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: $24 in Morrow County; $18 senior rate (in Morrow County only; 62 years or older); $30 elsewhere.

David Sykes ..... Publisher
Katie Wall ..... Editor

News deadline is Monday at 5 p.m.

For Advertising: advertising deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Cost for a display ad is $4.75 per column inch. Cost for classified ad is 50¢ per word. Cost for Card of Thanks is $7 up to 100 words. Cost for a classified display ad is $5.35 per column inch.

For Public/Legal Notices: public/legal notices deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Dates for publication must be specified. Affidavits must be required at the time of submission. Affidavits require three weeks to process after last date of publication (a sooner return date must be specified if required).

On the HEPPNER WEBSITE: www.heppner.net
• Start or Change a Subscription
• Place a Classified Ad • Submit a News Story
• View Real Estate for Sale • City Council & Planning Minutes
• Local Businesses • County Park • Willow Creek Park Reservations
• Free Digital Postcards • Senior Housing • and more!

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.)

Rules can't be stretched without consequences

To the Editor:

The recent letter that attacked our new superintendent Dr. Jack Crippen for enforcing school board policy regarding the age of children at entrance into school was very disturbing. Dr. Crippen followed board policy in his decision, and allowed the parents of the child concerned a hearing and review of that policy by the full board. It is the board's responsibility to set policy and the superintendent's to enforce it. It is necessary to make a cut-off day for school entrance and whatever date it is, there will always be some students whose birth dates fall just before, after, and on. Once the policy is stretched for one student, the floodgates have opened for every student who is "somewhere close" to the date and the policy becomes eroded and useless. Research tells us that maturity does have a major impact on education and social behavior, and school success of children. The full board felt is important to maintain a standard, for the good of this child and all entering kindergarteners.

While individuals may disagree respectfully, the tone and personal attacks of the previous letter were inappropriate. This concerns me because there are many controversial issues ahead for us to face. My reason for writing this letter is to ask all citizens of Morrow County to think about how we interact with each other when we are discussing difficult issues.

Morrow County School District will be forced to make serious reductions in staff and programs in the next year. While the taxpayers in Morrow County have whole-heartily supported our children's schools with excellent facilities, the local voter currently has no control over the amount of operating money Morrow County Schools receive. All decisions regarding money to operate schools lies with the state legislature or in statewide votes, such as the January income tax surcharge. The State Legislature has failed to deal with the lack of tax revenue that will be available for schools in the next few years. Morrow County Schools are quickly eating down our limited cash reserves as current staff and programs cost more money than the state is sending us; indications are that they will send even less next year. There will be no way to avoid difficult cuts in our schools. As we start that process, the manner in which we educate ourselves with the facts, and find ways to preserve the best education for all children of Morrow County will truly test the character of those who care about children in the county.

We need to be able to work productively with one another, if our communities and our children's education are to survive this crisis. Our focus needs to be on using the resources we have efficiently to get the most "bang for our buck" and on getting the State Legislature off the dime to find a way to adequately fund education in this state. We will have to work together to achieve either. One way you may be able to make a difference is to join the "Coalition for School Funding Now", (503) 309-1665, a group that is working directly on lobbying for school financing. Another is to work on positive, communication and interaction as we work through difficult times.

Our kids need us to be up to the challenge. How we conduct ourselves as we make decisions may be the most important educational lesson we can give our children.

(s) John Rietmann
Member, Morrow County School Board
Ione

WILLOW CREEK CLINIC
announces an
OPEN HOUSE
November 25 and 26
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 2 - 5:30 p.m.
TAMMY IS MOVING!
We'll miss her at Willow Creek Clinic and we know you will too
Stop in, say good-bye and have refreshments

Answers to the Mystery of Education

by Dr. Jack Crippen
Morrow CountySchool District Superintendent

From Tillamook County to Morrow County.
From months of no sunshine to months of no clouds,From July temperatures in the 60's to July temperatures in the 90's, From limited vistas of tree trunks to open vistas where one can see for miles and miles, From 100" of rain a year, Morrow County is a great place to live.

Inspiring students to reach for their dreams I'm very happy to be the Superintendent of the Schools of Morrow County.

I'm very excited about the opportunity the Heppner Gazette Times has given me to talk to the people of Morrow County about our schools. We are in very challenging and exciting times in education. To quote a bard, "the times they keep a-changing". A little poetic license with that quote perhaps, but education has been undergoing constant change for the last decade and I don't see it slowing down in the near future.

As a part of this monthly column, I would like to invite you to send me questions about education, either in our district or education in general. Please send them to me in care of the Heppner Gazette Times 147 W. Willow Street, Heppner, OR 97838.

Today I would like to respond to three items I am often asked about.

What is the Board of Directors focus this year?

At the beginning of the school year, July 1, the Board meets to set it's goals. This year the board set four areas on which they wanted to focus. The goals included the areas of budget and finance; state testing and standards; communication – both internally and externally; and updating the policy manual, beginning with the area of Policy 1131 Elected Advisory Committees.

What is happening with school funding?

At this time, the state has lost $1.75 billion in revenues this year. The legislature in its five special sessions tried to minimize the loss of income to education. Of the $756 million K-12 education could have lost, the legislature found "one time money." That is money available only this year in the amount of $529 million. They have referred Ballot Measure 28 to the voters in January, which contains $95 million for this year. This results in a reduction in revenue for this year of $132 million to K-12 education, or approximately a $625,000 loss to Morrow County.

The local impact of Ballot Measure 28 is approximately $450,000 for Morrow County. If the Ballot Measure fails in January, the district will not receive the $450,000 this school year. This could result in a total loss to Morrow County of $1,075,000.

What about the opening of the new elementary schools in Boardman and Irrigon?

The District anticipates that those two elementary schools will not open next year. In the above question, I talked about the hundreds of millions of dollars in cuts the State is facing and the over a million dollars in money that the district could be losing this year. According to state economists, they expect the revenue loss to grow from the $1.75 billion it is now to a total for this year of close to $2.4 billon. The district feels that we may still lose more money this year, plus our costs will increase just to maintain this year's level of teachers and programs. If we open the two new buildings in Boardman and Irrigon, we will have additional costs for electricity, water and sewer, etc., plus secretaries, custodians, etc in addition to what we now pay. We also believe we will lose teachers next year because of the revenue reduction. With the loss of teachers, class size will go up creating vacant rooms in Sam Boardman and A.C. Houghton. It doesn't seem reasonable to move teachers out of those buildings and into the new buildings creating even more vacant rooms in Sam Boardman and A.C. Houghton. Another reason is we have not seen the increase in students that we have in the past years. We really see this as an adjustment period. Some businesses haven't grown as fast as they expected and others haven't moved into the area as quickly as we thought. That will happen, but with the decrease in teachers resulting in the increase in class sizes, as well as a slow down in growth, we will not need the rooms as soon as we thought we would. However the interest rates make this a great time to be building and having the space ready to be occupied is better than needing it and then having crowded conditions while one builds.

In terms of the high school in Irrigon, the Board approved that to happen only if seven contingencies were met. They haven't been, among them were increased funding and an increase in High School students.

What can I as a parent do?

You can phone or write your legislators:
Call Senator Dave Nelson at (503) 986-1950 or (503) 522-5924(Cell Phone) or write him at 900 Court Street, NE S-223, Salem, OR 97301; Call Representative Greg Smith at (541) 676-8719 or (541) 676-5154 or write him at P.O. Box 219 Heppner, OR 97836-0219 Or fax him at (541) 676-5989; or call, Elizabeth Scheeler at (541) 276-2949 or write her at 1207 S W Frazer Ave Pendleton, OR 97801-2899, and tell them what you want them to do. Your voice as a parent is louder than mine.

You can also join the Coalition for School Funding Now. It is a state organization of parents and concerned patrons interested in education. They have chapters all over the state. Join one or start one. For information call the Heppner Gazette Times office at 676-9228 or call Julie Ashbeck at the School District Office at 989-8202 and request brochures, or you may call the coalition directly at (503) 309-1665 or E-mail them at: info@schoolfunding.org

Now that we have answered a few of the mysteries of education, send me a few more.

MCWG meeting set for Nov. 15

The Morrow County Wheat Growers will hold their annual fall meeting at the Heppner Elks Club in Heppner on Friday, Nov. 15 at 4 p.m. A hosted social and dinner will follow.

Speakers will include Larry Frey, State Director, Farm Service Agency; Dave Paul, Regional Director, Risk Management Agency; Tim Wright, Basin Team Leader for NRCS; and Tammy Dennee, Executive Director, Oregon Wheat Growers League.

All growers are invited and encouraged to attend. Door prizes will be awarded.

Chamber Chatter

By Claudia Hughes
Chamber Executive Director

Veteran's Day was sunny and warm. It was the day to say "Thank You" to our veterans and if you didn't, then today and everyday is not too late. What a shame that there are veterans who have to go to work on the day that honors them while others are at play. There is something wrong with this picture! What can we do to fix it?

Recent minus 7 degree weather caused thoughts to turn to winter, the holidays and the new year. The Heppner Chamber of Commerce, "a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a positive environment where business, community and people thrive," is always working hard to create a balance for Heppner's future. Enthusiasm, fun, events, community activity, job creation and the fixture of Heppner's business community are at the top of the list as the year ends. Please mark your calendars and be a part of these events that help create a balance and continue to keep Heppner healthy and vital.

*** Third Tuesdays** - Nov. 19 is an opportunity for all retailers to come together for lunch at noon at John's Other Place to plan what we can do together in 2003 for our business community. Retailers will be invited to share ideas and requests for programs, talk about what works and doesn't work, make plans to recognize great employees, discuss dreams for Heppner that will attract more residents and visitors thus enhancing the economy, and much more. The success of these third Tuesdays will depend on the interest shown. Change is happening all around us and we may have to paddle a little harder.

*** Stroll Heppner and The Light Parade** - Thursday, Dec. 5. After Thanksgiving dinner, put your heads together and create a light parade entry. The more entries, the better.

*** Christmas At The Courthouse** - Saturday, Dec. 7. Sign up at the Chamber to decorate and donate a three to four foot tree for this event, finalizing the 100th anniversary. The trees will be auctioned off to the public to assist in funding ongoing Chamber projects such as the hanging baskets, Christmas wreaths and banners. (One decorative wreath for the light poles is over $200.)

Thought for the week: "It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory." ...Denning

Magnetic Door Signs
Order Yours Here
Heppner Gazette-Times

election results

continued from page one

Ione City Mayor: Betty L. Gray- 103; and Gayle Eynetich- 61.

Ione City Councilor-Pos. 3: Richard L. Graham- 147.

Ione City Councilor-Pos. 4: Mark Bruno- 100; Samuel A. Backman- 61.

Ione City Councilor-Pos. 5: Dennis Stefani- 135.

Ione City Councilor-Pos. 6: Cathy Gates- 65; James L. Swanson- 105.

Irrigon City Councilor (Elect 3): John Swanson- 229; Arnold Joseph Theisen- 204; Donald W. Hurd- 125; and Robert Flournoy- 203.

Lexington Town Mayor: Ron G. McDowell- 90.

Lexington Town City Councilor- Pos. 3: Jim Nelson- 82; and Marcia Kemp- 25.

Lexington Town City Councilor- Pos. 4: Jean M. Brazell- 75.

State Measure 14 (racial references): Yes- 1595, No- 1143.

State Measure 15 (bonds for public ed buildings): Yes- 1080, No- 1651.

State Measure 16 (bonds for emergency services buildings): Yes- 1103, No- 1625.

State Measure 17 (age requirement for state legislator): Yes- 521, No- 2304.

State Measure 18 (tax districts): Yes- 807, No- 1857.

State Measure 21 (judicial vacancies, none of the above vote): Yes- 1156, No- 1546.

State Measure 22 (Oregon Supreme Court judges): Yes- 1556, No- 1183.

State Measure 23 (health care finance plan): Yes- 498, No- 2279.

State Measure 24 (denturists-dentist): Yes- 2004, No- 721.

State Measure 25 (Oregon minimum wage): Yes- 1529, No- 1294.

State Measure 26 (payment for petition signatures): Yes- 1929, No- 821.

State Measure 27 (labeling of genetically-engineered foods): Yes- 545, No- 2288.

Measure 25-41 (Recreation Dist. Electoral Zones): Yes- 902, No- 1781.

Morrow County Grain Growers, Inc.
Recepient of the 2002 OSU Extension Service Cooperator Award
MCGG serves
472 members & their families;
provides full-time jobs for
over 50 employees & families;
Supports over 15 local communities;
and Serves 6 counties.
Did you know that MCGG donates over $30,000 annually to causes like:
4-H and FFA Projects;
School Athletics & Programs;
Crop Tours; Tractor Training;
County Fairs; Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo;
Corporate Sponsor - Dufur Threshing Bee;
Wilkinson Arena; Little League; Museums;
Parks; Safety Workshops; Commodity Groups;
Sherman Experiment Endowment Fund.
Morrow County Grain Growers
1-800-452-7396 • 989-8221 • 350 Main • Lexington, Oregon
For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgg.net