

The Official Newspaper
of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

**Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES**

U.S.P.S. 240-420

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

Published weekly and entered as periodical matter at the Post Office at Heppner, Oregon under the Act of March 3, 1879. Periodical postage paid at Heppner, Oregon. Office at 147 W. Willow Street. Telephone (541) 676-9228. Fax (541) 676-9211. E-mail: gt@heppner.net or gt@rapidserve.net. Web site: www.heppner.net. Postmaster send address changes to the Heppner Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Oregon 97836. Subscriptions: \$24 in Morrow County; \$18 senior rate (in Morrow County only; 62 years or older); \$30 elsewhere.

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CHAMBER CHATTER

By Claudia Hughes, Exec. Dir

When writing this article each week, foremost in my mind is always the Chamber's mission statement... "A non-profit organization dedicated to creating a positive environment where business, community and people thrive." The Chamber is "staff" for the businesses and organizations that belong, always working to serve their best interests and those of Heppner to the best of its ability. We're about people and community.

Recently, my mother, sister and I went for breakfast at the new Walla Walla Airport. As we drove away, we noticed a young man walking, weighed down with backpacks and duffle bags. Having observed him disembarking from the plane, we stopped to ask if he needed a ride. It was 96 degrees with no shade in any direction. He was a Whitman College student from Palo Alto, California. Four miles later, as we delivered him to the north hall, he was very grateful. It was no problem. He was someone's son and grandson. I wish we had said, "Just pay it forward."

Have you seen "Pay It Forward"? During a rare moment of television watching, I saw this movie. The message: rather than trying to pay back someone who has helped you, you pay forward. Kleenex is required. It's about human beings and how we treat one another.

And that brings me to the issue of The Ten Commandments in public view. Realizing I have to be very careful here and make it clear this is my own opinion, I have some questions to ask. In this free country we live in, within a world that shrinks every day, wouldn't it make sense to learn and be aware of the parallels and the common good of a variety of religions rather than have some or all removed from the public eye? How does one learn or make choices if they aren't allowed to view these choices or be exposed to them? Why would anyone waste millions of dollars to remove one set of rules for living? It would seem the theory is "out of sight, out of mind." There's plenty of unhealthy information put in front of us daily; why not an equal dose of healthy options? We learn more about people and the world through example and by listening to different opinions and ideas. Doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out treating others as you wish to be treated is paying it forward.

This might make for some interesting letters to the editor and this might also put me over the edge with this column privilege, so back to star gazing, and marketing, and planning for scarecrow contests and Town and Country and on and on.

Oh, and by the way, there are 6,000 acres with trails at Morrow County's OHV Park, not 6,000 miles of trails. Writing a column minutes before the deadline isn't always the best bet. Keep an eye on your Chamber Exec. She's getting older, but not necessarily wiser.

Next week Senator David Nelson will be addressing the Chamber during the noon meeting at John's Place. Come hear what he has to say about the longest session in Oregon's legislative history.

Thought for the week: "The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese in the trap."

PMH receives new volunteer coordinator

moving into the Volunteer Coordinator position.

Pioneer Memorial Hospice announced Sept. 1 that the volunteer position of Volunteer Coordinator changed from Carolyn M. Willey to Cyde Marie Estes.

Estes is a native of Heppner, married to Rusty with two sons, Chad and Eric Skroch. Her hobbies include volunteer work, golf and especially family. She started employment at the Morrow County Assessment and Tax Office in 1986 and since 1990 has been the Lead Appraiser.

Estes completed the Volunteer Hospice Training Course, the Healing After Loss Course and served as a Teacher-in-Training before

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City council *continued from page one*

it can with the money it will have available.

In other water issues, the council heard from several citizens who asked why their commercial rates are so high. Jerry Holloman, local barbershop owner and real estate broker, said he thought the \$17.50 per month extra charge on businesses was "unfair". "The base rate for residential," Holloman said. "It's getting pretty expensive to live in Heppner, Oregon," he added. "It cost me \$58 a month for water and sewer and all I have is a toilet and two sinks," Holloman said about his business rates.

The council also voted to forgive a \$645 water bill to the Willow Creek Little League. The council had earlier agreed to give the Little League 400,000 gallons per year to water its three fields. However, the Little League said it has a leak in its irrigation system on one of the fields on Riverside and had lost 740,000 gallons in July. The Little League should only have used 50,000 during that time, according to Doug Holland who was at the meeting representing the Little League. Holland said the water is now shut off to the field and volunteers are trying to find the break in the pipe.

Jake Brakes

The council heard a complaint from Joe Miller of Heppner about a recently enacted jake brake ban in the city limits of Heppner. Miller said banning the jake (exhaust) brakes was unsafe for trucks coming into town. The council explained that the problem was mostly log trucks coming into town early in the morning, and agreed that the ban would not be enforced during the day.

Property clean up

The council authorized deputy Randy Rayburn to bring in a clean up crew from the corrections department

and clean up property at 425 Water Street in Heppner. Several neighbors of the property were at the meeting complaining of accumulated debris and other matter that needed to be removed. The city authorized up to \$3,500 to get the property cleaned up, and that the city would file liens against the property to be reimbursed for the cost.

Flood plain

The city manager gave a report on his efforts to have the flood plain in Heppner reduced. The flood plain determines who must buy flood insurance, and also places building restrictions on certain kinds of construction and remodeling in the parts of the city. Breazeale has been working with FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) who determines the flood plains size, for quite some time to have new studies done and the maps re-drawn. FEMA has said it doesn't have money for the new studies and maps. The project would cost \$50,000 to be done, or \$100,000 if Ione and Lexington were also covered. Breazeale said he may be able to get some grant money for the project and pay to have it remapped, or go back to FEMA and point out "where they screwed up" and maybe get the study done within two years. If the city came up with the \$50,000 itself the study and maps could be done in an estimated six months. There are 170 buildings in the flood plain in Heppner, and \$27,000 in annual flood insurance payments is paid according to just one insurance agent who was surveyed in Heppner.

Other business

The council authorized the city manager to try and find grant money to fund a \$9,600 plan to decide how to remodel city hall.

Agreed to provide materials worth \$4,807 for the burying of fiber optic cable under Heritage Park in Heppner.

WVSC to hold shower

Willow Valley Service Club will be holding a personal care items for women and children shower for the Domestic Violence Services at their meeting, Thursday, Sept. 18, at John's Place, in Heppner, from 12-1 p.m.

Terri Cribbs, West End Supervisor, will explain the services offered, share illustrations, and accept the personal care items.

Cribbs is a native of Hermiston and has four children and one grandchild.

Her family and travel are her main interests.

Items should be brought to the meeting or dropped off at Carolyn Willey's home by Sept. 17.

Everyone is welcomed at this no-host luncheon.

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M.C. School District *continued from page 1*

be from the D.O. Nelson Road north to the river.

In other business, the board:

-learned that the district will not have to file a supplemental budget to receive additional monies expected as a result of the increase in the Oregon State School Fund approved by the legislature. Dr. Crippen said the additional taxes approved by the legislature may be challenged and the district could be required to pay the additional monies back. He said that he intends that "a lot" of the additional monies be used for the English-as-a-second-language programs in Boardman and Irrigon schools.

-asked Dr. Crippen to clarify the difference between the newly hired director of programs and the former assistant superintendent position that was eliminated because of budget constraints.

Crippen said that the director of programs is not an assistant superintendent, is not a year-round position and is not funded to the extent of the assistant superintendent position. He said that the program director will have an office in north Morrow County because he will work primarily with the district's principals and programs in the north end. The board also asked Dr. Crippen, "Is not the Boardman office your satellite office and Lexington your principal office?" "Okay, ..." replied Crippen, who added, "As time goes on I anticipate spending more time in Boardman and Irrigon." The board earlier voted to allow Dr. Crippen to move his office to the north end, but later reversed its decision when it was determined that the district would not save money by moving from its Lexington location. Dr. Crippen maintains that he belongs in the north end where the majority of students are. He has also purchased a home in Boardman.

-heard a complaint voiced by Columbia Basin Electric Coop manager Jerry Healy that damage to farm machinery due to a low-hanging wire at the Ione School construction was attributed to negligent workmanship on behalf of Columbia Basin. Healy maintained that the incident was not caused by Columbia Basin Electric Coop's negligence and added that he had "no intention" of turning the insurance claim over to CBEC's insurance carrier. He further stated that upon earlier advice he had received, regardless of the latest incident, CBEC will not do any more work on the "customer's side of the meter" and customers will be advised to hire a licensed electrician. Healy pointed out that CBEC had donated many hours of labor to schools and other organizations, including school football field lights, flag poles, batting cages and other projects. "The only reason the football field lights work at Riverside (high school) is because we volunteered," said Healy. Healy said that the incident gives CBEC "the opportunity to step back from school projects." MCSD Board member Pat McNamee thanked CBEC for the work they had done for the school district.

-voted against taking out an earthquake policy for district buildings, citing expensive premiums and low risk.

-approved striking the reference to Ione from policies concerning temporary and standing committees and adding Lexington to the

references to Heppner committees.

-appointed Lisanne Currin and Keith Lewis, both Heppner, to the budget committee.

-heard a request from Marilyn Post, teacher and Morrow County Education Association president-elect, that the school district reinstate FFA in some form;

-learned from Dr. Crippen that as a result of complaints from Irrigon residents, the district has arranged for school activity bus drivers to remain at drop-off points until students have been picked up. Dr. Crippen said that the students are dropped off at Huwe's in Irrigon and Sentry Market in Boardman because of access to a phone. He added that many students have cell phones and are able to call ahead for rides. "It's not as large a problem as we thought," he said.

-appointed Ron Anthony, Columbia Middle School principal, as principal for the Irrigon high school when it is slated to open in the fall of 2005.

-tried out a new sound system to determine whether to purchase one to facilitate hearing at meetings.

-appointed Ken Matlack to oversee setting up a committee for naming the Irrigon high school.

-postponed a decision on allowing the children of a family living in the Morrow County School District to attend school in the Ione District until October, hopefully after a boundary decision is made by the Umatilla-Morrow ESD.

-approved a request for an attendance variance for a child living in the Sam Boardman Elementary School attendance area to attend school in Arlington.

- a c c e p t e d resignations from: Nic Budge, Riverside High School music teacher and assistant football coach; Bertie Van Dyke, Columbia Middle School special education one-on-one assistant; Jason Hanna, Heppner Junior High basketball coach and Heppner High School assistant football coach.

- a p p r o v e d employment for: Jill Harris, A.C. Houghton Elementary and Sam Boardman Elementary counselor; Britnie Winters, Windy River Elementary sixth grade teacher; Gretchen Kirchner, RHS ESL assistant; Cheri Cook, WRE, Title I assistant; Gerald Smith, RHS assistant custodian; Jennifer Stafford, WRE Title I assistant; Leah Wagg, CMS assistant cook; Guadalupe Rodriguez, Irrigon Elementary Title I assistant; Helen Walty, RHS assistant custodian; Mila Inman, IES assistant custodian; Sara Burroughs, CMS special ed one-on-one assistant; Wendy McPherson, ACH special ed one-on-one assistant; and Tiffany Rill, SBE special ed assistant.

-approved attendance variances for a student in the Hermiston School District to attend Sam Boardman Elementary and two students to attend school in MCSD from the Hermiston School District.

-approved a resolution to accept and appropriate unanticipated revenues.

-learned that all employee collective bargaining contracts will expire this year.

-set a goal setting meeting at 3 p.m. Monday, October 13, at RHS, prior to the next regular board meeting set for 7:30 p.m.

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