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HEPPNER

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Over 30 cars collected in clean-up project



Smashed cars from city clean-up will be taken to Portland

Morrow County Sheriff's Office sponsored a city clean-up project, Jan. 18-19, to help the citizens of Heppner get rid of their abandoned vehicles and collected about 33 cars.

Through the combined efforts of MCSO, Heppner Public Works and Jay Coil Fabrication the cars were smashed and loaded onto a

flatbed trailer and hauled by Mike Torgeson Trucking to Portland where they will be sold as scrap metal.

State threatens to cut aid to Medicaid nursing home residents

Some people at Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home are getting pink slips. No, not the employees—although that could happen down the road. Those targeted are the nursing home's most vulnerable citizens, the residents. Some of PMNH's residents have received notice from the state that if Measure 28 does not pass, the state will cut their funds. Certain residents will no longer meet state criteria and will no longer be eligible for Medicaid and will become private pay. Unfortunately, many of these people have no money and nowhere to go.

"The criteria is so egregious, I can't imagine that they could even follow through with this," said PMH CEO Victor Vander Does. "I've never seen a health care crisis so bad. It's beyond comprehension." But, he added, "Kicking people out on the street is not new to the state of Oregon."

"This is just cold blooded," said PMH Director of Nurses Tammy Henderson. "The state made people give up their homes and spend down all their money (to qualify for Medicaid).



Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home resident, 103-year-old, Bill Lowe, a World War I veteran, visiting with PMH Director of Nurses Tammy Henderson, is one of those that could be affected by the state's cut in Medicaid funds.

Now the state has no money and they're breaking their contract with these individuals."

Vander Does said that the nursing home is already facing steep cuts, even without the loss in reimbursements. "Obviously we will get next to nothing in reimbursements. We're already losing a couple hundred thousand a year. If this were to pass, I don't have a clue as to what to do," said Vander Does. "If institutions keep them (disqualified Medicaid residents) and don't get paid, the institutions go broke. Is the state going to tell us how to kick people out?"

Of course you can't do that. It's morally and ethically not cool. These people have nowhere to go. I can't support throwing people out on the street."

Vander Does said that PMNH has two private pay residents and 13 Medicaid residents, seven of whom have received notice that their funding will be cut. If PMNH closes, for example, the residents may not be able to be transferred to another facility. "We can't transfer them anywhere else," he said. "Who would take them?"

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ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

Citizens honored at Town & Country

Heppner mayor, Bob Jepsen and his wife, Suzanne, were selected as Heppner Chamber of Commerce Man and Woman of the Year, at the annual Town and Country Banquet held Thursday, Jan. 16, at the Heppner Elks Club. Central Red Apple Market, owned by Bert and Kim Houweling, was selected as Business of the Year. Retired teacher, Cherry Webber was honored as Educator of the Year, Diana McElligott, lone High School senior, was awarded Youth of the Year and Bill Rietmann received the honor of the Lifetime Achievement award.

Extension agent Bill Broderick presented the OSU Extension Cooperator of the Year award to the Port of Morrow, which was received by Gary Neal, port manager, and Larry Lindsay and Gerry Healy, Port of Morrow Commissioners. The "rifle with a history," from the Heppner Chamber raffle went to John Gochner.

Man and Woman of the Year, Bob and Suzanne Jepsen have served the community of Heppner, together and individually, through numerous involvements.

Bob Jepsen has served the area for over 30 years. Currently he serves as the mayor of Heppner. He was president of the Oregon Wheat Growers League and was president of Willow Creek Country Club in 1972. He was chairman of the state ASCS committee from 1973-75. He served as Secretary of Agriculture to the Wheat Industry Council in 1980. He was on the board of directors to NAWG on the Wheat and Wheat Foods Foundation. He served as chairman of the Morrow County Republican Committee in 1986. He also served as director of the E.R. Jackman Foundation, a development area of OSU, in 1992. He also served on the Morrow County Road Advisory Committee and Advisory Committee to the OSU Extension.

In 1972, Jepsen was honored as Father of the Year, sponsored by the CowBelles (Woman's Auxiliary of the Oregon Cattleman's Association). He taught outdoor school to the sixth graders at Bull Prairie for many years, helped organize bringing eighth graders from Portland up to the area for a week of rural life experiences, and taught survival skills to kids at Tupper.

Jepsen also a member of the Mazamas Mountain Climbing Club, and went on many climbs, his last in 1977 on Mt. Hood. He has been a Ham radio operator since 1964 and was a weather records keeper for the State of Oregon for 20-plus years.

Jepsen attended Pacific University and Eastern Oregon State College where he played football for both schools. According to family legend, he and wife Suzanne meet while skiing. Supposedly, Suzanne fell and broke her arm while skiing, and Bob was on ski patrol and rescued her.

Suzanne Jepsen, our Woman of the Year, has not only been instrumental in helping her husband along his way, but has been very active in many city projects herself. She, along with others, put much effort into creating and bringing about Willow Creek Terrace, the assisted living facility.

She has been active in All Saints Episcopal Church,



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Bill Rietmann received the honor of the Lifetime Achievement award



Diana McElligott, lone High School senior, was awarded Youth of the Year



Bert and Kim Houweling selected as Business of the Year



Retired teacher, Cherry Webber (shown here from her hospital bed with Cara Osmin), was honored as Educator of the Year

teaching Sunday school, getting things set up for the coffee hour, making sure church bulletins were available and ready. She has helped with the community Thanksgiving dinner at the Episcopal church.

She was always active in her children's school lives and continues to be active in her grandchildren's. She volunteers with her daughter, helping create car seat clinics, to help keep children safe.

Jepsen helped to take care of her mother as she faced Alzheimer's, making sure her mother was taken care of and loved, making trips to Pendleton to see her.

She along with her husband has served the community of Heppner and the area at large tirelessly and gracefully.

Business of the Year honorees, Bert and Kim Houweling of Central Red Apple

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