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Merry Christmas

HEPPNER 50¢
Gazette Times

VOL. 129 NO. 50 8 Pages Wednesday, December 22, 2010 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Nominations being taken for 2011 Town and Country awards

Heppner's Town and Country, sponsored by CenturyLink, will be held on Thursday, January 13, and it's time to nominate a community member for "Woman of the Year", "Man of the Year", "Business of the Year", "Citizen-Educator of the Year", "Lifetime Achievement" and "Youth Award". Nomination forms are available at the Chamber Office, Bank of Eastern Oregon, Kuhn & Spicer and Community Bank.

The forms need to be completed and turned into the Chamber Office or to Kuhn & Spicer by Friday, December 24. To receive a nomination form electronically, contact the chamber office and leave your email address or email the chamber at heppnerchamber@centurytel.net.

The theme for this year's event will be "Heppner – A little town, where big hearts abound ... in every direction". The event will be held at the fairgrounds again this year to accommodate more room. Catering will be provided by "Cornerstone Gallery, chef Alvin Liu. The Town & Country meal tickets ($20) can be purchased starting Monday, January 3, 2011 at Heppner Chamber, Bank of Eastern Oregon, Murray's Drugs and Community Bank.

Rules for the selection of Youth of the Year, Woman and Man of the Year, Citizen-Educator of the Year and Lifetime Achievement include:

-Nominations should be submitted by written letter or on application form to Heppner Chamber of Commerce, PO Box 1232, Heppner, OR 97836.

-This is not a popularity contest and only the facts of the nominations should be considered. Criteria for selection shall be: Outstanding volunteer community service over many years; Activity in community affairs in the past year; Activity in more than one phase of community life; Participation in community affairs outside of his or her business, profession or vocation; Demonstration of a high degree of cooperation in community and civic affairs; Leadership in community affairs by inspiration and example; and Contributions to the economic base of our society.

-After all nominations have been read and considered, each member of the selection committee shall list his/her first two choices in order of choice.

-The Chamber Manager or Committee Chairman shall collect lists and tally.

-Recognition plaques shall be ordered and winners notified of honor to be given at Town and Country Banquet or Chamber Banquet if Town and Country is not held that year.

Rules for selection of Business Awards include:

-Community involvement, improvement and investment.

-Involvement of the business in clubs and organizations, especially in the Chamber, although Chamber membership is not a requirement.

-A unique or significant contribution by the business to the employment picture of economy of Morrow County.

-Innovation in the business' employee and customer relations programs.

-Establishment of new business.

A list of former Town and Country winners can be found online at www.heppner.net.

Ione School Board discusses upcoming charter school summit, district enrollment

By April Sykes

The newly-formed InterMountain Education Service District (formerly Umatilla-Morrow ESD) administrator Mark Mulvihill spoke to the Ione School Board concerning an upcoming charter school summit that the ESD is planning.

Mulvihill told the board, at their regular meeting on December 14, that the planned summit will include not only charter schools, but also surrounding school districts, since issues surrounding charter schools affect other districts as well. The Pendleton Convention Center is being considered as a forum for the summit with a suggested February date.

At the meeting Mulvihill, who is also the Ione district's superintendent, and the board discussed enrollment. According to estimates, only three to four kindergarten students are expected to enroll in the Ione School for the 2011-12 school year. Dwindling enrollment also has become a concern for Heppner schools as well. Mulvihill said that an issue concerning exchange students has recently come forth and commented that some districts are staying alive by hosting foreign students. He noted that some educators are now questioning the practice of loading districts with a large number of exchange students to boost student population, consequently increasing state education funds to those districts, especially in a poor economy when state ed funds are in jeopardy of being reduced.

Ione has two foreign exchange students this year, while Heppner High School has around 20.

Also at the meeting, the board discussed solutions to the district's janitorial and maintenance problems. One solution included hiring the Pendleton School District for janitorial services on a limited basis.

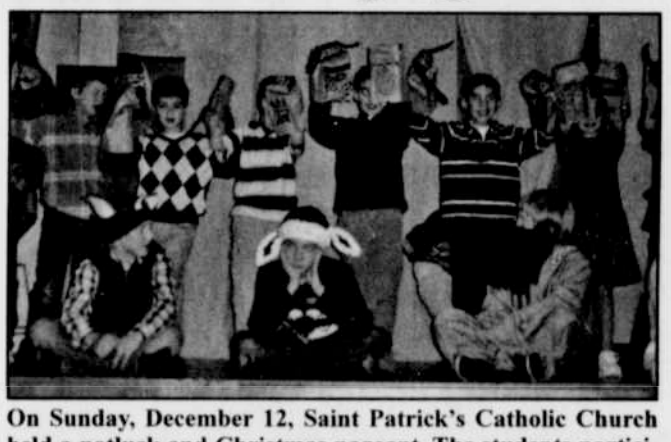
The board also learned from Ione School Principal Jerry Archer that the boiler at the school, which heats the gym, cafeteria, locker rooms and pool, is down. The board is considering replacing the aged boiler with a heating and ventilating system, which could cost in the neighborhood of $200,000-$400,000, and possibly heating the pool with a solar-powered system, which could be around $13,000-$16,000. Mulvihill suggested to the board that they consider prioritizing the remaining bond projects and use remaining bond monies for the replacement. Some sort of asbestos abatement in the hallway between the gym and the cafeteria will also be a factor if the boiler is removed, which could prove costly.

In other business the board:

-heard from Mulvihill about "School Reach", a company that provides an automated system to inform parents, students and teachers about school closures, student absences, substitute teachers, school events, "rumor abatement" and other issues via cell phones, email, Facebook and other electronic media.

-See IONE SCHOOL DISTRICT/Page SIX

St. Patrick's holds Christmas pageant



On Sunday, December 12, Saint Patrick's Catholic Church held a potluck and Christmas pageant. The students participated in a Christmas play to help teach about the meaning of Christmas. *–Contributed Photo*

CD to benefit spinal cord research on sale

A CD to benefit spinal cord research is currently on sale.

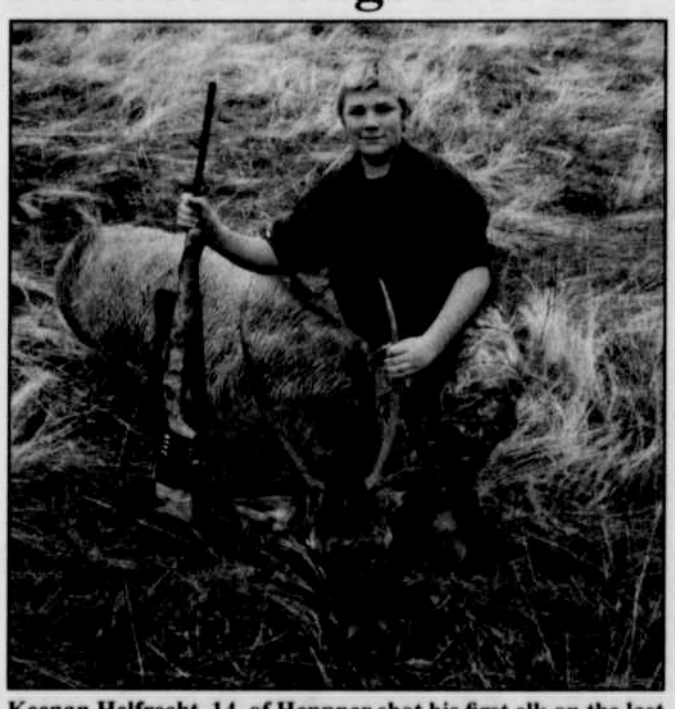
The CD, These Old Hills Will Sing, was inspired by Dave Matheny, an eastern Oregon wheat rancher who was injured in a horse accident in 2001. Several community members, including Matheny's sister, Sandy, and aunt, Doris, joined together to make the album.

The CD can be purchased for $15 at Murray's Drugs in Heppner or Condon, or by sending a check or money order for $15 plus $2 for shipping and handling to Matheny Project, P.O. Box 1095, Heppner, Oregon.

All proceeds from your purchase of this CD are donated to the Oregon Health Sciences University Foundation in support of Neurological Surgery's Innovation Fund and their ongoing research. Because you will receive a CD valued at $15, your purchase is not a tax deduction. If you wish to donate a larger amount to OHSU, please make your check payable to OHSU and either send it to our address or directly to the OHSU Foundation at 1121 S.W. Salmon St. #100, Portland, OR 97205. If you are making a direct donation to OHSU, please list "Matheny" on your check. You can view OHSU's information at their website www.ohsufoundation.org.

For more information send an email to mathenyproject@gmail.com or visit www.matheny project.com.

Helfrecht bags first elk



Keenan Helfrecht, 14, of Heppner shot his first elk on the last day of this year's second season. *–Contributed Photo*

Irrigon woman arrested for theft

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office recently completed a six-week investigation of theft of money from Irrigon High School with the arrest of Amy J. Tolar, 37, of Irrigon.

Tolar was arrested and released on her own recognizance for the charge of Theft I and First Degree Official Misconduct.

The Investigation is continuing and the case will be referred to the Morrow County District Attorney's Office.

Boardman Police Department seeks help from public in homicide investigation

The Boardman Police Department is seeking help from the public to solve a homicide that occurred over the weekend.

Ariel Velasco, 16, of Boardman was found shot at Anderson Street in Boardman at approximately 7:45 p.m. Velasco was pronounced dead upon arrival at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston.

Investigators believe there were several witnesses that have not come forward and would like to speak to them. Investigators indicate the homicide is possibly gang related. No possible suspects are known at this time and the police are following all leads.

The case is being investigated by the Boardman Police Department with assistance from the Morrow/Umatilla County Major Crime Team.

Anyone who may have witnessed the killing or have any information about the crime is asked to call the Boardman Police Department at (541) 481-6071.

Heppner Gazette-Times closed Friday

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed on Friday, December 24. The office will re-open on Monday, December 27.

Open house to be held for D.A. Nelson

An open house will be held at the Morrow County Courthouse on Friday, January 14, 2010 to formally introduce the county's newly elected district attorney, Justin W Nelson.

Refreshments will be served upstairs in the courtroom from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m.

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LAST MINUTE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING
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We will be closed 12 noon Friday until Monday
Morrow County Grain Growers Green Feed & Seed
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