

Bessie Wetzell
U of O Newspaper Library
Eugene, OR 97403

HEPPNER

50¢

Gazette Times

VOL. 122 NO. 19 12 Pages Wednesday, May 7, 2003 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Stories of The Flood

As part of the centennial year, the Heppner Gazette-Times will be running personal accounts of the 1903 Heppner flood, from now until the flood commemoration event.

Our first account is from John Leach, a retired Portland pharmacist. "I was a young man clerking in a store when I went through the Heppner flood of June 14, 1903. In the catastrophe, one-fourth of the population was wiped out in 20 minutes by a wall of water that came down Willow Creek.

"Heppner's population was about 1000 at the time. Most who died were killed by crumbling houses-crushed. We buried upwards of 225 within a few days. Bodies and parts of bodies were uncovered for some years afterward.

"The first day, bodies were brought in on horse-drawn trucks like so much cord wood. It was hot weather and we had no embalming facilities. We turned Mike Roberts' saloon into a morgue. Crude coffins were made of rough lumber.

"Nerves were shattered. Grief and fatigue were great. If we thought a body was that of so-and-so, we listed it and put the name on a board to be stuck at the head of the grave. If that person came walking in later, the name was scratched off the list. We opened on box marked 'Geo. Conser' (bank cashier) and found his Chinese cook in it. George was alive.

"No one will ever be able to accurately list or number the dead because of the nature of the transient population of the frontier town-sheep shearers, sheep herders, cowboys, hobos, Gypsy basket makers who camped along the creek, gamblers and ladies know only by trade names such as Molly, May, Kitty, Lulu, etc."

Local children show support for troops



(front L-R) Mary Ann Elguezabal, along with Rylee Kollman, 5 and Carrie Hagewood, 9 deliver boxes to Heppner Postmaster Sally Larsen (back).

The St. Patrick's Catholic Church catechism children's classes have been praying for all the soldiers who are serving in the war. Along with their prayers, they decided to send care packages to local soldiers serving in the Middle East.

The children packed up "goodies" including, Girl Scout cookies, gum, candy, toothbrushes, lip balm, lotion, wipes and many other items the children thought the soldiers would enjoy. They

also included pictures, letters and notes from all the children.

St. Patrick's Altar Society donated the money to pay for the postage for the packages. Packages will be sent to Levi Geer, Stacy Lauritsen, John Martin, Phil Appleton, Eric Schonbachler, Joseph Baker and Derrick Campbell.

Postmaster Sally Larsen also asks that any one wishing to send care packages to local soldiers overseas contact her about guidelines and a list of which items may or may not be sent.

MCURD seeks proposals

The Morrow County Unified Recreation District is now seeking funding proposals.

The Morrow County Unified Recreation District funds activities each year for the benefit of the general community. Those activities range from funding entertainment for big celebrations to giving instruction in the arts. In May, MCURD requests each

organization seeking funds from the district to submit a proposal. Any organization can request funding for their projects. There is no set format for the request, but it should identify the project and the costs associated with the project.

To submit a funding request, contact Cyde Marie Estes, chairman for the district, at (541) 676-5808.

Soccer registration to be held

Soccer registration will be held this Thursday, May 8, from 5:30-7:30 p.m., and Saturday, May 10, from 9-11:30 a.m. Registration will be held at the Heppner Neighborhood Center.

This is the third year of soccer for the community and children ages four through 12 are invited to join. You must be four by Jan. 31, 2003

and under 12 through July 31, 2003.

Registration is \$31 for the first child and \$28 for additional children in the same family household. Late registrations will be subject to a late fee. Games will be held in Hermiston.

If you have any questions you can contact Tina or Darrell Raver at 676-8710.

Portland kids experience rural life



Centennial students watch a demonstration.

Photo by Sandy Matthews



Left to right: Centennial students Austin Porterfield, Hayley Porterfield, Haley Peterson, teacher Jerrod Miller, Danny Craft, John Utberg, Jocelyn Hays, Emily Carpenter and Daniel Keys.

The annual Heppner-Centennial student exchange, where Heppner students travel to the Portland area and attend school at Centennial Middle School and Centennial students travel to Heppner and attend Heppner Junior High, was held the week of April 20-26. Monday the Centennial students attended school at HJH; Tuesday they toured the Pendleton Underground and Umatilla Museum; Wednesday they toured with the Forest Service; Thursday, they went to the Mark and Tami Rietmann ranch and the Wilkinson indoor rodeo arena at the Morrow County Fairgrounds in Heppner; Friday they were on their own with their host families and attended a dinner and dance; and on Saturday returned home.

Centennial students always seem to provide a positive and refreshing look at rural life. Following are some of their observations:

Austin Porterfield, 14, lives in Portland with his father, Loren, a purchasing agent, and stepmother, Wendy, a teacher, his eight-year old brother, Xavier Fay, and three-year-old brother, Eli Porterfield. His mom Darla Sheldon, a secretary, lives in Fairview. During his visit to Heppner, Austin has been staying with the John and Sonja McCabe family. He says he likes "everything" about the exchange, but especially enjoyed the Forest Service trip to Bull Prairie. "It's more laid back here-very much so. People aren't as uptight and people at school are a little bit more trusting. They let you be independent. Everyone's not in a rush. They enjoy life and aren't as conscious about



Lexi Matteson (left) gives a roping lesson. Photo by Sandy Matthews

things. They do what makes them tick."

Hayley Porterfield, 14, a cousin of Austin's, lives in Portland with her father, Rob, a mechanical insulator, and mom, Jill, a hair dresser. She has three older brothers, Jeremiah, 21, Brody, 19, and Brogen, 17. She stayed in Heppner with the Jeff and Lana Orr family. Hayley liked working with on the Rietmann ranch. "I liked working the cattle today. That was really fun. Here, people are more into rodeos and the outdoors. In Portland, there's a lot more stuff to do." But, she adds, "It's a cool experience to be in a smaller town.

Haley Peterson, 13, lives in Portland with her father, Curt, who owns a construction company, her mom, Karen, a physical therapist, and sister Nikki, 16. Haley, who stayed with the John and Diane Kilkenny family, says that her favorite thing during her visit to Heppner was visiting the "t-shirt company," Fabrics Etc. Her least favorite activity was visiting the "Umatilla Museum". She likes "how you can walk everywhere and how everybody knows everybody" in Heppner. "They (Heppner

people) probably have closer friends. They're really nice people. At our school, there are a whole bunch of cliques." Haley says she misses her sister, but adds, "This is the most I've ever done in a week. It was pretty cool."

Danny Craft, 14, lives in Damascus, with his dad Rick, a doctor, his mother, a stay-at-home mom who also helps at the office, a sister, Kacey, 17, and brothers, Rick, 16, Bradley, 11, and Jeffrey, eight. Danny, who stayed with the Mary Ann Elguezabal family, says that his favorite Heppner experience was at the Rietmann ranch and his least favorite was a regular school day on Monday. He says that there "isn't a huge difference" between city and rural kids, but, he adds, "It seems at Centennial there are more obvious social classes and here everyone is friends with just about everyone."

John Utberg, 13, lives in Gresham with his dad, John, a construction worker, his mother, Debbie, who works in a school cafeteria, and his sister, Jordin, 12. John initially stayed with the Rauch family, but a family emergency necessitated his move to the

continued page two

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



HiQual Portable
Fabric Buildings

36'x22' -- 45'x30' -- 65'x30'
NOW AVAILABLE!

Morrow County Grain Growers

Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at www.mcgg.net