

# Town and Country Awards winners announced

The Heppner Chamber of Commerce Town and Country Community Awards event, sponsored by CenturyLink, was held in the pavilion at the Morrow County Fairgrounds on Thursday, January 13. This year's theme was "Heppner - A little town, where big hearts abound... in every direction." This year the follow-

ing awards were given out: Youth Recognition, Brett Harrison; Business of the Year, The Stable of Youth; Woman of the Year, Sandy Matthews; Man of the Year, Ken Grieb; Lifetime Achievement, Larry Lindsay; and Citizen-Educator of the Year, Beth Dickenson.

The 2010 Youth Recognition Award recipient is Brett Harrison. Harrison, a senior at Heppner High School, is involved with student council, National Honor Society, Spanish Club, 4-H, sports, youth group, and FFA. He has also received numerous Student of the Month awards. He has also helped with hanging Christmas lights downtown, cutting firewood for those in need, helping to run the annual Veteran's Day Celebration, organized homecoming and FFA week activities, Mustang Mop-Up, helping with numerous canned food drives, and even help glean sweet corn in a field in Maryland for local food shelters. All in all, he has logged more than 400 hours of community services.



Brett Harrison

been down on their luck. Along with bowling, there are many other activities for youth and children to enjoy. "In these difficult economic times, (Bobbette) has remained dedicated to the children of our community, knowing financially it will only be a break even endeavor on its best day," said Sheryll Bates. "Still, she feels God wants her to provide this safe environment and she has shown great faith and dedication to keep pressing on."

This year's Woman of the Year is Sandy Matthews. Born and raised in Heppner, Matthews is famous for her desserts and taking pictures at every imaginable event Heppner has to offer. "She has to hold the record for most pictures taken in Heppner," stated Kim Cutsforth. "It would be easier to list things she may not have taken a picture of. I can't imagine a person in town that has not been touched by one of her photos."



Sandy Matthews

The 2010 Man of the Year is Ken Grieb. In addition to being a Morrow County Commissioner, Grieb donates his time as an auctioneer for various projects and fundraiser. He also volunteers his time with many programs including the HEROES Reading Program, Parent Teacher Club, Booster Club, and Colt Youth Sports.



Ken Grieb

This year's Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Larry Lindsay. At 23 he took over the family ranch and over the years developed a custom feedlot that holds 5,000

head of cattle. Over the years Lindsay has been a Morrow County Grain Growers board member and Farm Bureau secretary, the St. Patrick's Parish Council member and long-time parish high school catechism teacher, St. Patrick's Day Parade grand marshal, and a prior Cattleman of the Year. He currently is a member of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, Oregon Wheat Growers, Knights of Columbus, and Morrow County Chamber of Commerce. He also served as Port Commissioner for the Port of Morrow for over 44 years. Lindsay has been honored by the Oregon Historical Society for preserving a portion of the Oregon Trail that runs through the feedlot. In 1975 he sponsored over 40 members of a Vietnamese family that escaped Saigon by providing jobs, housing and English classes.



Larry Lindsay

The 2010 Citizen-Educator of the Year is Beth Dickenson. She was hired six years ago and since then has worked to resurrect the FFA/AG program at Heppner High School. Since coming to HHS, Dickenson has revived the land lab and started an FFA alumni association. Since taking over the FFA program, Heppner FFA now has a 35 percent membership total within the student body. Dickenson also makes sure her students have access to service learning and is involved with the Chamber of Commerce, Elks, and Garden Club.



Beth Dickenson

This year's Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Larry Lindsay. At 23 he took over the family ranch and over the years developed a custom feedlot that holds 5,000

the indictment on January

This year's Business of the Year is The Stable of Youth. Opening approximately five years ago, the goal of the business was to provide a place the youth of the community to go and feel safe. The Stable, owned by Bobbette Lovgren is currently located in the old bowling alley. The restaurant not only serves customers but helps provide meals for grieving families or those who have



Bobbette Lovgren



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## School district names Dirksen proposed superintendent successor, Mendoza, assistant

The Morrow County School Board voted on January 11, upon Superintendent Mark Burrows' recommendation, to hire current Riverside High School Principal Dirk Dirksen as superintendent, replacing Burrows who has announced his retirement at the end of the school year. The board plans to schedule a series of public meetings throughout the district prior to finalizing Dirksen's hire.



Dirk Dirksen

The board, also upon Burrows' recommendation, approved the hiring of current Riverside High Assistant Principal George Mendoza as assistant superintendent, replacing Phyllis Danielson, who is also retiring.

Dirksen has been at Riverside for 30 years and has been principal for the past eight years. He has indicated that he is pleased with the district's direction and plans to continue in the path Burrows has taken with the district.

Mendoza came to the district from Pasco, WA,

where he worked at Virgie Robinson Elementary School. Mendoza, who has around 10 years of experience as a school administrator, has created a parent meeting program for Spanish-speaking families at Riverside.



George Mendoza

He has said that supporting the district's teachers and increasing partnerships between businesses and families, with the desire to offer equitable and consistent education for all students, are goals for him.

At the meeting, Heppner Elementary School teachers Molly Rill and Sherry Matteson reported on 'Parents for Parents', the group that they created to assist parents and students. They had earlier organized a health fair at the school and also a health jobs fair and plan to hold an additional one later during this school year.

The board also viewed a presentation by Matthew Matz, Irrigon

Junior/Senior High School vice-principal, on a software program that he created to improve student attendance and discipline by tracking attendance and referrals, providing quick responses to incidents, resulting in improved communication with parents and teachers. Matz also created a program to display school-related information on digital screens at IJSHS. Matz said that the new system has "basically eliminated tardiness."

The board subsequently released copyright, trademark and patent interest in the software Matz created.

Also at the meeting, Doreen Enz and Jan Stroeber, representing the United Methodist Church and "Christmas Is", a Heppner community musical Christmas program, presented \$750 to Heppner music teachers Joe Lindsay and Michelle Stone to enhance the Heppner

-See M.C. SCHOOL DISTRICT/Page EIGHT

## Morrow County School District announces meetings for superintendent candidate

After reviewing superintendent applications last week the Morrow County School Board announced they were considering promoting Dirk Dirksen, Riverside principal, to the superintendent position. They directed current superintendent, Mark

Burrows, who is retiring June 30, 2011 to set up public meetings for Dirksen to address patrons and receive their input.

Burrows reports the meetings will occur as follows:

-Tuesday, February 1, 6 p.m. - Irrigon Elementary School library

-Thursday, February 3, 6 p.m. - Heppner Elementary School library (Dirksen will also be present at Heppner Chamber meeting at noon at City Hall)

-Monday, February 14, 6:15 p.m. - Windy River Elementary library.

## Heppner G-T Trophy Corner



Amber Fritz shot this spike x 3 (there's a kicker off the back side) during the second season elk hunt of 2010. -Contributed Photo

## Title & ELL Family Night Out to be held

Interested in tasting free international desserts? Heppner Elementary School's Title and ELL Family Night Out will be an evening of cooking demonstrations, samples, and recipes. Dean Antonucci, Dora Collins, and Alvin Liu will demonstrate their cooking expertise on Sunday, January 23, at 4:30 in the Heppner Elementary School cafeteria.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Elguezabal or Mary Hague-wood at 541-676-9128.

## Speaker indicted on sex charges

Morrow County District Attorney Justin W. Nelson on Tuesday announced the indictment and arraignment of James Wayne Speaker, 29, from Hermiston on charges of Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, Rape in the Third Degree, Sexual Abuse



James Wayne Speaker

in the Third Degree, and Furnishing Sexually Explicit Material to a Child. The charges span from December 1, 2010 to December 13, 2010 and involve four separate victims.

Speaker was arraigned on the indictment on January

18, 2011 by Judge Eva Temple. The court kept bail at \$150,000. The courts set a release hearing for January 21 at the Morrow County Circuit Court.

The case is being investigated by the Morrow County Sheriff's Office. Anyone with information should call the sheriff's office at 541-676-6317.

## City puts \$2 sewer increase on hold

By David Sykes

The city of Heppner has decided not to move forward with a planned sewer rate increase "for the time being". City Manager Dave DeMayo told the city council last Monday night.

DeMayo did not give a reason for withdrawing a planned \$2 per month increase, even though the city utilities commission had earlier voted in favor of the increase at its Dec. 16 meeting. The commission was told monthly sewer fees were not covering the cost of operating the sewer system. DeMayo told the utility commission that although the sewer plant is now operating more efficiently because of improvements, the sewer fund was still facing a \$3,500

shortfall by mid-year. He said if the rate increase were to bring in excess funds they would be put into a reserve account. In details handed out at the city council meeting last week, DeMayo said income from sewer fees so far this fiscal year is \$100,000 with expenses of \$120,000, for a deficit of \$20,000, which he said was made up from cash carryover funds.

Mayor Les Paus-tian said the city can continue with the deficit, and not raise fees, "but if funds have to be borrowed in the future (to operate the sewer system), this will add to the debt and, with interest, the amount will double by the time it is paid off." Council members Joanne Burleson and John Bowles agreed

with the mayor, saying the rates should be raised.

At the utility commission meeting, Bowles said he recommended the rates be raised by \$2 per month now, and then possibly again in two years by 25 cents if necessary.

In other business at the January meeting the council:

-Signed a one-year extension of a lease with Tim Dickenson of Dickenson Chiropractic for office space in the back part of the city hall building. Terms of the lease are \$450 per month.

-Received the following police report from the sheriff department.

-See CITY COUNCIL/ Page FOUR

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