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HEPPNER 50¢
Gazette Times

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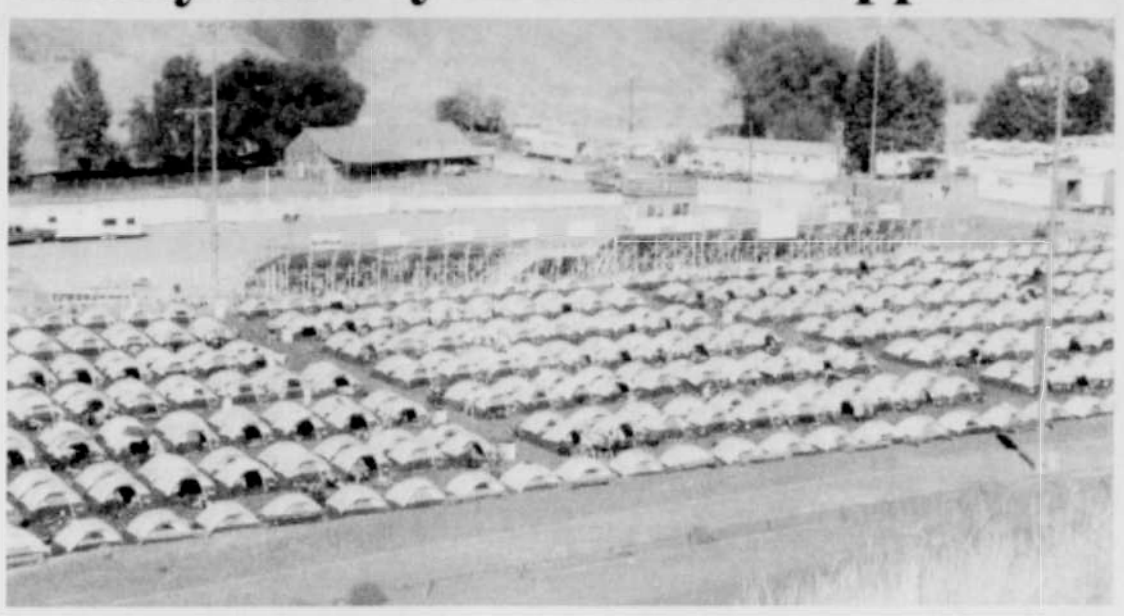
Nearly 2000 cyclists flood Heppner



Tents were set up at the Heppner football field, Heritage Park and school grounds for the nearly 2000 cyclists who came through Heppner on Sunday, Sept. 10 as part of Cycle Oregon.

New road revisions made for high school traffic

As of Sept. 28, Spruce Lane will become a one-way street going uphill to Heppner High School and Morgan Street will become a one-way street going downhill. This plan was reviewed and approved by the Morrow County Court on Aug. 16.

Spruce Lane will be outfitted with new guardrails and with a new bike/pedestrian lane. Morgan Street, which originally was a one-way uphill road, will be redirected as a one-way downhill street.

The change in the roads comes after bus drives said they felt it was safer to go up Spruce Lane and down Morgan Street.

Signs directing the traffic will be installed by Sept. 28.

Victor Vander Does helps man the information booth set up for cyclists who came through Heppner as part of Cycle Oregon.

Toxic algae found in Willow Creek Lake

Fish taken from the lake should, at a minimum, have the organs and skin removed and discarded prior to cooking

High levels of a toxic form of blue-green algae were recently discovered in Willow Creek Lake, near Heppner, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced Sept. 11.

Corps officials notified county and state health officials of the results. Morrow County will not be issuing a public health advisory. The algae were confirmed to be Microcystis aeruginosa.

Water containing visible algae blooms should be avoided; however, boat- and land-based recreation should not be impacted. High concentrations of the toxin producing algae appear as floating green, or blue to blue-green colored surface scum and can wash up on the shoreline. Do not use the water for swimming, cleaning, cooking or drinking and do not let your pets drink or access the water. Fish taken from the lake should, at a minimum, have the organs and skin removed and discarded prior to cooking. Studies have shown that toxins mainly accumulate in the liver and viscera of fish, although microcystin has been detected in the fillet.

Warnings are posted around the lake advising the public of the potential risks and ways to avoid contact with the algae. When the toxins are present they can be absorbed if affected water is swallowed or inhaled as droplets or spray in the air.

Blue-green algae are plants that occur naturally in lakes and are often associated with increased water temperatures and nutrients in lake water. Algal blooms are rapid buildups of algae that are often found near the shore due to wind and waves and are visible as masses of green, yellow or bluish-green slime.

Symptoms of ingestion of high concentrations of the toxin produced by Microcystis aeruginosa algae could include abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, blistering of the mouth and pneumonia, dizziness and fainting. Pets and other animals are more likely to ingest a fatal dose from the areas of high algae concentrations. Symptoms reported in cattle include generalized weakness, hyperthermia, anorexia, diarrhea, pale mucous membranes, mental derangement, muscle tremors, coma and death within a few days.

Monitoring will continue in the reservoir until toxic algae decline to safe levels. Check for news releases and updates on the Corps of Engineers, Portland District's Web site at www.nwp.usace.army.mil.

For more information, visit the Oregon Department of Human Services website at www.oregon.gov/DHS/, or contact them at (971) 673-4444.

School board hears plans for new Heppner High vo-ag program

Heppner High School's newly-hired vo-ag teacher Beth Dickenson presented an ambitious plan to revitalize the school's vo-ag program at the Morrow County School Board meeting at HHS Monday night.

An enthusiastic Dickenson said she would like to get the community involved in the program which was reinstated by the board this year after many years of absence.

Dickenson's plan included short-term and long-term goals:

-a horticulture program, which would include refurbishing, rewiring and providing heat and irrigation for the school's greenhouse with the goal of creating a production greenhouse with the ability to produce bedding plants, vegetables and flowers to the community;

-a livestock program, which would include refurbishing the school's barn, including piping in water to the barn and providing irrigation to a surrounding field so that students who don't have the ability to raise animals at home may be able to do so at school;

-an "active" land lab, a secondary greenhouse, an active FFA Chapter, a fund raising program, an FFA alumni association, service learning in the community, a community garden, a recruitment and retention program, development of research capabilities, possibly through a partnership with the Extension service, an advisory committee and plans for an open house.

Dickenson thanked the board for bringing back the program and also the Morrow County Grain Growers for labor and the donation of a propane tank.

Also at the meeting MCSD superintendent Mark Burrows said that he and assistant superintendent Wade Smith have been meeting with Morrow County and the city of Heppner to resolve problems concerning Heppner High School's access roads. Spruce Lane will be a one-way street going to the high school and Morgan will be a one-way street leaving the high school. Plans include a bike/pedestrian path and guard rails on Spruce Lane. Changes will be effective Sept. 28.

In other business, the board:

-approved the first reading of a policy regulating equipment vendors, such as those who provide musical instruments to students and their parents. Building principals will maintain a list of equipment vendors, who must, in turn, "maintain a record of good service, quality product and competitive prices" to keep their listed status. Schools may issue a "request for

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Council says 'no' to horses in the city

The Heppner City Council Monday said no to a request for an animal permit to keep two horses in Lott's addition on Canyon Road.

Robin Cobb had recently purchased a home and adjoining lot on Canyon and wished to keep two horses on the property. Several of her neighbors were at the council meeting and expressed opposition to the city allowing the animals. According to city ordinance, animals are allowed on property within city limits, but only after approval by the city council.

Darcy Bergstrom lives in the area and told the council she didn't think a city lot was appropriate for horses. Rita Woolsey said she didn't have anything against horses; she just didn't want one "parked across the street; more less two."

The council voted to deny the permit; however, they allowed Cobb two weeks to remove a horse that was already there.

In other business, the council discussed the recent decision by Morrow County to turn Spruce Lane into a one-way street. After a meeting with the county and the school district (Spruce Lane runs up to Heppner High School) it was decided to make Spruce one way going up and Morgan Street one way going down. It was

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