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HEPPNER Gazette Times
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Annual Town and Country Community Award winners recognized

The annual Town and Country Community Awards were held this past Thursday, January 15. Local citizens were honored with the awards of Business of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Citizen-Educator of the Year, and Youth Recognition.

The Business of the Year award was a family affair this year. Victorian Rose, owned by mother Marti Luther, and Sweet Productions Ice Cream Parlour, owned by daughter Jodi Chapa, were the joint recipients of the yearly award.

Marti Luther

Jodi Chapa

Kay Robinson

Dale Bates

Molly Rhea

Mary Haguewood

Maggie Armato

Gary Wight

Luther moved to Heppner from Corvallis where she opened the Victorian Rose, a gift shop on Main Street.

Housed in the same building as her mother is Chapa's business. Sweet Productions is an ice cream shop that not only serves sweet desserts, but a variety of meals.

Former Heppner City Councilor Kay Robinson was the recipient of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award for Community Service.

Robinson diligently served for 19 years as a Heppner City Councilor. She also served for approximately two years as city mayor. One of Robinson's major accomplishments while in office was obtaining equipment and fire trucks for the Heppner Fire Department.

This year's man of the year is only a phone call away. Dale Bates always seems to be available for help with community events.

From high school dances to the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo, Bates makes sure all the sound systems are working properly. He plans his schedule around community events as to always be available if needed.

Bates works locally for CenturyTel.

Molly Rhea was named Heppner's Woman of the Year.

Raised in Heppner, Rhea returned home after graduating nursing school. She worked as a floor nurse for many years before taking a job with Tri-County Home Health Agency. She is currently the director of nursing for Home Health and Hospice in Heppner.

Rhea can be seen cheering in the stands at most Heppner sports events. She also serves as the secretary of the Heppner Lions Club, the Leprechaun during St. Patrick's Day Celebration, helps the firemen with their breakfast during St. Patrick's, and serves on the Pastor Parish Committee at her church.

Mary Haguewood was named the Citizen-Educator of the Year. Her entire teaching career has been with the Morrow County School District.

She began her work as a teacher in 1979 at A.C. Houghton Elementary where she worked for one year. She also worked for one year at Sam Boardman Elementary. The rest of her teaching career has been spent at Heppner Elementary School. She is currently the Title 1 teacher and the half-time second grade teacher.

Haguewood takes the time each year to make sure eye screenings are given each fall for students at HES.

The Heppner Chamber Youth of the Year Award was presented this year to Maggie Armato.

Armato is the number one ranked student in her class with a 4.0 GPA. She has been named student of the year in science, math, language arts, Spanish, and social studies. She is a nine year member and 4-H Club president as well as a Jr. 4-H leader and ambassador since 2005. She is the current HHS Civics Club Treasurer, two year member of National Honor Society, and Associated Student Body Treasurer. She has been a six year volunteer of the St. Patrick's fundraiser carnival and a Vacation Bible School teacher's aide for four years.

She has also played both volleyball and golf at Heppner High School. She has also assisted with the Junior Golf and Colt Volleyball programs.

This year a special award was given Gary Wight for his work during the winter seasons in Heppner. Wight works to clear the downtown sidewalks of snow.

Basketball Buddies show their support

If you come to an Ione basketball game you might notice some young enthusiasts in the stands with amazing t-shirts. Ione's K-3 students were paired with a basketball player to cheer on their new buddy. The Cardinal Booster Club purchased t-shirts and the "Basketball Buddies" created an original shirt for their elementary partner to wear to the games. *–Contributed Photo*

Community Bank announces plans to open Heppner Branch

Community Bank has purchased a building in Heppner with the intent on opening a full service branch in the location during the second quarter of 2009. An official grand opening date will be announced at a later time.

The building is located at 127 North Main Street in Heppner - the former home to Farmer's Insurance. Renovations are already underway on the building.

Community Bank President and CEO Tom Moran said in a statement that "we're best at banking smaller agricultural communities just like Heppner. We feel that the residents of Morrow County deserve choice, and that we can provide an alternative to customers looking for superior care and service from their bank."

AJ Tarnasky, Community Bank EVP/Chief Credit Officer, who was raised in Heppner, said "It's exciting for us to open a branch in my hometown. Based on my knowledge of both the community and the bank, I think our local approach to financial services will be a perfect match."

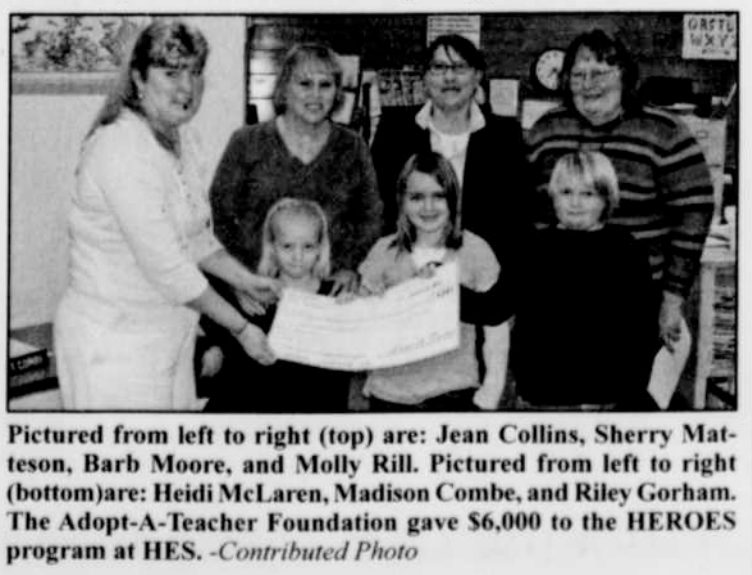
Community Bank will also add 4-5 new jobs to the local economy. The search for a branch manager and support staff will begin shortly. Community Bank AVP and Commercial Loan Officer John Hays, who currently works in Hermiston, will also have an office in Heppner.

Heppner will be Community Bank's 16th full service branch.

Lexington to swear in new officers

A special session for the Lexington Town Council will be held on Tuesday, January 27, at 7 p.m. at Lexington Town Hall. The purpose of this session will be to swear the new town councilors into office and conduct town business.

Adopt-a-Teacher Foundation donates money to HEROES program


Pictured from left to right (top) are: Jean Collins, Sherry Matteson, Barb Moore, and Molly Rill. Pictured from left to right (bottom)are: Heidi McLaren, Madison Combe, and Riley Gorham. The Adopt-A-Teacher Foundation gave $6,000 to the HEROES program at HES. *-Contributed Photo*

Ione coach pleads not guilty

Dennis Dean Stefani, the head football and boys' basketball coach at Ione High School, plead innocent last week to three counts stemming from a domestic dispute on Christmas day in Ione.

Stefani, 46, was arrested in the early morning hours of Dec. 25 at 415 E. Main St, Ione, when his sister reported to police that he "was intoxicated and was being physically violent." He was subsequently arrested and charged with assault IV, harassment, and interfering with a 911 report. He was lodged in the Umatilla County Jail and his bail was set at $17,000. He posted 10 percent and was released.

Last Thursday, January 15, Stefani plead not guilty in Morrow County Circuit Court and his trial was set for March 5 at 8 a.m. He was not represented by an attorney but told the judge he would retain one. The judge told Stefani not to have any contact with the alleged victims, Tina or Tyler Fetterhoff.

Tuesday Ione School Superintendent/Principal Karl Ostheller told the Gazette-Times there was no change in Stefani's employment status with the district as a coach.

Chamber Lunch Meeting scheduled for Thursday

Allen Freuff from OSHA will be the guest speaker for this week's Chamber Lunch Meeting on Thursday, January 22. The meeting will begin at noon at John's Place. The lunch cost will be $9. Those planning to attend are asked to RSVP by Wednesday afternoon so a final head count for lunch can be made.

An update on the Wrestling Invitational that is taking place at Heppner High School on February 7th is on the agenda. There may be opportunities for businesses to get involved so come and find out more.

Other upcoming events include:

Jan. 29 – Allicia Aquilar from the Oregon Employment Department will talk about some of the job openings that are available and give an update on Worksource Oregon.

Feb. 5 – All Entities Meeting

Feb. 12 – Shelley Wight, Public Health Educator from Morrow County Health Department will speak on "Smoke Free Oregon."

Feb. 19 – This meeting will be hosted by Willow Creek Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) who will be having their annual meeting. This meeting will be held at the Senior Center, beginning at 11:30 a.m.

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

AT MCGG GREEN FEED & SEED IN HEPPNER:
WINTER CARE LAWN FOOD
50 lb. bag Regularly $19.00
On Sale $13.50
Morrow County Grain Growers Green Feed & Seed
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