

# Wranglers Riding Club hold playday

The Wranglers Riding Club held their first playday on Sunday, April 11. The results are as follows:

### Stickhorse Race

1<sup>st</sup> place, Sallie Orem; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Irelynn Kollman; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Hattie Orem.

### Leadline

Barrels: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Evan Kollman; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Saige Jensen; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Irelynn Kollman; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Hattie Orem. Also participating were Gracie Orem and Sallie Orem.

Poles: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Evan Kollman; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Irelynn Kollman; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Hattie Orem; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Saige Jensen. Also participating were Gracie Orem and Sallie Orem.

Put-n-take: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Irelynn Kollman; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Sallie Orem; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Gracie Orem; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Hattie Orem. Also participating were Evan Kollman and Saige Jensen.

### 7 & Under

Barrels: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Brian Lindsay and 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Blane Mahoney.

Poles: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Blane Mahoney and 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Brian Lindsay.

Put-n-take: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Blane Mahoney and 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Brian Lindsay.

### 8-10 year olds

Barrels: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Jaiden Mahoney; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Alex Lindsay; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Coby Dougherty; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Jacee Currin. Also participating were Carson Brosnan.

4<sup>th</sup> place, Jacee Currin. Also participating were Carson Brosnan.

Poles: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Jaiden Mahoney; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Coby Dougherty; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Jacee Currin; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Alex Lindsay. Also participating was Carson Brosnan.

Put-n-take: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Alex Lindsay; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Coby Dougherty; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Jacee Currin; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Jaiden Mahoney. Also participating was Carson Brosnan.

### 11-14 year olds

Barrels: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Kolby Currin; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Rylee Kollman; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Kaelyn Lindsay; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Erin Monagle.

Poles: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Kolby Currin; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Rylee Kollman; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Erin Monagle. Also participating was Kaelyn Lindsay.

Put-n-take: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Rylee Kollman; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Kolby Currin; 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Erin Monagle; and 4<sup>th</sup> place, Kaelyn Lindsay.

### 15-17 year olds

Barrels: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Jessica Hughes; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Taighler Dougherty; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Hannah Jones.

Poles: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Taighler Dougherty; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Jessica Hughes; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Hannah Jones.

Put-n-take: 1<sup>st</sup> place, Taighler Dougherty; 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Hannah Jones; and 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Jessica Hughes.

# UMESD Board discusses options following merger hiccup

Yet. We're not done yet.

That was the message the Umatilla-Morrow Education Service District Board of Directors conveyed during its special meeting Wednesday night after finding out Malheur ESD decided to pull out of the voluntary merger between the UMESD, Malheur ESD and Union-Baker ESD.

"We still believe a voluntary merger is in the best interest of the students of Eastern Oregon," said UMESD Superintendent Dr. Mark Mulvihill. "We're not done; we're going to shift gears and dig in and get back to work on finding the best and most efficient ways to serve our kids."

Mulvihill also noted that the deterioration of the Union-Baker ESD's financial situation isn't going away, and neither is the Legislature's push for forced ESD mergers. "Moving forward in this manner will allow us to maintain local control and local governance rather than have the Legislature dictate merger configurations," he said.

Last Friday, Malheur ESD's Board rescinded its resolution in support of the merger petition, which was submitted to the State Board of Higher Education in February. MalESD's decision to back out of the deal stemmed from inequities in the state's permanent tax rate system.

The UMESD Board discussed six options in moving forward:

1. Allow the vol-

untary merger process to end and wait to see how things play out in the 2011 Legislative session regarding potential forced ESD mergers.

2. Allow the voluntary merger process to end, but summarize the work that went into the merger and actively lobby key leaders, organizations and legislative members, detailing the quality of the merger process, yet clarifying the reason for the failure - the permanent tax rate issue.

3. Keep the voluntary merger configuration between the three ESDs alive, but on hold indefinitely, pending legislative resolution to the permanent tax rate issue.

4. Explore a voluntary merger process with both Union and Baker counties.

5. Begin the process to merge Union County with the UMESD, while Baker County becomes its own ESD.

6. Explore creative solutions to join Union County with the UMESD, with the dissolution or receivership of the Union-Baker ESD by the Oregon Department of Education.

Mulvihill has recommended the Board consider Option 4 - to explore merging with both Union and Baker counties. He said that, as a whole, this option works out in the best interest of the students in the region, while further establishing the UMESD as a premier service provider in the state. At the same time, this option lends

value to the comprehensive merger process that's taken place over the past eight months and maintains local control.

Mulvihill also noted that if this option was selected, the process to move forward could be compressed to align with the previous merger timeline, with completion by July 1, 2011.

All seven Board members agreed that Option 4 is the best route to take, and that backing off a merger and waiting for the Legislature to make a move isn't an option.

"It's better to be proactive and do this ourselves the right way rather than have the Legislature take over down the line," said Board member Jack Matlock.

Board members stressed the importance of quality service to the students of the region, and that a consolidation with both Union and Baker counties would provide students there with more options than they currently receive.

"I think the kids of Union and Baker could benefit greatly from what we could do for them," said Board member Tom Groat.

Board chairwoman Verneda Wagner agreed. "Our strength is in what we provide our kids," she said.

However, this option doesn't come without its hurdles. Board members want to make sure they have the support of the school districts in the UMESD area

for this new merger. Additionally, if Union and Baker counties were to merge with Umatilla and Morrow counties, the UMESD area would see a tax increase of 5 cents per \$1,000 assessed value due to the permanent tax rate under the Oregon Constitution. However, taxes in Union and Baker counties would decrease. Yet, several board members felt the increase in taxes isn't as important as quality service to kids.

"I don't want to pay anymore taxes, but we have to do what's best for the kids in our area," Matlock said. "This is about providing service."

Mulvihill met with the superintendents of Union and Baker county school districts Wednesday afternoons. He read the Board a letter of support - signed by those superintendents - for exploring the merger Union and Baker counties with the UMESD.

"(Option 4) is the only option that Union-Baker wants to consider," Mulvihill said. Mulvihill noted the importance of informing and including the public and local school districts during these next stages. The UMESD Board and administration will develop a communication plan to involve these stakeholders, as well as to seek feedback throughout the process.

The UMESD Board will make a formal decision to explore the merger further at its next regular board meeting on April 14.

## ~ 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.

### In support of Tom Cutsforth

To the editor:

I am writing in support Thomas W. Cutsforth for Morrow County District Attorney. I worked as Tom's secretary for 15 years (1991-2005) while he served as Wheeler County DA and found him to be an extremely good prosecutor. Tom was diligent in protecting victims and the public. He was fair, honest, and compassionate. He also was responsible with the county funds, managing the budget to get the most good for the most reasonable cost.

Tom was born and raised on a working farm in Morrow County and still owns the family farm there. He joined the military in 1972, serving in the Marine Corps and Navy until 1985. He continued his military service in the naval reserve until 2000, retiring with the rank of commander. After completing his active military service, he returned to school to obtain his law degree from the University of Oregon.

While serving as Wheeler County District Attorney, Tom was also active in professional and civic groups. He was an EMT for over 15 years, served as chairman for the OLCC Alcohol Servers Educational Committee, Chairman of the Morrow/Wheeler Mental Health Board, formed the Gilliam/Wheeler Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Team (CAMI) and continued as chairman of the Wheeler County CAMI team, created the Wheeler County Victims of Crime (VOCA) office and set up the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) system to assist juveniles in the court system in Wheeler County. He served as Wheeler County Counsel and in that capacity assisted the county court in obtaining the land for the Wheeler County Family Services building and the site for Fossil's cell phone tower as well as helping the county obtain ownership of Shelton and Bear Hollow parks. He also served as city attorney for Fossil and Condon.

Tom is well known as a tough, fair prosecutor and has taken the lead in prosecuting cattle theft cases in Wasco and Union county, and is consulted by Oregon State Police and Oregon Attorney General's office in game cases and decoy operations. He has prosecuted two murder cases while serving as Deputy District Attorney in Union County and has completed over 300 jury trials and more than 2,000 cases. He is a 20 year member of the Oregon State Bar Criminal, Family and Juvenile Law sections and is a strong supporter of local justice and county juvenile courts.

Tom Cutsforth would provide Morrow County with an experienced District Attorney who looks out for the public's interest.

Susan Snyder

Condon

### Cutsforth a devoted prosecutor

To the editor:

While working with Tom Cutsforth in Wheeler County I found him to be an experienced and devoted prosecutor, a caring boss, and he remains a good friend to our family.

Kathy Horn

Fossil

### The United States of America needs you now

Letter to the Editor:

On Sunday afternoon the Willow Creek Tea Party Patriots sponsored a candidate forum, 57 folks from our local community attended in addition to the 11 candidates.

I appreciate those who attended and supported the forum with their presence and their participation in presenting 42 questions which they passed forward to the candidates in written form. Moderator Bill Kuhn presented the questions in a very straight forward and precise matter.

The questions ranged from local to state issues like "Are you one of us? to "Are you hearing us?"

The two governor candidates addressed questions ranging from "the Business Energy Tax Credit program to the "tax burdens on small businesses and farms," to "how do we reduce the federal government in Oregon?"

District 57 representative candidate fielded questions, "How is Oregon going to provide adequate education from K through college?" to "Your proposal for improving and restoring Oregon Forest and Timber Industry."

Questions like "Do you think the county judge should be responsible for juvenile justice in Morrow County?" to "How is the money from windmills being spent in the county?"

The district attorney candidates fielded questions like "What and how would you deal with the drug, sex, and domestic abuse cases?" to "What do you see the biggest challenge in the office?"

Questions like "Why is it necessary to have a Justice of the Peace court?" to "Do you feel that our form of government is still being built on people of high moral qualities?"

The lone candidate for county commissioner responded to questions "Due to the fact you are running unopposed, what are the issues and projects you would like to see addressed in Morrow County?"

The 11 candidates (maybe modern day patriots) thought enough of Morrow County voters to travel to Heppner from Albany, Portland, Summerville, Hermiston and Boardman. Following the Q & A segment the candidates joined in for time of "one-on-one face to face exchange" with the audience at the coffee and cookie table.

Where were you? Are you going to continue to let someone else do your thinking for you? How are you going to respond to those who gave their time and lives in the service to their country so you had the freedom to vote intelligently? Do you know or care what's happening to our "Constitution" and the formers of this "Miracle." Maybe you feel your vote doesn't count, but the fact you don't vote with conviction and truth does.

Your country the "United States of America" needs you now!

Dick Sargent

Heppner

### HHS Varsity Track Schedule

April 16 - at Stanfield 11 a.m.  
 April 17 - at Cascade, 11:30 a.m.  
 April 23 - at Umatilla 1 p.m.  
 April 24 - at Hermiston (JV), 10 a.m.  
 April 27 - Heppner/Ione Invitational at home, 4 p.m.  
 April 30 - Mustang Invitational at home, 12 p.m.

### HHS Junior High Track Schedule

April 16 - Heppner/Ione Invitational at home, 1 p.m.  
 April 23 - at Sunridge MS, 2 p.m.  
 April 30 - at Sunridge MS, 2 p.m.

### HHS Varsity Baseball Schedule

April 16 - Irrigon at home (double header), 11 a.m.  
 April 20 - at Pilot Rock, 4:30 p.m.  
 April 24 - at Weston McEwen (double header), 11 a.m.  
 April 27 - Stanfield at home, 4:30 p.m.  
 May 4 - at Irrigon, 4:30 p.m.  
 May 8 - Pilot Rock at home (double header), 11 a.m.

### HHS JV Baseball Schedule

April 15 - at Stanfield, 4:30 p.m.  
 April 19 - Umatilla at home, 4:30 p.m.  
 April 23 - Stanfield at home, 10 a.m.  
 April 26 - Pendleton at home 4:30 p.m.

### HHS Varsity Softball Schedule

April 16 - Irrigon at home, 11 a.m.  
 April 20 - at Pilot Rock, 4:30 p.m.  
 April 24 - at Weston McEwen (double header), 11 a.m.  
 April 27 - Stanfield at home, 4:30 p.m.  
 May 4 - at Irrigon, 4:30 p.m.

### HHS JV Softball Schedule

April 15 - at Riverside (double header), 3:30 p.m.  
 April 22 - Umatilla at home (double header), 4 p.m.  
 April 29 - at McLoughlin (double header), 3:30 p.m.

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