

The Official Newspaper
of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
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Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper
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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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City workers not able to access water meters

The City of Heppner currently cannot access the water meters that are buried under the snow. The city will use customers' November water bills as an estimate for the December bill (they will be identical).

When city workers can access the water meters again adjustments will be to customers' accounts based on the actual usage.

Chamber of Commerce Annual Luncheon to be held

The Chamber of Commerce Annual Luncheon will be held on Thursday, January 8, in the Parish Hall at the All Saints Episcopal Church beginning at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will cost \$12.

Please call the chamber office at 676-5536 to RSVP.

December students of the month selected



Heppner Junior/Senior High School December students of the month have been chosen. Students selected are: left to right-11th grade-Curtis Harper; ninth grade-Trent Cannon; eighth grade-Kyle Harrison; 12th grade-Maggie Armato; 10th grade-Lindsey Cutsforth, and seventh grade-Micha Hintz. December's character trait was compassion. All of these students were nominated by their teachers at HHS. -Contributed Photo

Robert Burns Day to be held in Condon

Robert Burns Day, a celebration of Condon's Scottish heritage, will be held on Saturday, January 24, beginning at 2 p.m. at the Condon Elks Lodge.

The event will feature Scottish bagpipes and drums with musicians from across the Northwest; dancing; readings and recitations of works by Scotland's "National Poet" Robert Burns; and a Scottish dinner of haggis, neeps, and tatties. The cost is \$17.50 each or two for \$30.00.

This event is supported by the Gilliam County Cultural Coalition. For more information, contact 541-384-2421.

BMCC honor roll released

Blue Mountain Community College has announced that Josie Miller has earned honor roll status with a 3.9 GPA.

Students may attain honors status each term by qualifying for the honor roll, dean's list or president's list.

Fossil Beds closure announced

The Thomas Condon Visitor Center will be closed on New Year's Day, January 1.

The center is open seven days a week during the week during the winter months from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information call 541-987-2333.

M.C. Health District to go tobacco-free

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months. "We believe the policy is good for patients, employees and the community, protecting people from secondhand smoke exposure and helping those who want to quit using tobacco," said Victor Vander Does, Morrow County Health District administrator. "As an institution dedicated to serving the health needs of our community, implementing a tobacco-free policy is a logical step and smart business decision."

While evaluation the idea of adopting a tobacco-free policy, the Morrow county Health District determined that it would not only help create a healthier environment for staff patients, but it would also help significantly reduce business costs associated with health care and lost productivity.

The smallest hospital in Oregon, Pioneer Memorial, joins several other hospitals and health systems in the state in going tobacco-free, including Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU). Now both the largest and smallest hospitals in the state are tobacco-free.

Shelley Wight, public health educator for Morrow County's Health Department, worked closely with

DA's Report

Morrow County District Attorney Elizabeth Ballard has released the following report:

-Ryan Duwayne Payne, 29, was convicted of Criminal Mischief in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor, and was sentenced to 180 days in jail with 150 days suspended, 24 months bench probation, complete 40 hours of community service, other numerous conditions, and pay \$613 in fines, fees and assessments.

Heritage Commission names new member

The Oregon Heritage Commission gained a new member when Governor Ted Kulongoski announced that he has appointed Carol Michael of Boardman to the board.

Active in Morrow County community organizations such as the Morrow County Historical Society and the Morrow County Cultural Coalition for the past 15 years, the new com-

missioner will serve a four-year term ending in June 2012. She replaces Forrest Rodgers of Bend on the commission.

Commissioner Michael was a co-recipient of 2007 Oregon Heritage Excellence Award for producing a DVD titled, "Higher Ground," about the move of Boardman necessitated by the construction of John Day Dam.

According to the 2007 Morrow County Fact Sheet in the Oregon Tobacco Prevention and Education Program, of the approximately 12,000 people living in Morrow County, about 25 people die every year from tobacco use and 489 people suffer serious illness caused by it. Additionally, the County spends more than \$3.7 million in medical care for tobacco-related illnesses and over \$3.8 million is lost as a result of decreased productivity due to tobacco-related deaths.

Desert Rats Classic Car Club shares the Christmas spirit

The Desert Rats Classic Car Club shared their Christmas spirit by donating to the Boardman community this holiday season.

Club President, George Price presented \$150.00 checks to Banner Bank for their Giving Tree, the Bank of Eastern Oregon for the DHS Backpack Program, and the Columbia River Harvesters food bank. Club members voted unanimously to distribute the funds to these worthy causes as a way of supporting the community during these trying times.

Heppner players named to 2A All State Football team

Heppner High School football players were recently named to the 2A All State Football team.

Offensive Line: Mark McCabe (Second Team) and Wacy Coil and Ian Murray (Honorable Mentions).
Running Back: Brent Eckman (Honorable Mention).

Defensive Line: Sam King (Second Team) and Mark McCabe (Honorable Mention).

Linebacker: Wacy Coil (Second Team).
Defensive Back: Bryan Holland (First Team) and Jordan Hatfield (Second Team).

Marriages

Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers has released the following report of marriage licenses issued:

-December 12: Craig Allan Rea, 46, Ione, and Adena Lynn Johnson, 46, Ione.

-December 17: Shane David Matheny, 27, Lexington, and Sarah Jean Eckman, 25, Heppner.

City of Ione announces Holiday Lighting winners

The City of Ione held their Holiday Lighting contest again this year. The contest was sponsored by Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative.

The winners are: Kermit and Sharon Kennedy (Best Use of Lighting); Susan and Andre Kendrick (Most Original Set); Mike and Toby Garrett (Mini and Bright); Bob and Clair Oliver (Spirit of Christmas); Joel Barnett (Best Decorated Entryway); and Dustin and Karen Padberg (Judges Favorite).

Town and Country Community Awards tickets on sale Friday

Tickets for the 2009 Town and Country Community Awards will be available for purchase beginning on Friday, January 2. They can be purchased at the Bank of Eastern Oregon, Heppner Chamber of Commerce, Heppner TV and Murray Drugs. The Town and Country Awards will be held on Thursday, January 15, at the Morrow County Fairgrounds.

The cost will be \$20 per person. The theme will be "Appreciate, Celebrate and Support the Community You Live In."

Swanson retires from Wheatland Insurance in Ione



Kids make a dash for the cereal drawer that Jim Swanson keeps on hand at Wheatland Insurance. -Contributed Photo

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Swanson says that ground in farming, Swanson has said that he would like to do some crop insurance adjusting beginning in May. He has been part of the Oregon Wheat Grower's League and has been advisor to some of the national crop insurance boards and has also been on the state board for 13-15 years. He has also had a hand in developing some of the programs that are available to farmers today.

Swanson says that he would also like to pursue some substitute teaching.

Jim's wife Monica also worked in the insurance business until Jim joined forces with Wheatland. She is currently working at the Pioneer Memorial Health Clinic. Their son Luke and his wife Tyan live in West Lynn. Their daughter Adrienne runs Ooh La La Salon in Pendleton.

The Swansons plan on staying in Ione.

Holly Rebekah Lodge to resume card parties

The Holly Rebekah Lodge will resume card parties starting this Saturday, January 3, at 7 p.m. at the Lodge Hall in Lexington. The cost is \$5 per person for an evening of snacks, fun and visiting with old and new friends. This event is open to the public.

Youth basketball tournament to be held this weekend

Heppner High School boys' basketball team will be hosting a youth basketball tournament for fourth through sixth grade boys on Saturday and Sunday, January 3 and 4.

Teams from Pendleton, Hermiston, Pilot Rock, Irrigon and Heppner will be participating. Games will be played from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Saturday. Games will also be played on Sunday. Entry fees will be \$2 per person and a concession stand will be available.

Wheatland Insurance will be sponsoring the awards.

USDA enacts changes to programs

With the publication of an interim final regulation in the Federal Register next week, the United States Department of Agriculture announced changes to Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) qualifications, program payment limitations, and direct attribution for Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, which became effective in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill.

Public comments on this interim final rule must be submitted to the department within 30 days of the date of publication.

"Changes to program participation rules and qualifying income requirements will make farm program payments more defensible to America's taxpayers," Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer said. "This is a step in the right direction to ensuring that program benefits are targeted to active qualifying farmers and ranchers."