

Bessie Wetzell
U of O Newspaper Library
Eugene, OR 97403

HEPPNER

50¢



Gazette
Times

VOL. 123 NO. 35 10 Pages Wednesday, September 1, 2004 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Back to school!



Students at HES depart to the buses after the first day of school on Aug. 30.



Heppner Elementary School teacher Karen Clough helps make sure students depart on the right buses at the end of the first day of school.

School for Morrow County students began on Monday, Aug. 30, with an increase in enrollment of 167 students over the end of June 2004.

Other Morrow County school enrollments started with an increase in enrollment of 213.

Irrigon, 355; Irrigon Elementary- Irrigon, 125; Sam Boardman Elementary- Boardman, 457; Windy River Elementary- Boardman, 159; and Riverside and Irrigon High Schools- Boardman and Irrigon, 781. The Alternative

Passage of health district levy won't affect other taxing districts

The Morrow County Health District Board announced Monday night that they learned that the passage of the proposed health district tax levy will not affect any other taxing districts. Some feared that the passage of the MCHD levy would reduce the amount of money that other districts get, but that proved to be untrue.

The district will put a three-year, 39 cent per \$1,000 levy before the voters on Nov. 2. The levy was deemed necessary because patient revenues, Medicare and Medicaid payments and current taxes do not generate enough monies for the district to break even.

The levy will generate around \$292,000 for the district in 2005-06, \$287,000 in 2006-07 and \$282,000 in 2007-08. Of the total \$6 million MCHD budget, only around \$600,000 is currently received in taxes.

In other business at the regular meeting in Heppner, the board approved paying Sheridan Tarnasky, a physician's assistant employed with the district at Pioneer Memorial

Clinic in Heppner, \$20 per hour for emergency room on-call services, increased Tarnasky's paid vacation to four weeks, approved one week of paid continuing education and clarified other issues in her contract.

The board commended Tarnasky for her dedication and many years of service with the district and took note of the number of patients who consider her as their primary provider. Tarnasky has worked with the district over 20 years in various capacities. She has been a physician's assistant with the district for the past five years. Prior to returning to school to obtain certification as a physician's assistant, she worked for the district as an RN. Her mother, Ilene Laughlin, was previously the Pioneer Memorial Hospital director.

The district plans to utilize Tarnasky in providing emergency room on-call services, as well as physicians and an additional physician's assistant who has yet to come on board. The district previously used only physicians to provide ER care, but has received the

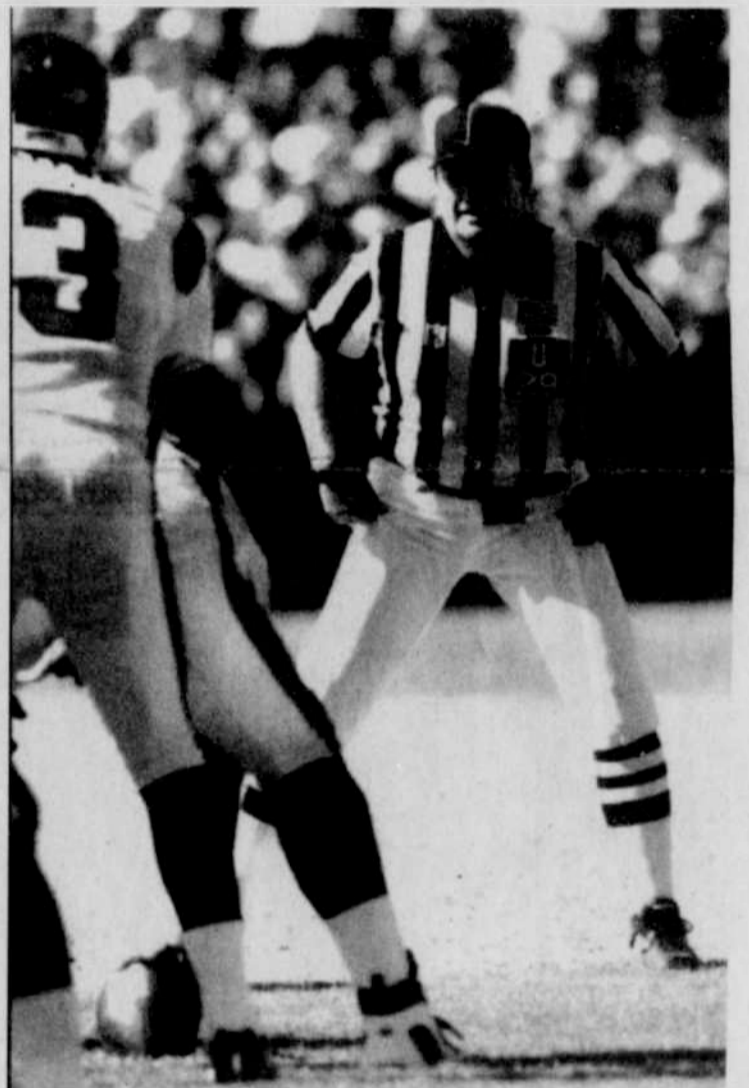
okay to use other providers. The move should save some monies for the district, since doctors receive \$45 per hour for emergency room on-call. The district will use both physicians and physician's assistants on a scheduled rotating basis. The board was emphatic in assuring Tarnasky that she will not be on call "24-7." (Tarnasky was not able to be present at the meeting because of continuing education, but was represented by Home Health director Molly Rhea.) A back-up physician will also be available when the PAs cover ER.

MCHD CEO Victor Vander Does told the board that the hiring of an additional physician's assistant is necessary because the district does not have enough staff providers to cover ER. Previously MCHD had to pay additional physicians to cover ER who were not under contract with the district. This has proven to be to be expensive for the district, especially considering its ailing bottom line.

Currently, besides Tarnasky, other district

continued page two

NFL referee to speak in Heppner



NFL Referee Steve Wilson

NFL Referee Steve Wilson, of Spokane, WA, will be speaking at Heppner High School auditorium on Saturday, Sept. 4 at 7 p.m. Admission is free.

Wilson will be speaking on "Scoring Touchdowns in Life."

Wilson was born and raised in Spokane where he attended high school at East Valley. He was the captain of the football, basketball and baseball teams and was also a member of the National Honor Society. He was also the president of the Letterman's Club and junior class president.

Following high school, Wilson was awarded a scholarship to Whitworth College where he started all four years on the Pirate football team. During that time, he was on the Dean's list and majored in journalism specializing in public relations.

Wilson serves as executive pastor at Spokane Valley Nazarene Church and during the fall he referees football for the National Football League (number 29). Wilson has met all the great players and coaches around the league and has been to all the big stadiums.

Wilson is married to Terri, vice-president of the Spokane Teachers Credit Union.

This event is being sponsored by the Heppner Church of the Nazarene. For more information contact the Nazarene Church at 676-5529.

Gazette-Times closed for Labor Day

The Heppner Gazette-Times office will be closed Monday, Sept. 6 in observance of the Labor Day holiday. All news articles and advertisements need to be turned in by Friday, Sept. 2, at 5 p.m., for the Sept. 8 edition of the paper.

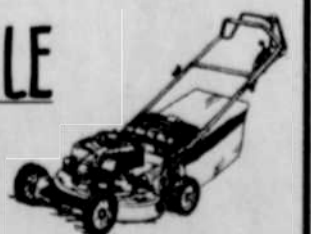
The office will resume normal business hours on Tuesday, Sept. 7.

END OF SEASON LAWNMOWER SALE

10% OFF EVERYTHING IN STOCK!

Morrow County Grain Growers

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



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