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Father Condon selected Heppner Chamber man of the year; Jan Stroeber, woman of the year

Whitney Matthews, student of the year

Father Gerald Condon, man of the year

Jan Stroeber, woman of the year

Jean Strange, citizen-educator of the year

Larry Mills, lifetime achievement

Keith Herbison, Les Schwab manager, business of the year

HEPPNER 50¢ Gazette Times

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The Heppner Chamber of Commerce held their annual Town and Country Banquet on Thursday, January 17. The banquet is held each year to honor local individuals and businesses for their contributions to the community. This year's theme was "Celebrating Small Town Life" and was sponsored by CenturyTel.

Awards presented included Lifetime Achievement, Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Citizen Educator, Business of the Year and Youth Recognition. The winners were recognized during a prime rib dinner at the Elks Lodge. Musical entertainment was provided by Heppner High School.

Les Schwab Tire Center was recognized as the 2007 Business of Year.

Les Schwab Tire Center came to Heppner in 1978 and moved to their current location in 1982. In its earlier years Les Schwab consisted of a two man crew. During those years the company donated its normal sponsorships, but on a smaller scale. In the mid 90's the store started making a profit and was able to hire two more employees and was also able to share their profits with the community on a larger scale.

Current manager Keith Herbison came to Heppner in January 2002 and today runs a seven man crew. Today Les Schwab donates to numerous community programs and activities including the SMART reading program, basketball scoreboard points for both Heppner and Ione, football billboard sponsor, high school yearbook for Heppner and Ione, St. Patrick's Motor Cross, Morrow County Livestock Auction, Booster Club Auction, and is a major sponsor for the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo and Morrow County Fair.

Father Gerry Condon was recognized as 2007's Man of the Year.

Father Condon is the pastor of St. Patrick and St. William's parishes. Father Condon was first appointed to the Heppner parish in the early 90's but took a year off to be with his sister in Ireland. When Father Condon returned to the United States he learned that the person who had been appointed to replace him during his absence was retiring. Father Condon was then re-appointed to St. Patrick's parish.

Along with his work in the parish, Father Condon visits the sick at the hospital and enjoys visiting and entertaining the residents at the assisted living facility. Father Condon also enjoys playing golf.

Jan Stroeber was named as 2007's Woman of the Year.

Since moving to Heppner 40 years ago, Jan Stroeber continues to make her home here and promote shopping locally. She enjoys being a Garden Club member, volunteering at the Willow Creek Assisted Living Center, and being involver in her church's activities. Stroeber also volunteers as a taxi service to seniors in the community. She also enjoys her grandchildren's extracurricular activities.

Jean Strange, a P.E. teacher at Windy River Elementary was named Citizen Educator of the Year for 2007.

Strange has worked for 28 years with the Morrow County School District. She has worked for 20 of those years at Heppner schools.

Strange is currently serving as president of the American Legion Auxiliary. She joined the Auxiliary over 15 years ago in honor for her parents. Strange is active in the St. Patrick Catholic Church, church choir, and helps with the youth group. She also enjoys playing golf and participates in the Willow Creek Golf Club. Currently, along with fundraising, Strange keeps the score clock for HHS games and provides help for the athletes and coaches.

Larry Mills, retired manager of the Morrow County Grain Growers, was honored with the 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award.

In 1969 Larry Mills, along with his wife Betty and their two children, moved to Heppner from the Spokane area. Since then Mills has been an incredible force in the community, participating in many projects to help get the job done.

In the past Mills has served on the Morrow County School Board, City Council and was the mayor of Heppner at one time. Currently he serves on the Morrow County Medical District Board, Hospital Foundation Board, Farm Foundation Board and Morrow County Budget Committee. Mills also serves as a trustee of the Leonard Foundation, a foundation that gives scholarships to students to help further their education.

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Weeds, birds and cougars discussed at annual livestock and soil meeting

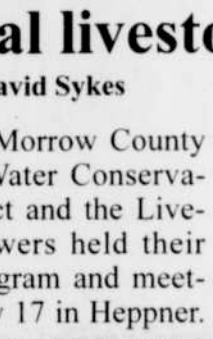
by David Sykes

The Morrow County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Livestock Growers held their annual program and meeting January 17 in Heppner.

On the program was a presentation from two Heppner FFA students about the group's trip to the national convention in Indianapolis, a report on using goats for weed management, how to improve upland bird habitat, a report on the lower Willow Creek Weed Management area, and a presentation on the cougar management program in the Heppner unit.

OCA president

The meeting started with a talk from Oregon Cattleman's Association President Bill Moore. Moore said the biggest job facing the group in the coming years is to do a better job communicating what the cattlemen are doing. "The cattle industry contributes $600 million to the economy of Oregon and we need to let people know this," Moore said. He said the group needs to be part of the solution posed by protecting the environment. He pointed out the problems of wildfires on ungrazed land, and how livestock can knock down 50 percent of the fuels that cause wildfires.


Bill Moore

He said the association has been working hard to protect members' private property (livestock) from cougars and wolves. He said there will be a breeding pair of wolves in Oregon this spring, and cattlemen will have to deal with that. "When they come to Oregon they will be protected by the endangered species act," Moore said.

Goats & weeds

Larry Larson of Eastern Oregon University gave a talk on an experiment he had been conducting on using goats to control Russian Knap Weed and other weeds.

Larson said goats, when combined with a spraying program, had been very effective in controlling the weeds.

The experiment was carried out using boar goats on several thousand acres in Harney County outside Burns. He said the goats were "selective" grazers and would go for the Knapweed and White Top and leave grasses alone. Larson said he even ate some of the meat afterward and did not detect and Knapweed flavor to the goat meat.

"I'm not saying goats are a cure all, but they are a good tool," he said.

Upland game birds

Dennis Newman, a wildlife habitat technician, gave a talk on improving upland game bird habitat.

Newman said many landowners who want to improve habitat focus on feed, but there are many aspects to better bird habitat. He said water is very important, as are a large enough parcel to support birds, and type of cover. He urged those who want to develop their bird habitat to contact him, as there are often grants and other funds to do the work.

Weed Managment

Clint Carlson gave a talk on the weed control efforts in the Willow Creek drainage. He reported on the spraying efforts. Gilliam County donated Milestone spray to do 505 acres from Willow Creek to the county line. They spray for Knapweed. A helicopter was used for some of the spraying and landowners helped with in-kind services.

Cougar management in the Heppner Unit

Steve Cherry, Oregon Department Fish & Wildlife District biologist, gave a report on the ongoing efforts to reduce the cougar population in Oregon.

Steve Cherry

Cherry gave some history on the cougar, pointing out that in 1961 there

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Informational meeting on lake irrigation set

The US Army Corps of Engineers is planning to hold an informational meeting Tuesday, Feb. 19, to discuss and explain the proposed long-term irrigation contracts under consideration for Willow Creek Lake.

The meeting will be held from 6 to 9p.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds in Heppner.

According to Jennifer Sowell of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Portland District Public Affairs Office, it will be an "open format, meaning people can show up and leave when they want, although there will be a short presentation at 6:30 p.m. The rest of the time is for people to discuss with and ask questions of the Corps related to the proposed project."

Representatives from the irrigators, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Oregon Water Resources/Watermaster, Morrow County Parks, and the Dept. of Agriculture also plan to be on hand, Sowell added.

Two file for county commissioner position

By David Sykes

So far two people have filed to run for the upcoming county commissioner election. John Wenholz of Irrigon is the incumbent, and Leann Rea of Boardman will be challenging him.

John Wenholz

Wenholz, 65, has served on the court since 1996. He has lived in Morrow County since 1973. Wenholz attended high school in Portland, attended Portland State University and served in the army where he received and honorable discharge. He has worked as an iron worker and owned a trucking company, and currently owns Irrigon Motors, a truck sales company, which he started in 1993.

Some of his public service includes eight years on the Morrow County school advisory board, was 1999 Irrigon man of the year, 1997 grand marshal of the Irrigon Watermelon festival, 2000 dealer of the year, is on the board of directors of CAPECO and on the board for the Oregon Consortium Workforce Alliance. Wenholz has been married since 1967 to his wife Jeanette. They have two children and four grandchildren.

Wenholz says one of the big challenges facing the county in the future is the closing out of the Umatilla chemical disposal operation, as well as maintaining county services. "We need to find funding to keep up services, maintain our county road system and take care of the sheriff department and public safety. I've always appreciated the opportunity to serve the people of the county. And I'm committed to representing Morrow County to the best of my ability."

Leann Rea

Leann Rea lives in Boardman and has filed for the position of county commissioner. Rea, 66, has her roots in Morrow County. She is the daughter of Darrell (deceased) and Alvina (Casebeer) Padberg of Ione. She has one brother, Marvin Padberg of Ione, and is the granddaughter of the late Lee and Lana (Wood) Padberg of Ione, and the great-granddaughter of the late Henry and Martha (Riggs) Padberg of Ione. Her grandparents on the Casebeer side were

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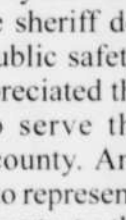
ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

At the MCGG GREEN FEED STORE in Heppner:
Lilly Miller
Ultra Green Fall & Winter Lawn Food
20 lb. bag Reg. $10.99 SALE $8.99



Morrow County Grain Growers Green Feed & Seed
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