

NWS conducts weather spotter training in Heppner

Volunteers are being sought to participate in the latest weather spotter training on April 3 in Heppner. Weather spotters trained by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) are key volunteers who assist the meteorologists by providing up-to-date information about storm activity.

The Skywarn Weather Spotter training is free and will be held in the Emergency Operations Center at 325 Willow View Drive in Heppner beginning at 7 p.m., and is co-sponsored by Morrow County Emergency Management.

Even though the Doppler weather radar is scanning the skies and the NOAA Weather Radio is broadcasting forecasts, watches and warnings, forecasters depend upon getting good "ground truth" information from trained Skywarn weather spotters. Spotters are especially important in Crook County due to limited Doppler radar coverage.

"Skywarn volunteers are not 'storm chasers,' although many Skywarn members, both local and nationwide, may chase storms on their own time," said Dennis Hull, NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the forecast office in Pendleton. "The National Weather does not encourage storm chasing because it is very dangerous."

Hull added, "The safety of all Skywarn spotters is a high priority. Skywarn members are volunteers trained in weather spotting and reporting those findings in a timely manner using the phone, amateur radio, or Internet."

Skywarn spotters attend a two-hour training session where they learn how to observe cloud formations and other weather in this area. The Weather Service teaches how to determine which storms are potentially severe. Spotters use a special toll free number, amateur radio frequency, or the Internet address to let the forecasters at the National Weather Service office in Pendleton know what is happening in their area. Meteorologists use this data as they issue severe weather warnings or statements to the residents of Morrow County.

Hull said the Skywarn was a concept developed in the early 1970s that was intended to promote a cooperative effort between the National Weather Service and communities. The emphasis of the effort is often focused on the storm spotter, an individual who takes a position near their community and reports wind gusts, hail size, rainfall, and

cloud formations that could signal a developing tornado.

In the winter, spotters report heavy snow, icing, high winds and blizzards. Skywarn also works to ensure National Weather Service forecasts, watches and warnings are broadcast and received in a timely manner.

The lead role in Skywarn may lie with the National Weather Service or with an emergency management agency within the community. This agency could be a police or fire department, or often is an emergency management/service group. This varies across the country however, with local national weather service offices taking the lead in some locations, while emergency management takes the lead in other areas.

Interested residents who would like to learn more about the local weather or those who may have an interest helping your neighbors obtain good weather warnings, are invited to attend the Skywarn Weather Spotter training. Those attending will be eligible for door prizes.

More information about the training is available by contacting Morrow County Emergency Management at 541-676-5161 or the National Weather Service at 541-276-7832. You can also email Hull at dennis.hull@noaa.gov. Additional information is also available at the National Weather Service website at <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pendleton>.

NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts to Morrow County from transmitters at Sillusi Butte and Robinson Hill on a frequency of 162.425 MHz.

Additional information about Skywarn can be found at <http://www.skywarn.org>.

The National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories and operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping to protect lives and property and enhance the national economy. To learn more about NWS, please visit <http://www.weather.gov>.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

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Ione American Legion Post 95 celebrates 82 years

The Ione American Legion Post 95 celebrated its 82nd birthday with a prime rib dinner March 18 at the Office Tavern in Ione. Post 95 was chartered in 1921. Jim Barnett, the most senior American Legion Post 95 member, was honored for 58 years of membership. Delmer Crawford received a 55-year pin, and L.J. McElligott, Rodney Crawford and Nolan Bonner received 30-year pins.

Lucy Tworek received her 35-year Auxiliary membership pin. Rikka Tews received a 25-year pin; Erin Cleveland, a 15-year pin, and Gina Jepsen, Peggy Broyles, Arlynda Gates, Charissa Gates and Jeanette Moran each received five-year pins.

Also at the meeting, the Bank of Eastern Oregon, represented by Fran Barnett, was recognized as a sponsor for Girls State, which is an Auxiliary program. Jean Jepsen was honored with a gift of appreciation for her work in the Auxiliary, as was June Crowell, Auxiliary secretary-treasurer.

The program for the evening was presented by Dave Young, a serviceman with an extensive record of military service, who is promoting the Pendleton air show to be presented in May.



Jim Barnett receives his 58-year Legion Membership pin.



Jean Jepsen receives a gift of appreciation for her Auxiliary work by Auxiliary President Irene Holtz.



Gina Jepsen receives five-year pin from Auxiliary President Irene Holtz.



Auxiliary Secretary-Treasurer June Crowell (left) is presented a gift for her Auxiliary work by Auxiliary President Irene Holtz.



L.J. McElligott (left) receives his 30-year membership pin from Legion Adjutant Conrad Tworek.



The Bank of Eastern Oregon, represented by Fran Barnett (left), was honored for its sponsorship of Girls State. Auxiliary member Jean Jepsen is pictured right.

Senior Center directors view successful St. Pats weekend

The Board of Directors of St. Patrick's Senior Center met in regular session on March 19, in the Center office. Like every business and organization of the community, the members took a deep breath of satisfaction for the successful weekend celebration and then began to assess their own participation in various activities. Breakfast and lunch were served on Saturday, a sofa throw, donated by Helen Crawford, was raffled, and an enthusiastic group represented the Center in the parade. The dining room and kitchen were rented to the United Methodists for the Friday evening stew feed; on Saturday evening, the common room was used for a town meeting with our U.S. Representative, Greg Walden. At other times, it offered respite from rain and for weary feet.

More than \$600 was earned from breakfast and

lunch and more than \$80 from raffle tickets. Pete Schwarzin, board president, drew the winning ticket purchased by Marian Murchison. The "Antiques" parade float received second place in their class.

Letters of appreciation will be sent to major food donors, among them J. R. Simplot for the hash brown potatoes.

Mike Armato announced that he would no longer be the Center Coordinator. The Senior Center Board members want to express their gratitude for his attentiveness to their work by attending every meeting, offering helpful suggestions and guiding them through the protocol of the their relationship to the agency (CAPECO). As ex-officio member of the board, he has kept us on track of our main task.

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, April 16 at 12 noon.

Tax prep service to change service area in April

As we move into April the tax season is beginning to wind down, the free tax preparation service, sponsored by AARP, has been very successful in the Heppner area. However, the service has not been utilized in the Ione area. For that reason, instead of being in Ione on April 1 as planned, volunteers will be at the OSU Extension office in Heppner. Unless things change, April 9 will be the last day prep service will be available in Heppner.

If you are one of those who have been putting off getting your taxes done, your time is rapidly running out.

Please call the Extension Office at 676-9642 for an appointment.

This free service is available to everyone, young and old alike. However, the volunteers do reserve the right to refuse service if your return is beyond the scope of their training.

Order Magnetic Door Signs HERE
Heppner Gazette-Times
676-9228



Lucy Tworek receives 35-year Auxiliary membership pin from Auxiliary President Irene Holtz.

WVSC announces April activities

Senior Girls' Luncheon. Mayor Robert Jepsen and Merry Brannon headline the April activities for the Willow Valley Service Club.

April 3, the Annual Invitation-Only Senior Girls' Luncheon will be held at All Saints Episcopal, Heppner, from 12-1 p.m. In addition to honoring these girls, Jeri McElligott will speak and Rev. Keith Brudevold will provide music. The junior girls will serve and the women of the church will cater the salad lunch. The WVSC sponsors this 50-plus years annual tradition.

The program meetings of the WVSC are held at John's Other Place in Heppner from 12-1 p.m. April 10, Robert Jepsen, mayor of Heppner, will update the club on current issues and areas of interest in the life and business of Heppner. Mayor Jepsen, a native of Heppner, has lived here all his life. Prior to these last ten years as mayor, he served on the city council. His greatest interest is family, especially grandchildren. Jepsen and his wife, Suzanne,

have two children and six grandchildren.

Merry Brannon will update the club on issues and activities at the Heppner Day Care Center at the April 17 meeting. Brannon is the director and preschool teacher of the Center. Her delight is spending quality time with her child; hobbies include woodworking crafts, swimming and hiking.

The services of the WVSC for March included filling an all-Irish basket, which was raffled with proceeds going to "The Shenanigans" for their Ireland trip. The Club also sponsored and provided helpers for the American Red Cross Blood Drive. Members also covered the Chamber of Commerce information booth during the St. Patrick's weekend celebration.

Everyone is invited to attend the program meetings and new members are welcomed. For more information call Carolyn Willey at 676-9749.

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

Heppner B.P.O.E. #358
cordially invites you to attend
the Installation of Officers
Saturday, March 29, 2003

Exalted Ruler Elect - Thomas Wolff
Installation 5 p.m.
No-Host Cocktails 5:45 p.m.
No-Host Dinner 6:30 p.m.
Dance 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.

(Music provided by Dan Burns 3-D Productions)

Prime Rib Dinner

R.S.V.P. (541) 676-9181 Lodge
(541) 676-5114 Wolff's