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of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

Heppner
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For Obituaries: Obituaries are published in the Heppner GT at no charge and are edited to meet news guidelines. Families wishing to include information not included in the guidelines or who wish to have the obituary written in a certain way must purchase advertising space for the obituary.
For Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor MUST be signed by the author. The Heppner GT will not publish unsigned letters. All letters MUST include the author's address and phone number for use by the GT office. The GT reserves the right to edit letters. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10.

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Obituaries

Francis Byron Nickerson

Francis Byron Nickerson, D. Ed., 91, died Thursday, February 21, 2008, of complications following a stroke.



Francis Byron Nickerson

He was born in Suisun City, CA in 1916, spent his school years in Heppner and graduated from the University of Oregon in 1939.

A decorated veteran of World War II, he participated in behind-the-lines reconnaissance as a U.S. Army Ranger in New Guinea and the liberation of the Philippine Islands from the Japanese.

In 1943 he married Peggy Bauman of Chicago, IL. In 1996, following his first wife's death, he moved from Kerrville, TX to Phoenix, AZ where he married Peggy Jane Peebler Decker of Scottsdale, AZ.

He worked in higher education administration for

the state systems of higher education in Oregon and South Dakota, as well as for the Universities of Oregon and South Dakota. He was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1976 in South Dakota where he provided volunteer services to mission churches of the Lakota Sioux. He was an Eagle Scout and served the Boy Scouts for over 50 years, earning the Silver Beaver.

He is survived by: his wife, Peggy Jane; daughters Lisa Nickerson of Washington, DC and Alice Pickel of Phoenix, AZ; sons Eric Nickerson of Fallston, MD and Patrick Nickerson of Eugene; stepsons David and Ted Decker of Phoenix, AZ; 10 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Funeral services will be held at Christ Church of the Ascension, 4015 E. Lincoln Drive in Phoenix, AZ on Thursday, February 28, at 1 p.m. followed by a reception in the parish hall.

The family is deeply grateful to the Pueblo Norte Hospice of Arizona and suggests donations in lieu of flowers be sent to Hospice of Arizona, 2222 W. Northern Ave., Suite A-100, Phoenix, AZ, 85201.

Heppner Garden Club to meet March 3

Heppner Garden Club will meet Monday, March 3, at St. Patrick's Senior Center at 7 p.m.

Kay Proctor will be sharing a video of Garden of Europe. She was able to visit nine countries including Ireland, Italy and France and has many interesting stories to share along with the pictures.

Proctor is a Heppner Garden Club member, former nursery owner, OSU Master Gardener and a member of the City of Heppner Parks Committee.

Hostesses for this meeting are Ida Ferra and Bebe Munkers.

Heppner Garden Club works to beautify the city of Heppner. Meetings are usually held on the first Monday of the month and are open to the public.

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~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10.

Consider carefully who will distribute tippage money

Letter to the Editor:

The Morrow County Livestock Growers Association would like to appeal to all residents of Morrow County to consider carefully who will distribute Finley Buttes tippage money most fairly.

On one hand you have the County, whose officials everyone voted into office, whether they lived in town or in the country. On the other hand are the 5 cities of Morrow County, who are not a party to the contract between Morrow County and Finley Buttes Landfill, and who represent their particular cities only.

At a December 4th meeting last year, the cities admitted that there is nothing that entitles them to these funds.

Each city may have an agenda, but it isn't likely that would include spending a dime outside the cities, and as former commissioner Ray Grace put it, there seems to be no legal mechanism in place for any city to fund outside its boundaries.

That said, all of us have valid concerns over future funding for Morrow County Fair, for example, since it serves both town and country. We should be proud that our children have opportunities to show their talents and test their skills at our Fair's diverse exhibits each year. These children, many of whom get valuable training through 4-H and FFA programs will be future community leaders. The list goes on for the services supported directly by tippage fees of \$248,985.00 for 2007 - 2008.

Wildlife Services could disappear if not funded by the county. (Who will you call next time you have a skunk or raccoon roaming your city streets?)

Morrow County Extension is another service for everyone, and the same can be said of the South County Neighborhood Center.

Morrow Soil & Water Conservation is very important to the entire agricultural community. I say agricultural community because that is what we truly are.

Morrow County produces six out of the top seven top Oregon commodities (cattle and calves, grass seed, hay, milk, wheat and potatoes) and that in turn supports our economies. Gross farm and ranch sales in Morrow County were \$249,871,000.00 just one year ago.

Ranches and farms spend large amounts of money in surrounding towns of Morrow County and certainly need to have vital services preserved and funded as they have been in the past.

We feel that the county has done a good job so far handling the tippage fees, so please follow your conscience, let reason prevail and join Morrow County Livestock Growers in a "no" vote March 11th.

Pam Wunderlich, President, Morrow County Livestock Growers and Board of Directors, Morrow County Livestock Growers, Dave Riekkola, Mark Rietmann, Kyle Robinson, Kevin Hughes, Matt Clark, Jean Bennett, Bill Van Schoiack, Hank Howard, Jamie Helfrecht and Marc Orem

Are you willing to take the chance?

Letter to the editor:

As a voter, who lives in the city limits, I strongly believe Morrow County tippage fees would be more beneficial to all of Morrow County residents if left under one leadership of Morrow County instead of five different cities with their own agendas.

If the Tippage Fee referendum passes, the cities in Morrow County could use the money for new sidewalks, street lights, a city hall or whatever they want without regard to anyone outside the city limits. This is a far cry from the services all Morrow County citizens could lose.

Morrow County may be forced to cut many community programs as well as essential services that serve everyone in the county. One such service that could be cut, could very well be, Morrow County Sheriff's Department.

Out of the five communities in Morrow County, Boardman is the only one with a full time police force with Heppner contracting for part time police coverage while Lexington, Ione and Irrigon rely on Morrow County for all their police protection.

Crime is the number one problem our county faces. It costs taxpayers not only money, ruins lives, causes injuries and death and is devastating to all our communities.

What would you rather have a new sidewalk in your city or Morrow County Sheriff's Department protecting your property and life? I am not willing to take the chance, are you? Please vote No on the Morrow County Tippage Fee referendum.

Marcia Kemp
Lexington

Holly Rebekah Lodge to hold monthly card party

Holly Rebekah Lodge of Lexington will hold their monthly card party this Saturday, March 1, at the Lodge Hall in Lexington. The cost is \$5 per person and the public is invited to come and join in on the fun. Play starts at 7 p.m.

Misinformation has been circulated

To the Editor:

Morrow County Judge Terry Tallman is absolutely right, there has been much misinformation circulated about the tippage fee initiative. Most, if not all of it, is coming from past and present members of the County Court.

Misinformation: 40% of Morrow County citizens live in a city, 60% live outside any city, say two former members of the County Court.

Fact: Morrow County's total population as of July 1, 2007 has been certified as 12,335. The combined population of Morrow County cities is 7, 200 or 58.4%. You don't have to believe me, check it out yourself: <http://www.pdx.edu/prc/>

Misinformation: Morrow County has struggled to maintain a cash carryover of \$1 million in its General Fund according to both Judge Tallman and Commissioner Wenholtz.

Fact: Fiscal years 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 have all ended with General Fund balances in excess of \$2 million. Check it out yourself, audited financial statements are on file at the County Courthouse.

Misinformation: Tippage fees have helped support the County Road Fund, say two former commissioners.

Fact: No money has been transferred from the Findley Buttes Landfill License Fee fund to the County Road Fund, at least in the last five years. In fiscal year 2004, \$279,670 was transferred from the License Fee Fund to the General Fund and then \$500,000 was transferred from the General Fund to the Road Fund, perhaps illegally. Refer to the audited financial statements.

Misinformation: The Tippage Fee Fund has steadily declined in year-end carry over, "the cushion," according to one former commissioner.

Fact: At July 1, 2003 the fund balance was \$277,817. On July 1, 2007 it was \$1,026,499. See the audited financial statements referred to above. (Wouldn't any banker like this kind of money management?)

Misinformation: About \$1 million has been "awarded" to community organizations, including cities, since 1998 according to Judge Tallman and Commissioner Wenholtz.

Fact: There's a big difference between "awarded" and initially paid. For example, in 2006-07 \$135,000 was awarded in the Needs and Issues program but only \$81,686 was actually dispersed. It is also true that some '06 - '07 project awards have been carried over and paid out in '07 - '08. As of December 10, that amounted to \$33,950. But the '07 - '08 budget includes no money for those carried over awards. You can verify this through the County Treasurer's office.

Misinformation: The County Court and its budget committee control the use of the tippage fees including the Needs and Issues budget.

Fact: The County Court has assigned a committee the task of determining the Needs and Issues projects to be awarded. Even the County Court will acknowledge this. (Can you name more than one of the six members of this committee?)

Misinformation: The tippage fees "belong" to the county but in context meaning the County Court, according to even the County Council.

Fact: Indeed, the tippage fees do belong to the County, and we, the people, are the County. Tippage fees are our money and we can spend them in any fashion we choose.

This is also true: If you are satisfied with the misinformation you have received and the way the County Court has handled the tippage fees, by all means vote "no" on the initiative. If, on the other hand, you would like better information, more local control, some predictability in the future, a better means of improving the liability of your community, you should vote "yes."

Gayle Eynetich

Take inventory of your belongings

Dear Editor:

We had our Ione shop broken into February 6th and/or 7th. We lost over \$15,000 worth of tools and equipment, from a welder to radiators, wire, cases of oil, and tools we've had for over 30 years. We feel that the more people that know about this incident, the better, and neighbors can be watching out for neighbors.

Please take inventory of all your belongings, whether you have a shop or not. Serial numbers need to be recorded. Check to see if your insurance is updated on purchases. Extra lights and security cameras can help catch thieves.

Please lock your doors, your vehicles, extra tires, even children's bicycles.

Thank you for letting me voice my concern to not only protect ourselves but our neighbors as well.

Mary Haguewood
Haguewood Ranch, Heppner

HES Parent/Teacher Club selling raffle tickets for a Nintendo Wii

The HES Parent/Teacher Club is holding a raffle for a Nintendo Wii. Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5. The winning ticket will be drawn on March 7 during Step-in' Out With the Family. You do not have to be present to win. Tickets are available at the HES office and Hair Expressions.

Divorces

The Morrow County Circuit Court at the M.C. Courthouse in Heppner has released the following report:

-February 20: Andrew Linn Sherman and Donna Marisa Sherman.