

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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Katie Wall Editor

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school board meeting

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for the three high schools in the district to make v-tel classes more feasible.

-approved Option A for the 2003-04 school calendar which calls for a post-Labor Day start of school, Sept. 2, a two-week Christmas break, from Dec. 22-Jan. 4, and the last day of school on June 10. Ione graduation will be held on June 5, HHS graduation on June 5 and Riverside High School graduation on June 6. Option A was overwhelmingly preferred by staff and advisory committees. Board member Gary Frederickson opposed the two-week Christmas break, saying it was too long. Dr. Crippen said that the longer break allowed more people time to return from family trips.

-approved a resolution of support for the Eastern Oregon Rural Alliance, which is attempting to create a voice for eastern Oregon in business and education.

-received an extensive report outlining ESD services offered and those used by MCSD.

-approved employment for Lonnie Rill, assistant track coach at Columbia Middle School.

-approved resignations for: Paul Keefer, RHS boys' assistant soccer coach; Donna Scott, Heppner Junior High seventh and eighth-grade math teacher, at the end of the 2002-03 school year; and Duane Yechea, director of programs for the 2003-04 school year, to

accept a position as superintendent of the Reedsport school district; and Lisa Konecny, Columbia Middle School assistant track coach.

-accepted retirement for Maureen McElligott, RHS social studies teacher, effective June 13.

-approved an attendance variation for a student to attend the Hermiston Alternative School in the Hermiston school district.

-recognized Lori McCabe for five years of service with the district; Jim Raible for 10 years, Dean Robinson and Kay Aldritt, both 15, and Barb Collin, 25 years of service.

-heard the following announcements:

-the deadline for filing for elected positions is March 20. Five school board positions are up for election: Position One currently held by Gary Frederickson, Boardman; Position Three, held by John Rietmann, Ione; Position Four held by Larry Mills, Heppner, who was appointed; Position Five, held by Pat McNamee, Irrigon; and Position Six, held by Burke O'Brien, Heppner, who was also appointed. According to the Morrow County Clerk's Office as of Tuesday, March 11, John Kilkenny of Heppner has filed for Position Three and Barney Lindsay, a former board member from the Lexington area, has filed for Position Six. School board members are no longer elected by zone, but by at-large positions.

-the next board meeting is at Columbia Middle School on April 14 at 7:30 p.m.

**We Print
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Times 676-9228**



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



**HAPPY
ST. PATRICK'S
WEEKEND!**

Thursday, March 13th

**PER, OLD TIMERS and LADIES
NIGHT.** Linda Kenny, Andrea Mortimore and crew will serve a chicken and rice dinner starting at 6 p.m. Lodge and Pin Ceremony will start at 8 p.m.

Friday, March 14th

BUFFET DINNER with BBQ pork and more! Dinner starts at 6 p.m. **St. Patrick's Auction** starts upstairs at 7 p.m.

Saturday, March 15th

ST. PAT'S BRUNCH. Enjoy egg casserole, hashbrowns, ham, fruit salads and sticky rolls from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$8 for adults and \$5 for children under 12.

CORN BEEF AND CABBAGE DINNER starts at 6 p.m. Live music begins at 9 p.m. with bands High 5 and 3 Quarters Short. Don't miss it!

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.)

Clearing up secession misunderstandings

To The Editor:

After reading Dr. Jack Crippen's column in last week's paper entitled "Answers to the Mysteries of Education" I felt compelled to try address some of the misunderstandings that he obviously has regarding Ione's attempt to secede from Morrow County School District and the process under which we would do so.

We did, in fact, introduce Senate Bill 372 in an attempt to clarify the current statutes regarding school district boundary changes. And the Morrow County School Board did, in fact, vote to oppose the bill and ask to have it killed in committee. However, if they had taken a little more time to absorb the information that we provided to them and to consult with their legal counsel, they might have reached a different conclusion. They reacted in a hasty manner based on rumor and innuendo and, as Dr. Crippen said, since then we have been able to answer most of the questions and clear up most of the rumors regarding this bill.

Now, in relation to the division of assets and liabilities, Dr. Crippen still seems to be laboring under some misconceptions about how this would work. We have, in fact, agreed to an amendment to SB 372 that would put this process under ORS 330.123. However, Dr. Crippen has chosen to selectively quote ORS 330.123 in a way that does not accurately reflect what the statute says. Dr. Crippen skips over the part of the statute (ORS 330.123(1)) that directs the "district school boards of the affected districts to immediately after the change make an equitable division of the then existing assets and liabilities between the districts affected by the change and provide the manner of consummating the division."

He chooses instead to go straight to the instructions to the Board of Arbitration that would be appointed if the districts failed to reach an agreement within 20 days. He accurately quotes this section (ORS 330.123(6)) as saying that "Assets include all school property and moneys belonging to the district at the time of division. Liabilities include all debts for which the respective districts in their corporate capacities are liable at the time of division. In determining assets, school property shall be estimated at its real market value." However, then he chooses to skip over some very relevant language and say, "The division... shall be made in proportion to the resident average daily membership of the districts."

At this point the statute actually says: "The assets and liabilities shall be divided between the districts in proportion to the last assessed value of the real and personal property. The district retaining the real property shall pay the other districts concerned such sums as are determined in accordance with the provisions of this section. All funds to be apportioned during the current school year, after such division, shall be made in proportion to the resident average daily membership of the districts divided, as shown by the report of such districts for the

period ending the preceding June 30 as certified by the districts to the administrative office of the county." A careful reading of this language will lead one to the conclusion that the result is not quite what Dr. Crippen indicated it would be.

In addition, Dr. Crippen claims that the two values he used (insurance value and Assessor's Appraised Value) represent the most probable high and low values of the assets. He fails to understand that the insurance values he is using are full replacement values. He also fails to understand that the values he calls "Assessors Appraised Values" are not appraised values at all. Rather, they are insurance values provided to the Assessor's Office by MCSD in 1994 or 1995 (i.e.: outdated replacement values).

It is quite probable that, when an actual appraisal is completed, both the insurance value and "Assessor's Appraised Value" cited by Dr. Crippen will be higher than the "Real Market Value" of the assets.

So, until Dr. Crippen chooses to acquire all of the facts about this situation, I would hope that he doesn't choose to enlighten us further.

(s) Lisa Rietmann
Ione Self Determination
Committee
Ione

Morrow County needs work in all areas

To the Editor:

Concerning the article in the Feb. 26 edition of the Heppner Gazette-Times "Tempers flare as Ione-MCSD split turn acrimonious;" if I were a resident of Ione, or in that area, or my children were going to school there, I am quite sure my temper would flare also, if I were told my school would close. I can't see as Ione has any other choice but to do what they are doing.

It is a known fact that smaller schools have better educated children; simply because teachers have more one-on-one contact with individual students.

While keeping track of Ione School news, I see a large number of students make the honor roll through out their school years. A very high percentage of these honor students go on to higher education.

In my opinion, Ione parents take very good care of their students and are very proud of them.

If the Morrow County School District wants to consolidate schools, they should build one on Bombing Range Rd. and put Irrigon, Boardman, Ione and Heppner all together out there. That way, all students could ride a bus 150 miles to school and back; or pay \$2 a gallon for gas and drive themselves.

Also, it appears to me that the Morrow County Health District Board of Directs have worked hard at holding things together in all of Morrow County.

I fell from a roof on May 29, 2002 and broke three vertebrae in my neck and five in my top eight vertebrae of my back and crushed the other three. If I would have had to be transported to Hermiston or Pendleton I don't think I would have made it. I feel the Heppner hospital saved my life.

The \$1724 loss at the Pioneer Memorial Hospital for the month of January was probably 100 percent my bills. It took me a couple months before I could walk with a walker or talk plainly. I had someone bring my mail to me but I never opened any of it for five months. By that time, PMH had turning it over to a credit collector. I was rather upset about that so I ignored those bills another six months. I had Medicare so the hospital got 80 percent of their money from that.

It sounds to me like there are a few people down that Irrigon, Boardman way who have walked to close to the river and fell in and got a small amount of brain damage from not getting out quick enough. The only person I know personally from the health district article is Larry Mills. I think Larry Mills did as fine a job as anyone could at M.C.G.G., then when he retired he took on two of the toughest jobs in the county. It is my opinion, we would have lost our hospital and nursing home if not for Mills.

Since Sept. 11, at the failure of Measure of 28, things have turned and Mills and the committees he belongs to have had very little cooperation from members of the board and outside people. I have not intended to down grade anyone, but I wanted to share my views.

I also would like to comment about the story of Fran Oswald in the Feb. 26 edition of the Gazette.

I will agree that the people of Oregon should "get involved and speak up." We should create a situation such as Measure 28 only worse and maybe the state of Oregon would get rid of 446 more troopers. Of course, Morrow County Sheriff's Office would probably hire some more of them. I cannot see why the state of Oregon is in such bad shape, when Morrow County schools are in worse shape and Morrow County and the city of Heppner are going stronger than ever.

This City has worked Saturday and Sunday with extra help to get ready for St. Pat's Day. Money must be no problem. They have all fairly new trucks and equipment also.

I will agree with who Heppner has for a Mayor and the new city foreman who is probably over qualified for his position that the city is in as good shape as it is.

The county is trying to buy 6000-plus acres to make a snowmobile and 4-wheeler tract at the reload is quite ridiculous, \$1.7 million, the same situation as the new swimming pool in Heppner. Come on people let's do something.

The working people have had to leave the area to find work and the farmers have had three of the poorest crops in the last 50 years. The dry spell has been tough on cattle as well.

(s) Richard Peck
Lexington

U.S. at a crossroads, with decisions ahead

To the Editor:

The U.S. finds itself at another crossroads, another time to make a decision. Peace or war?

Or can we? Make a decision? The rules that govern the electoral college (the senators and representatives of each state) are firmly stated within the constitution. When the federal government disagrees with the popular vote, it has the right to override it. No matter it seems, the majorities expectations.

At what cost? Sunday, Sept. 11? A return to the fear of the Cold War, the fear of pending holocaust? The fear of not being safe from anyone?

We've all seen the complete devastation of nuclear weapons, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We've also seen the long lasting effects of nuclear energy, gone wrong, as in Chernobyl. We don't need it until we make it safe. Any country aggravating another with threats of war, does not make it safe.

This dilemma, who started it? Sounds like a childish question, doesn't it? Some fathers would have both kids standing in a corner until they figured it out. Will we ever know who or why, for sure? Where did all the hate start? Are U.S. tourists that aggravating?

That's obviously ridiculous. So, where did all the hate come from, who started it?

Since the change of administrations the world has gone to a distasteful place in a hand basket.

The U.S. government and the U.N. don't agree.

The U.S. government and the inspectors don't agree.

The U.S. government and North Korea are acting like over-bearing step-parent and spoiled brat. Clinton gave them what they needed. Powell says we can win both wars at once.

The U.S. government and California don't agree. How many unnecessary wars does this administration need to win? Clinton stepped out of his public oriented bounds, but he let the terminally ill be comforted. Or, should he be serving some of the 85 years for aiding and abetting?

There are times I believe, some would have use "earn" the "right" to speak freely, even though the constitution guarantees it. As if war and the military are needed "rights of passage."

My stepfather fought in WWII. I was in the service between 1968 and 1972. I didn't go to Canada; I didn't hide. I thought I was doing the right thing. My heart and mind have changed over the years. I can't say it was done religiously, but I feel it just as strongly; war and killing are wrong. It does not stop the hate.

No person, no group of people, should have the right to dictate war. We the people, as humans, should have grown up at least that much.

(s) Phillip Kight
Heppner

Seventh-Day Adventist Church to host special musical program

The Heppner Seventh-Day Adventist Church will be hosting the Hermiston Junior Academy, Saturday, March 15, at 11 a.m. The event will be held in the church's gym. This will be a special musical program featuring the choir, hand bells and band.

The program is free to the public and all are welcome. There will also be a fellowship dinner at 1 p.m.

WVSC postpones meeting

The Willow Valley Service Club's scheduled program meeting for Thursday, March 13 has been postponed to a later date. The club will meet on Thursday, March 20 with Master Gardener Cecil Rill, from 12-1 p.m. at John's Other Place in Heppner.