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Davis begins work as deputy district attorney

By Autumn Morgan

There is a new face in the Morrow County District Attorney's Office. Kelsie Davis began working with District Attorney Elizabeth Ballard as the deputy district attorney on December 2.

Before joining the Morrow County District Attorney's Office Davis worked at a prosecutor's office in Washington. She recently passed the bar exam this summer and this is her first time working as a fully licensed attorney. "I feel very lucky to be in this position," said Davis.

Born and raised in Portland, Davis is the first in her family to receive a law degree. She received her undergraduate degree at the University of Washington in Seattle and her law degree from Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA.

Davis has always wanted to be an attorney. "I was one of those kids who knew what they always wanted to do," said Davis. "I knew I wanted to be an attorney in the fourth grade."

Kelsie Davis

Davis' parents and sister still live in Portland. "They are proud that I'm doing something with my degree to help people," said Davis. "Being a D.A. has given me that opportunity."

As the deputy district attorney Davis not only has her own case load, but also works as a team with District Attorney Ballard on some cases. Her work begins when she receives an arrest report. Then the decision is made on what charges should be filed and how to proceed with the case. These procedures can include many court appearances. Her responsibilities begin from the time someone is arrested to the final outcome of the case is announced.

"I'm excited to be in Morrow County," said Davis. "Everyone has been extremely welcoming."

Robinson not returning after 19 years on Heppner City Council

By Autumn Morgan

After serving 19 years on the Heppner City Council, Kay Robinson decided not to run again for the office to which she had devoted so many years to public service.

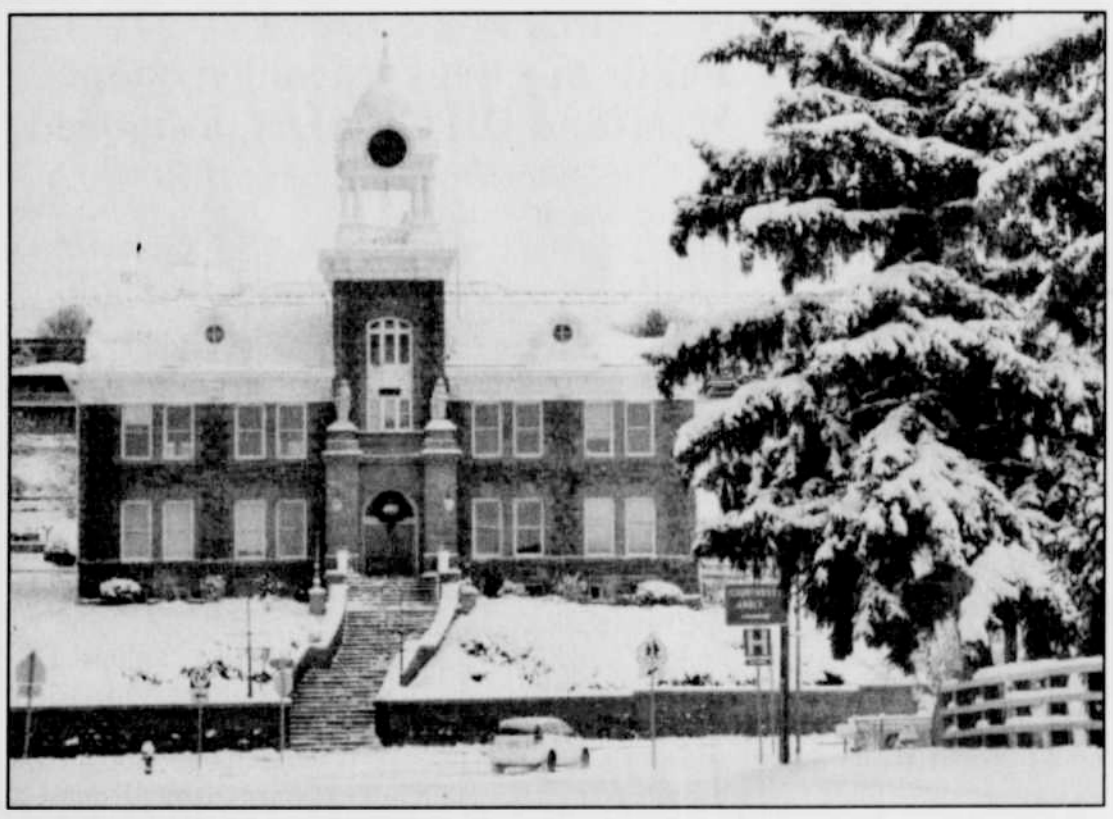
Robinson said she originally decided to run because of the way the council and "the whole thing" was being handled. She and a friend decided they could do just as well. So Robinson ran for the office of councilor and won. She was elected to the Heppner City Council in 1988 and began service in 1989.

"I continued serving because I liked it," said Robinson. "It was interesting and I enjoyed every minute of it."

Robinson also served as mayor of Heppner for a period of time. She served from August 13, 1991, to January 10, 1993. "I enjoyed being there, knowing what was going on, and trying to make things better," said Robinson. The most satisfying accomplishment during her career was when she got the fire trucks for the fire department during the time that she was mayor.

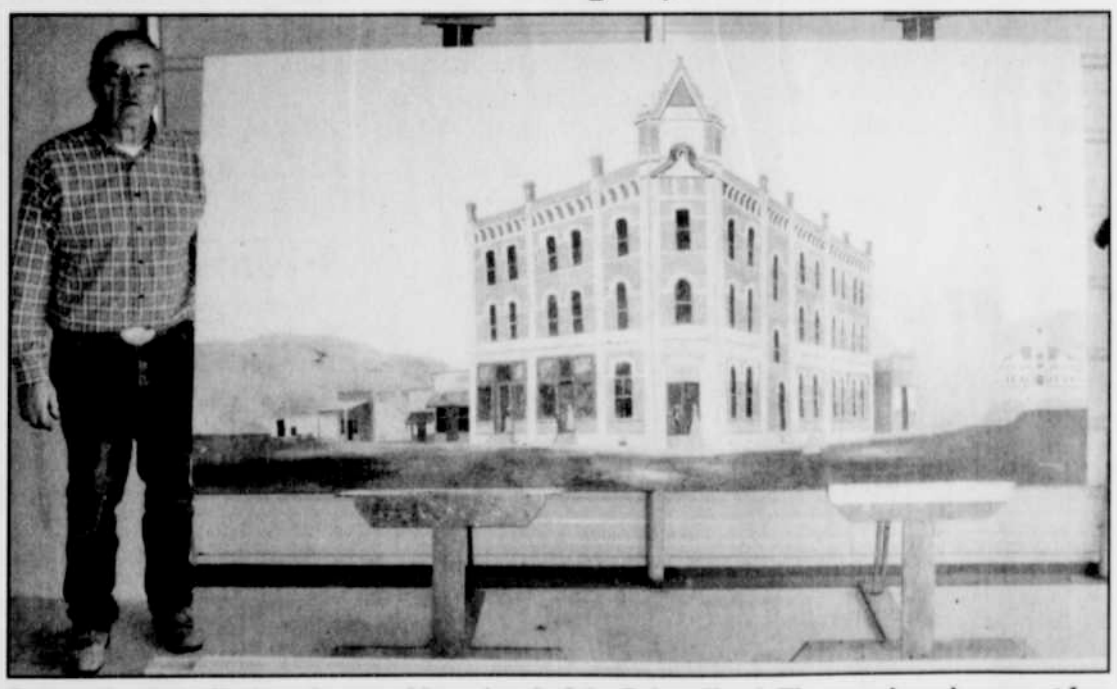
"I have enjoyed working with everyone," said Robinson. Her official last day will be on January 12 at the city council meeting where Samarra Van Doorn will be sworn in as her replacement.

A winter wonderland



Heppner was transformed into a winter wonderland over the weekend with the town's first snowfall of the season. According to the National Weather Service in Pendleton, Heppner has received approximately eight inches of snow so far. *-Photo by Teresa Crawford*

Mural of former hotel displayed at Les Schwab



Robert Harrison displays the mural he painted of the Palace Hotel. The mural can be seen at Les Schwab Tire Center. *-Contributed Photo*

A magnificent three story building, one of the finest in the Inland Empire, was erected in Heppner at the corner of May and Main Streets in 1890. Known as the Palace Hotel, it was built to accommodate the increasing number of travelers to Heppner that the train was bringing in.

The Palace Hotel served the public continuously, even surviving the Flood of 1903, until it was destroyed in the Fire of July 4, 1918.

A mural of the Palace Hotel is now displayed at the same location, the corner of May and Main, where the hotel once stood. The mural is a gift from the artist, Robert Harrison, who admired old pictures of the Palace and decided he wanted to paint it and preserve a little piece of history. He completed the painting and donated it to the Morrow County Museum.

Les Schwab has allowed the sepia-toned mural to be placed on the outside of their business so all passersby can see a little bit of history.

Court Street reconstruction project goes to bid next month

By David Sykes

Bids on the major Court Street reconstruction project will most likely be let out in January, representative of ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) told the Heppner City Council recently.

Three representatives from ODOT were at the December 8 council meeting to give an overview on the project which will see Court Street completely redone and straightened from the courthouse to the fairgrounds.

Bids on the $2.8 million project will be let out on January 2, 2009, with construction to start in March and the project wrapped up by October, said Tim Rynearson with the LaGrande ODOT office.

"The road is just worn out," Rynearson said. He told the council the new road would be built out of concrete and should have a life of 40 years. He also said that ODOT would do the best it could to not disrupt the residents along Court Street.

He said there would be new sidewalk from the courthouse out to the fairgrounds, and that quite a few retaining walls would have to be built.

The sharp corner near where Stansbury Street joins Court Street will be straightened significantly with a 10-foot retaining wall required there. The center line of the new street will be where the edge of the cliff is now, Rynearson said. He said there would be nine retaining walls total, ranging from three feet high to 10 ft.

The road will be widened by three to five feet, curbs and gutters would be installed and there would be parking on the west side of Court Street. The bridge near the court house will also be rehabilitated as part of the project with the old asphalt removed and replaced.

This major curve at Court St. and Stansbury by the grade school will be substantially straightened out upon the completion of the ODOT rehabilitation project in Heppner. *-Photo by David Sykes*

During construction there will be one-way traffic on Court Street and at times residents will not be able to use their driveways. There will also be disruption of water and sewer services. Heppner Mayor Les Paustian said arrangements have been made with the grade school to provide some parking. There also will be no construction during the St. Patrick's Day Celebration or Fair & Rodeo. "It's going to be quite an improvement to our city," Paustian added.

"It's going to be a crazy summer, we will be tearing up your city," said Craig Sipp of ODOT, but he said they would all do their best to keep the impact on the people of Heppner to a minimum. "I urge you to contact us if you have problems," Sipp added.

"When we get done you are going to very pleased with the finished product," Sipp told the council, "especially with the concrete work.

In other business at the meeting, the council heard from Dick Sargent who said he had read about the city curfew law published in the paper and that members of his church were concerned about possible youth problems in town. "Maybe we have a need to initiate a public watch program," he told the council. City Council Member John Bowles, who is also a Morrow County Sheriff's Deputy, said the Neighborhood Watch is separate from law enforcement, but he would be glad to meet with people about setting up a watch. "We are concerned and we would be glad to get together," Sargent said.

In other business it was announced that the city received $66,000 in tippage money for various project and equipment, from the recently concluded Needs and Issues meeting.

Public Works Director Brian Harmon said he has been meeting with members of the Willow Creek Golf Course, and that they are working through their problems with irrigation. "I have met with Dale Holland and I am looking forward to the next irrigation season," Harmon told the council. Previously there had been some disagreement between the golf course and the city about how much and how

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