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Don't ride ATVs in town, city warns

Ordinance allowing it unclear after citation

By David Sykes

"Hold off until we get the ordinance straightened out," was the word from the Heppner city council Monday night on whether citizens can legally ride ATVs (all terrain vehicles) on city streets.

Most people on the council and in the Sheriff's Department, which handles patrol duties for the city of Heppner, believed it was le-

gal to ride the popular 4X4s around the city, that is until Heppner resident Kenny Stookey and his wife Lorene got a \$242 ticket from the state police. She got the ticket on Church Street.

Stookey came to the council meeting Monday and said they bought the 4X4 three days ago to run around town because he uses their car to drive out of town to work. "I wanted my wife to have something to get around on," he told the council. "You know, go to the post office and such."

He said like most people he thought it was legal until a state police officer informed him otherwise and gave him the ticket. Stookey said he checked the city ordinances and found out the city does in fact have an ordinance that allows ATVs to be driven on city streets.

Most people are familiar with volunteers who plow the snow off the sidewalks and parking lots around town with 4X4s during the winter, and also another volunteer who would tow a trailer behind his ATV around town doing various community service projects.

Further discussion on the city ordinance revealed that to be in effect, signs must be posted around town and at the entrance



City is researching validity of ordinance which allows 4X4s and ATVs to drive on city streets. —Photo by Sandy Matthews

to the city stating the vehicles are allowed. The city has never had these signs posted.

The city attorney will look into the ordinance, but until it is straightened out county sheriff's deputy Randy Rayburn said "You can be cited. Hold off until we get the ordinance straightened out. Ride at your own risk," he warned residents.

In other business at Monday meeting the council denied a permit to keep chickens in town. Budd Richards of 365 SE Gilmore asked to keep five bantam roosters in his yard. Animals are allowed in the city limits of Heppner, but only with a permit. Council members denied the permit saying in part that the chickens would be allowed to run loose in

the yard. Richards said he had talked to his neighbors and found no objections.

Later the council approved a permit to Judy and Kaid Peck of 585 Hager to keep two sheep. The council said the permit would be allowed because they would be for 4H projects.

The council also briefly discussed the future of Willow Street. Willow is the steep street which connects Gilmore and Court Streets. The upcoming State Highway project which will completely re-do Court Street out to the fair grounds, may alter Willow Street. Some ideas include turning Willow into a dead end with a cul-de-sac, or making it even steeper that it is now.

An earlier ODOT public hearing in Heppner —Continued on page Two

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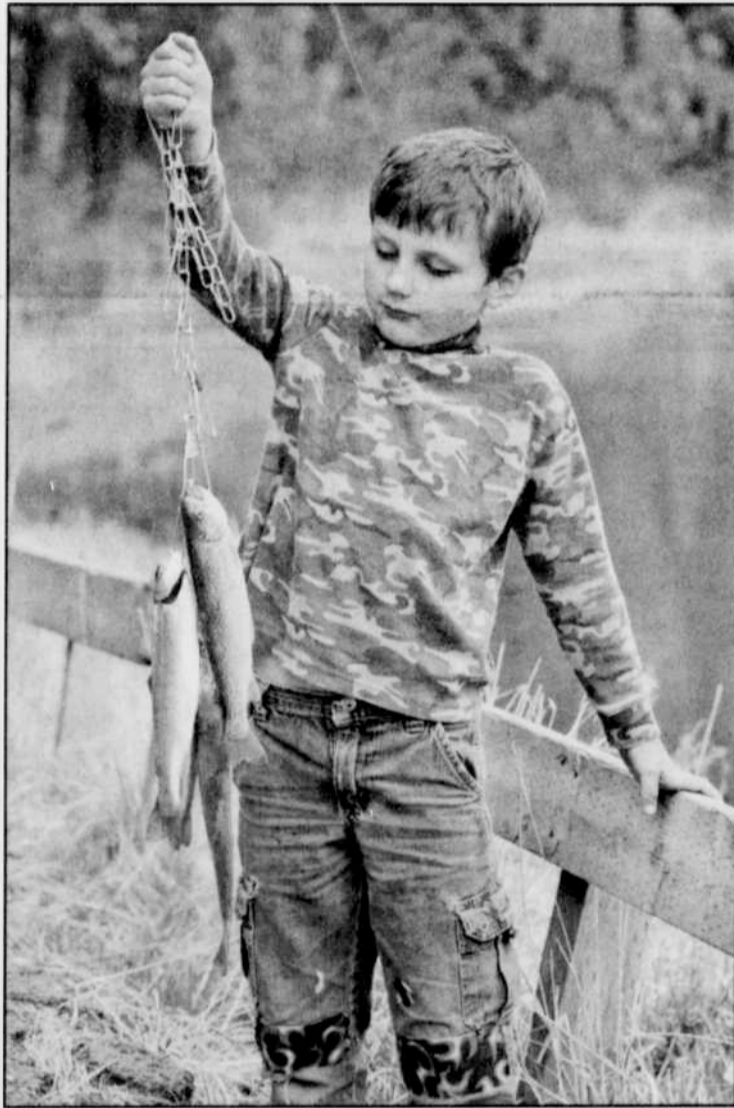
VOL. 127 NO. 20 12 Pages Wednesday, May 14, 2008 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Morrow County Parks holds Fishing Derby

The third annual Fishing Derby was held on Saturday, May 10, at Anson Wright Park Pond. The free Fishing Derby was for children up to 14 years of age.

Oregon Fish and Wildlife Department from John Day stocked the pond. Pettyjohns Builders Supply furnished fishing lures, and Northwest Steel Headers for the John Day Chapter, Wayne Hams, Gary and Nancy Propheter, Roger Mortimore and Doug Ferguson from Ferguson Engineering in Mt. Vernon furnished assistance with fishing poles, bait and valuable time. The Heppner Elks along with Morrow County Parks prepared lunch for everyone. Betty Gray organized and scheduled the event.

The goal of the day was to provide a fun day of fishing for kids, and encourage their interest in the sport of fishing. Mark your calendar for May, 2009 for the fourth annual Fishing Derby.



Logan Angell shows off the fish he caught at the third annual Fishing Derby on Saturday. —Contributed Photo

School board cuts back north end elementary music/PE; state ups graduation requirements

By April Sykes

Boardman music teacher Wendy Appleton and Morrow County Education Association representative Marilyn Post spoke out in a regular school board meeting in Irrigon Monday night against recent cuts in music and PE classes in north end elementary schools. The cuts were made by the board in the wake of news of no-growth in the district's student population.

Previously north Morrow elementary schools each had a full-time music teacher and a full-time PE teacher. After the reduction, A.C. Houghton Elementary in Irrigon and Irrigon Elementary School will share a music teacher and a PE teacher and Windy

River Elementary School in Boardman and Boardman Elementary will share a music and PE teacher. Heppner Elementary School was not affected by the recent cuts as that school already had only a half-time music and PE teacher.

Appleton spoke of the far-reaching detrimental effects the reduction would have to the students and urged the board to reconsider.

"We agonized over this decision," said MCS D Board member Bill Kuhn, who added that if the board had not cut the positions now, "We would be facing many more staff cuts and the end of two years. I hope you understand that it wasn't an easy decision for us." He

also said if the district could find the money they hope to restore the positions.

MCS D Superintendent Mark Burrows said that three teachers were affected, but one has already been hired back and he hopes that the district will be able to rehire the others to fill other vacated positions.

Also at the meeting, Riverside High School Principal Dirk Dirksen and Heppner High School Principal Daye Stone outlined changes in state graduation requirements, some of which will be mandated by the state as early as 2010.

Currently MCS D requires 24 credits for graduation, including nine electives, while the state —Continued on page Two

Corps approves request for irrigation water from lake

By David Sykes

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has announced it approved the long-term withdrawal of irrigation water from Willow Creek Reservoir, opening the door for annual withdrawals of 2,500 acre feet for use in irrigation downstream.

The Corps had been considering the irrigator's request for some time and because of heightened public interest had even held a public hearing on the proposal in Heppner.

Some people were concerned the draw down would harm recreation uses at the lake, while irrigators said the water would add

economic benefit to the area with increased crop productions.

"Irrigators in the Heppner area presented the proposal to the Corps, asking the agency to provide up to 2,500 acre-feet of stored water from Willow Creek Reservoir each year, instead of having to make annual requests based on drought declarations. The irrigation proposal was based on the irrigators' need for a reliable, supplemental water source throughout the growing season, which would help provide farm-based economic stability, and allow for the conservation of groundwater," according to a news release from the

Corps.

In a separate document the Corps said of lake recreation: "Water-based recreation would be affected as the earlier, lower drawdown would reduce the lake area available for recreational boating use. However, the use of the boat ramp should not be affected because it was designed to be usable to minimum pool. In addition to the decreased surface area, the drawdown would expose muddy slopes and banks that are aesthetically unappealing and restrict access to the shoreline of the lake. Some economic losses in the local area may occur because of the reduction in —Continued on page Two

Two arrested on theft and trespass charges

On Friday morning, May 9, at 7:05 a.m. Oregon State Police officer Brian Jewett stopped a vehicle pulling a trailer on Highway 74 for several traffic violations. The driver was identified as CJ Kestler, 26, of Irrigon and the passenger was identified as Jasen Holz, 26, of Irrigon.

The officer asked the vehicle occupants to explain the large trailer and fuel tanks

that were being hauled. The driver stated that his step-

father had bought the tanks from the Nickel Ads and the trailer had been borrowed without permission from a nearby farm. After running the subject's names, Officer Jewett was notified that both subjects had outstanding warrants.

Both subjects were taken into custody and lodged on the warrants and

theft and trespass charges.

It was later determined that the fuel tanks and trailer belonged to Bob Warden and they were allegedly stolen off his property at Barlow Canyon Road. Sgt. Rayburn of Morrow County and the Morrow County dispatch assisted with the arrests.

Reports of similar thefts have been made throughout the county.

Don't forget to turn in your ballot

Ballots are due at the Morrow County Courthouse by 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20. Ballots can be dropped off at the following locations:

New Boardman City Hall, 200 City Center Circle; Irrigon Annex, 205 NE 3rd Street; Bank of Eastern Oregon, 280 West Main Street in Ione; Morrow County Road Office, 365 West Highway 74 in Lexington; and the Morrow County Courthouse, 100 S. Court Street in Heppner.

On election day, drop boxes at these locations will be open until 8 p.m. Ballots must be dropped off at the Post Office in a timely manner so that they reach the courthouse by May 20. Postmarks do not count.

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