

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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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.)

Who would benefit if we retreated?

To the Editor:

I, again, hear the call for peace.

It comes especially loud from the young, even from high school students.

Winston Churchill, reputed to be a wise person, said something to the effect that the young must be liberal, otherwise they have no heart, but that the old must be conservative, otherwise they have no brain.

All decent humans upon their recognition of the cruelties of war experience a strong emotional reaction of horror.

All thinking persons recognize that, to quote the Judo-Christian bible, (reputed to be another source of wisdom,) there is "a time for war."

Would the young have enough life experience to recognize that, possibly, they are substituting reason with emotion?

Is it possible that during

a time when the leaders of our government have determined that war, or the threat of war is in the best interest of our country, that these peace marches are organized by those who have differing interests and goals than those of our government?

The fact that peace marchers demonstrated in considerable numbers, in our country, in Saudi Arabia, in England, in Iran, in France, in Iraq, in Germany, in Pakistan, in Canada, and in Kuwait, on the same day, is a sure indication that they were in no way spontaneous, that they were organized by someone with a great deal of power and money.

Think!
Who would most benefit if we apologized and retreated with our tail between our legs?
(s) F. Green White
Heppner

Elks to hold benefit dinner

The Heppner Elks Lodge will be holding a Ladies' Night/Benefit Dinner for Darcy Coil, Thursday, Feb. 6. LeAnn Wright and Ronda Helfrecht and crew will be service a Chinese dinner from 6-8 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

HHS to hold service auction

The Heppner High School senior class will hold a service auction, Friday, Feb. 7, before the varsity boys' game begins. If there is not enough time to auction everyone, there will be a silent auction held for the remaining students.

Report cards out for Morrow County schools

Three schools in Morrow County improved the state report card status, while the other four schools in the county stayed about the same. The Oregon Department of Education rates public schools in five overall ratings categories: exceptional, strong, satisfactory, low, or unacceptable. The scores are based on the 2001-2002 school year, in which schools are judged in areas including: test performance, attendance, improvement, dropout rate, and test participation.

The overall scores for Morrow County schools is as follows:

Heppner Elementary School (grades K-6): Received an overall score of "Exceptional," an improvement from last year's report card.

Heppner High School (grades 7-12): Received an overall score of "Satisfactory."

Ione School (grades K-12): Received an overall score of "Strong."

A.C. Houghton Elementary (grades K-5): Received an overall score of "Strong," an improvement from last year's report card.

Sam Boardman Elementary (grades K-5): Received an overall score of "Satisfactory."

Columbia Middle School (grades 6-8): Received an overall score of "Low."

Riverside High School (grades 9-12): Received an overall score of "Strong," which was an improvement from last year's report card.

MCHD passes by-law amendment

On Jan. 31, 2003 the Board of Directors of the Morrow County Health District passed a resolution amending the district's by-laws to be in compliance with Oregon state law. Beginning with the May election, all directors will be elected at-large from the entire district, which is the boundaries of Morrow County.

The office of the Secretary of State, Election Division, has issued a letter to the MCHD stating that all health districts in the state of Oregon elect the directors at-large.

The May election will have two positions open for election at-large. Previously zone 4 (Ione and Lexington) will now be position number 4. Previously zone 5 (Heppner) will be position number 5. In May 2005, the three remaining positions number 1, 2 and 3 will be up for election.

"The majority of the board of directors of the MCHD appropriately made this change to the by-laws to be in compliance with Oregon state law," said MCHD CEO Victor Vander Does.

Chamber Chatter

By Claudia Hughes
Chamber Executive Director

If calls to the Chamber went unanswered last week, I appreciate your patience. Gallons of water broke through the wall and saturated the office, which meant wading through a couple of inches of water to reach my desk. Needless to say, it was impossible to turn on my computer or function with vacuums sucking up water, fans drying out the room, and everything in piles! These things happen and work continues for awhile with or without technology. It's times such as these that I continue to be especially grateful to Klamath First for not only providing space for the Chamber, but also for their staff, who assists in many ways and comes to the rescue in a crisis.

A reminder to all the great volunteers who made Heppner twinkle during the holiday season and through Town and Country: it's time to take the tree lights down. From this voice of experience, buds and new growth can be a hindrance, so please don't wait any longer. This I learned on Sunday. The lights were so cheerful and welcoming during our many gray days.

The past week the Chamber Board of Directors spent a day working on the Chamber 2003 focus. Much energy went into the discussion and planning on how to "Make Heppner the Place To Be In 2003." Some of the ideas generated were marketing the ATV Trail; creating more events; meeting with the Rodeo Committee to discuss ideas to bring more people to Heppner that weekend; Third Tuesdays for merchants, customer training; improved website; distribution of the new Heppner brochures; continuation of the pie and Christmas tree auctions and working on other non-dues events; individual outreach for new Chamber members; the future of the Wee Bit O' Ireland Celebration; bringing people in to "shop Heppner", new products; and even doing a bit of dreaming about a "Shoe Box Theater" where movies might be shown, local talent could entertain with music and plays, and people would come to share a new experience. More about this at a later date.

Membership dues are coming in. Chamber membership is open to anyone desiring to see Heppner grow and thrive. Your investment helps the Chamber achieve goals. Members may give as much or as little time as their life allows. Visit a meeting on Tuesdays at John's Other Place. Call the Chamber, 676-5536, for a member application.

Don't forget the community happenings this Thursday, Feb. 6. Take time for the Chinese dinner benefit at the Elks and then head for St. Pat's Parish Hall for "Mulligan Stew", Flood History, Shenanigans, and dessert. This is what Heppner is all about.

Thought for the week: "In stooping low and bending to another's aid we rise." - Unknown

Justice Court Report

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

David Stephen Brown, 22, Stanfield, VBR 67/55, fine \$77.

Patrick W. Sweeny, 52, Heppner, VBR 75/55, fine \$77.
Shirley Rugg, 73, Heppner, VBR 68/45, fine \$132.
Gaylin B. Fickel, 59, Heppner, Failure to Yield to a Vehicle (MVA) and Driving Uninsured (MVA), fine \$211.

Annie Marie Hisler, 22, Gresham, VBR 71/55, fine \$87.
Tiffany N. Rill, 23, Heppner, VBR 79/55, fine \$132.

Answers to the Mysteries of Education

By Superintendent Jack Crippen

I was disappointed in the outcome of the Measure 28 election. This places even more pressure on the legislature's work for the 03-05 budgets. However, that is now behind us and we will make the adjustments required and concentrate on the look of education in the next two school years. It is now even more necessary that you let our Legislators and our Governor know how you would like our new reduced quality of life to look. Please let them know what services should be dropped and what services should be kept and to what level. Speaking of politics, let's move on to our first question, which deals with school board elections.

What is different about this year's school board election?

This year the four people elected to the four-year positions and the one person elected to fill a two-year position will all be elected as "at large members." In previous years board members were elected to represent geographic areas of the county. Last spring the Board changed from zones (representing a geographic area) to positions (representing the district "at large" or the entire county rather than one area). The Board feels it is necessary for board members to represent the whole district not just one corner or community. To help with this idea the Board has been meeting with each faculty and staff prior to the school board meeting at each school. The Board rotates its monthly meeting among the schools and the district office each year. Also, the Board has set up a schedule to provide for two board members at each advisory committee meeting on a rotating basis. This will help all board members to know the members of each committee and to be aware of issues and concerns around the county.

The time commitment of our board members remains enormous, and now more than ever, they all need to be familiar with and knowledgeable of all the communities in the county. As you encourage people to seek re-election or election for the first time, please talk to them about their knowledge and understanding of the district as a county unit.

What is this I'm hearing about musical chairs with the Principals?

In an effort to streamline the schools and district office administration we are making some changes that will result in one less administrator. In December, Karen Cooley retired as Director of Special Education, which was a half time position. In January, Mrs. Tolar retired as Principal of Sam Boardman Elementary School. In December, the Board made the decision to cut the head teacher positions, the largest one being the half time position in Heppner now held by recently retired principal, Mr. Allen. The Board also made the decision to close the district office in Lexington. Last year when Mr. Keown retired, many of his responsibilities were given to building principals. Spreading out those responsibilities has created some problems in communication and completion of reports to the State Department of Education. With the new burdens of the No Child Left Behind Act of the federal government we see an increase in the time needed to manage these programs. Given our money problems, we have been looking for a way to make the process work better as well as cut costs.

At this time we expect the following to happen: we are appointing Mr. Stuart, current principal of Ione schools, to split his time between the Ione schools and the Heppner schools. We have created the position of Director of Programs at the district level, which will be filled by Mr. Yecha. This leaves the principal positions at Sam Boardman Elementary and Riverside High School to be filled. In the process of filling them we expect to reduce the vice-principal positions at Riverside High School and Columbia Middle School to half time positions. We expect most or all of these positions to be filled from within the district; which is why people may be referring to the process as musical chairs.

Is it true that Ione is going to leave the Morrow County School District?

Some members of the Ione community are discussing the idea of secession. It is a very complex issue. In July, when the Board established their goals for the year, one goal was to create equity in spending among the schools. Since the passage of Measure 5 in the early 1990's, the state has been funding their schools on a formula that sets an amount of money per child. It includes adding additional money for certain programs in the form of additional children known as weighted-children. Through a series of Board meetings they looked at various ways of staffing and/or funding schools for the 2003-2004 school year. In December, the Board made the decision to reduce funding to the schools to meet the states funding guidelines. This created the need to reduce funding to Ione School by approximately \$275,000, Heppner schools by approximately \$528,000 and Riverside High School by approximately \$12,600. All schools in the district may still have additional cuts in funds depending on the actions of the legislature.

When the Morrow County School District was formed in the late 1950s, it was believed that as one district we could provide the best education for all of the county's children at a cost the county was willing to pay. Since Measure 5, the cost has shifted to the cost that the state is willing to pay. It requires us to have a different philosophy on what education is to look like and how it is to be delivered to our children. We will still provide an excellent education so our children may reach for their dreams. Classes may be bigger in Morrow County, and the variety of offerings may be different in some schools, but the quality will remain as it always has.

However, Ione is concerned about two things. First, with additional cuts that may be made, the Board may choose to consolidate Ione's seventh-12th grades with Heppner's seventh-12th grades. The second issue tied closely to the first, is that the closing of Ione's Jr/Sr High School would mean the loss of the Ione community. Members of the Ione community have embarked on a series of meetings to discuss all areas of the problem. Secession from the school district is one such area.

If you have questions or desire an explanation of items concerning education, please write or E-mail me in care of this newspaper or to the Morrow County School District office at P.O. Box 368 Lexington Or 97839.

HHS Senior Class to hold dinner

The Heppner High School Senior Class invites you to bring your sweetheart or special friend for a candlelight Valentine's dinner at the Heppner High School on Friday, Feb. 14 from 4:30-8:30 p.m. The dinner

will be held in conjunction with the basketball games against Umatilla.

The dinner menu consists of barbecue chicken, baked potato, salad, garlic bread and dessert. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$6 for children.



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

**Thursday, February 6th
LADIES NIGHT / BENEFIT DINNER
for DARCY COIL**

LeAnn Wright, Ronda Helfrecht and crew will be serving a Chinese dinner from 5-8 p.m.
The public is invited to attend.



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