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Gazette Times

VOL. 130 NO. 37 8 Pages Wednesday, September 21, 2011 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

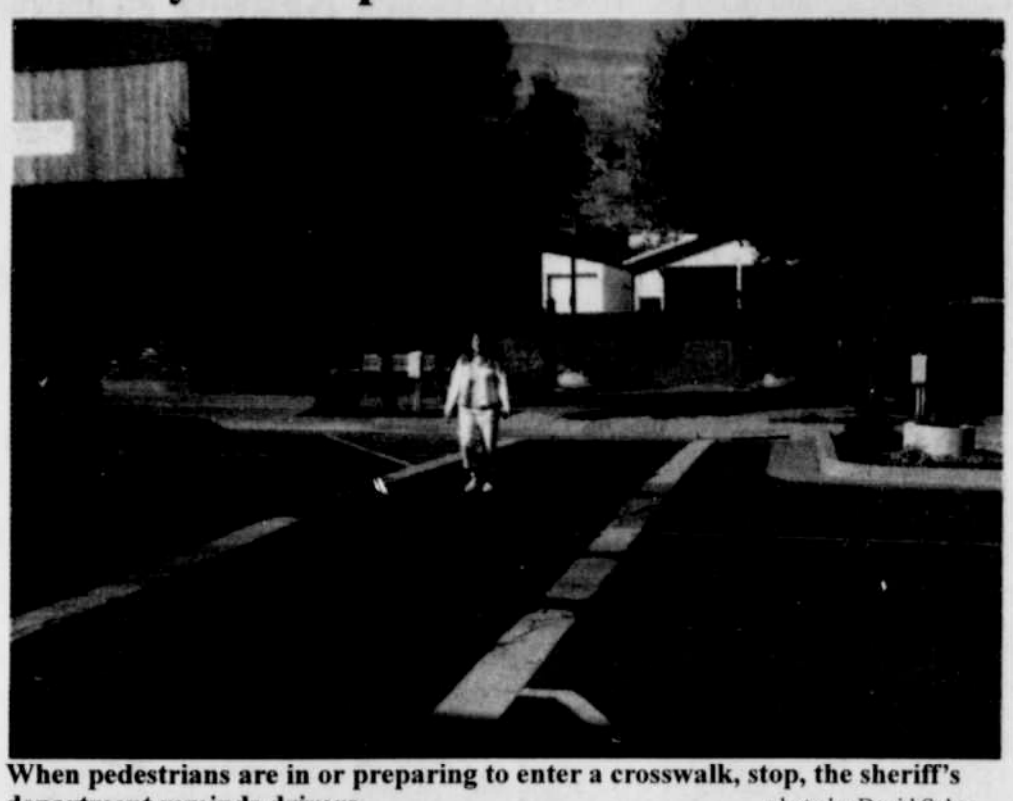
Drivers reminded to yield to pedestrians at crosswalks

The Morrow County Sheriff's Department reminds drivers that they must yield to pedestrians waiting to cross in a marked or unmarked crosswalk, and especially those who are already in a cross walk.

There are two levels of fines covering vehicles that do not yield. If a pedestrians is waiting to enter a crosswalk, it is a class C violation carrying a $192 fine. If the pedestrian is in the cross walk and the vehicle does not stop, it is a Class B violation with a $289 fine, the sheriff's department said.

The issue of trucks and autos not stopping for pedestrians at and in crosswalks in Heppner came up at the last Heppner City Council meeting, with council members saying the problem seems to be getting worse.

At the same time in the interest of safety, the sheriff's department reminded pedestrians that jay walking, or crossing in the middle of a block where there is no crosswalk can be dangerous, especially when pedestrians come out from between parked cars where vehicles cannot see them and do not expect them to be.



When pedestrians are in or preparing to enter a crosswalk, stop, the sheriff's department reminds drivers. photo by David Sykes

One man indicted in connection with shooting, two indicated on sex crimes

Scott William Foster

Gilberto Garcia

Alan Earl Stone

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson has announced that on September 20 the Morrow County Grand Jury indicted three men, one in connection with a shooting in Boardman and two in connection with sex crimes in Irrigon.

According to Nelson, the grand jury indicted Gilberto Garcia on 10 separate counts related to a shooting that took place on September 14, 2011, in Boardman, Oregon.

Morrow/Umatilla County Circuit Court Judge Ron Pahl arraigned Garcia on the indictment. Judge Pahl kept bail set at $750,000 and set a pre-trial conference date of October 6, 2011.

The investigation of this case is still ongoing, and anyone with information is urged to contact the Boardman Police Department at (541) 481-6071, said Nelson.

Also on September 20, said Nelson, the Morrow County Grand Jury indicted Scott William Foster on 13 separate counts related to alleged sex crimes that took place June 23, 2011, to August 26, 2011, in Irrigon, Oregon.

Judge Ron Pahl arraigned Foster on the indictment. Judge Pahl kept bail set at $300,000 and set a pre-trial conference date of October 6, 2011.

Also September 20, Nelson reported that the Morrow County Grand Jury indicted Alan Earl Stone on four separate counts related to alleged sex crimes that took place June 23, 2011, to August 26, 2011, in Irrigon, Oregon.

Judge Pahl arraigned Stone on the indictment. Judge Pahl kept bail set at $500,000 and set a pre-trial conference date of October 6.

The investigation of these two cases is still ongoing, and anyone with information is urged to contact the Morrow County Sheriff's Office at (541) 676-5317, Nelson said.

Tony Navarro sworn in as new school board member

Tony Navarro was sworn in as a new school board member at the regular Morrow County School Board meeting held Aug. 12 in Heppner.

Navarro, Irrigon, is employed as a juvenile services provider for Morrow County.

Tony Navarro

At the meeting the board reviewed the timeline for the new human sexuality/ health education program. The process includes numerous steps, involving formation of committees, curriculum selection process, a workshop and training of staff, administration and school board members and revision prior to adoption and implementation in the classroom.

A committee of Superintendent Dirk Dirksen, Julie Ashbeck, Dave Boor, Heppner High School Principal Daye Stone, board member Brian Kollman, Terri Gentry, Angela Dane and board Chairman Thad Killingbeck were named to the human sexuality program committee.

Also at the meeting Dirksen told the board the results of the OAKS state testing, with the following classes scoring at or above state standards:

Reading: Third grade-A.C. Houghton Elementary, Irrigon, Heppner Elementary, Sam Boardman Elementary; Fourth grade-Windy River Elementary, HES; Fifth grade-HES; Sixth grade-WRE, HES; Seventh grade-Heppner Junior High; Eighth grade-Riverside Junior High; 11th grade-Riverside High School.

Math: Third grade-ACH, HES, SBE; Fourth grade-HES; Fifth grade-WRE, HES; Sixth grade-WRE, HES; Seventh grade-HJH; Eighth grade-none; 11th grade-RHS, Heppner High School.

In other business, the board:

-learned from Michael Lasher of Inter-Mountain ESD that the state board of education has pledged around a half a million dollars toward Eastern Promise. The Eastern Promise, an innovative plan spearheaded by IMESD Superintendent Mark Mulivhill, would change the focus of the state's education process from kindergarten through grade 12 to include college age students and would allow high school students to obtain college credits while still in high school, though a partnership among area high schools, Blue Mountain Community College, Eastern Oregon University and Treasure Valley Community College.

-learned from Dirksen that the state's revenue shows little change from previous predictions. Dirksen said that the Oregon School Board Association advised districts to expect flat funding and "be conservative," which the Morrow County School District has accomplished.

-learned from Dirksen that the previous serial election will expire and another election is planned in May.

-learned from Dirksen that enrollment is down around 10 students from the previous year at the same time. He said that the district "hoped for 50 more students, but budgeted for 50 less", so "we're in a good position" for this year. HHS Principal Daye Stone said that he expected four more exchange students to enroll shortly.

District enrollment and enrollment information as of September 6 follows: A.C. Houghton Elementary-275 enrolled/261 in attendance; Irrigon High School-352/336; Heppner Elementary-189/177; Hep-

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Advocate speaks out for disabled

Darrin Umbarger, left, with son Jeremy spoke recently to the Heppner Chamber of Commerce about treatment of disabled persons.

By David Sykes

A Pendleton man who was responsible for major changes that were made with disabled access at the Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon, was guest speaker at the Heppner Chamber of Commerce recently, where he told of the do's and don'ts on treatment of the disabled.

Darrin Umbarger, who runs a disability resource center in Pendleton, uses a wheel chair because he has Multiple Sclerosis.

Umbarger said there are "Ten Commandments" of communicating with people with disabilities, and went on to name some, such as speaking directly to the person with the disability, not to his or her companion or caregiver.

He also said an important thing to remember is to ask before giving assistance to a disabled person. He said picking someone up who has fallen could be dangerous to the person's health, and pointed out that if he has lost much of his "core" muscles, he could be hurt if some one grabs him when he falls and just pulls him up. "Just ask," he says.

Also when a person is in a wheelchair, do not lean on it, and don't pat the person on the head. "Leaning on a person's wheelchair is the same as leaning on a person without a wheelchair. Many people with disabilities find this annoying," Umbarger said. He also said, if possible, place yourself at eye level and directly in front of the individual in a wheel chair. "They have been looking up all day and this will be better for them," he said.

Umbarger covered many other issues, including sensitive language. Do not use the word "handicapped" but instead use "disabilities." He also said to avoid saying people are afflicted with a certain disability. Using himself as an example, he said, "I do not suffer with MS. It does

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Volunteers needed for senior bus driving

Volunteers are needed to drive the senior bus. "There are a couple of drivers now," says Ed Baker who is head driver, "but we could use some more." "It is a volunteer position and people would have to be trained to get ready to drive," Baker said.

He said anyone who is interested should contact him at 541-989-8347. photo by David Sykes

The Heppner Gazette-Times wants to see pictures of your trophy animals from this hunting season. Stop by to have your picture taken, drop off photos, or email them to editor@rapidserve.net.

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