

Smith goes undefeated at wrestling meet.



Ryan Smith (Jr High) went undefeated during the team's meet last Thursday night. -Photo by Jeremy Lanthorn

CITY/SHERIFF CONTRACT

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to tell her constituents what is being done in the city. "I think a lot of people here think there is little crime," Doherty added. She said people look at the \$181,272 and say that's a lot and we don't have that much crime. "They say, 'Why do we have to spend that?'"

Matlack held up a stack of papers to the council and told them it was six months' worth of code violation case files. "These are mostly dog complaints," he said. He pointed out that people in Heppner want the police to take care of dog complaints and they do. In Umatilla County if people call the sheriff about a dog, the deputies do not respond. He said the sheriffs in Heppner handle the complaints because "That is what people want." He did point out

that it is time consuming because loose and violent dogs have to be transported to Pet Rescue in Hermiston, which this takes up a lot of deputies' time.

Council member Cody High questioned one section of the contract which has Heppner pay about \$26,000 per year for police vehicles. High proposed a plan which would have the city lease vehicles and save money. "I am opposed to this (contract)," High said. He pointed out that the city spends \$53,000 every three years on patrol cars, which works out to \$159,000 over nine years. The city receives two of the used patrol cars back every three years, but High says the city could save \$31,500 by renting the vehicles instead.

On a discussion about what level of protec-

tion the sheriff department would have to give the city if it cancelled its contract, the sheriff said, like Lone and Lexington which do not have contracts with the county, the department would have to respond to 911 emergency calls, but not run of the mill code infraction violations. Heppner could hire its own code enforcement officer to enforce city codes, but that officer would not have full police privileges such as running identifications, license plates and radio services and would have to pay separate for those services.

The majority of the council did not want to approve the contract Monday night, and voted three to two against renewing the contract.

Matlack urged the city to reconsider and approve the contract and to do it soon. He said if

the city did not renew the contract he would have to lay off two deputies and he needed to know that right away. "It will be terrible for this end of the county if you do not have this service," he told the council. "We don't want kids to get in trouble with alcohol. Whether you have your own department or contract with us you need police protection."

The city had its own department up until 2005 when it laid off its officers and began contracting with the sheriff. The sheriff supplied the city three deputies at that time.

The sheriff urged the council to reconsider its vote, saying he could not wait a month for another council meeting to hear their decision. The council did reconsider and voted again this time unanimously for the contract.

CHAPLAIN

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Johnson, a business and computer technology teacher in civilian life at Irrigon High School in Irrigon, Oregon, used to be a pastor fulltime, but said he always wanted to serve his country.

"When I was a pastor, and even before when I was going to Bible School, I thought it would be interesting to be a chaplain. But it wasn't the right time," he said.

Like so many Americans, the deadly Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks helped push Johnson into a more proactive role. "After 9/11, I wanted to look for a place to serve. My kids are older, and they are always looking for chaplains. There are never enough," he said.

While Johnson said his passion is teaching, he also said he believes the role of the chaplain is essential to the overall health of his unit. While he acts as a chaplain and a counselor to soldiers, he is also a key instrument for the 3rd Battalion's commander, Lt. Col. Phil Appleton. "Sometimes the command will ask us to gauge the morale of the troops, and sometimes we can act as the counselor for the commander," he said.

In the end, though, it all comes back to the spiritual welfare of the soldier, Johnson said. He said he sympathizes with the challenges soldiers in the 3rd Bn., 116th Cav. Regt. face on the roads as part of convoy escort teams.

"Some of our soldiers are seeing a lot of time outside the wire," he said.

So Johnson's role runs a full circle each week. He visits a number of different CETs preparing to go out on convoy duty and it is usually in the dark, under the stark lights of a company staging area. There he gathers around a group of soldiers and prays. The focus, of course, is partly on divine guidance. Yet another main element to his prayers rests, as it should and as it always has, on the soldiers. He prays for their safety and their families and their future.

"I pray they don't get hurt. I pray they do a good job," he said.

Community Lunch Menu

St. Patrick's Parish members will be serving lunch on Wednesday, February 23, at St. Patrick's Senior Center. The meal will include navy beans and ham, carrot salad, fruit juice, combread, and apple crunch. Menu is subject to change.

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