage: \$2
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