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HEPPNER

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# Gazette Times

VOL. 130 NO. 43 8 Pages Wednesday, November 2, 2011 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

## Irrigon man gets 19 years for sex abuse

Seventy-year-old Lonnie Lepper of Irrigon was sentenced October 27 to nearly 19 years in prison for sexually molesting two girls.

Lepper appeared in circuit court in Heppner and pled guilty to four counts of first-degree sexual abuse, according to Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson. The charges involved two separate acts with two separate minor victims. The state dismissed 64 additional counts of sex crimes in exchange for Lepper's guilty plea.

The trial wraps up a case that began on April 6, when an Irrigon woman called the Morrow County Sheriff's Office and report-

ed that her two daughters had been inappropriately touched by her mother's fiancé. Sgt. Mark Pratt questioned Lepper and arrested him on 60 counts of sexual abuse; the DA subsequently charged the man with a total of 68 counts of sex crimes.

Under Ballot Measure 11, the minimum mandatory sentence on each of the remaining four charges is six years, three months. While the Morrow County DA wanted to give Lepper the maximum sentence, run consecutively—a total of 25 years—Lepper's attorney asked for concurrent sen-

tences, which would have amounted to 12 ½ years.

Circuit Court Judge Eva Temple reached a compromise when she decided to run three sentences consecutively and the fourth concurrent, for a total of 18 years, three months in state prison. Lepper will also get credit for the time he spent in the Umatilla County Jail in Pendleton.

According to Nelson, investigators found that relatives had concerns about Lepper's behavior for years. The man also had a 1989 sex-crime conviction in Washington State.



Lonnie Lepper

## Special Election Nov. 8

Morrow County will hold a special election November 8. Questions will be on the ballot for both Lexington and Ione.

Lexington will be voting on Measure 25-29, the Town of Lexington Fire Station General Obligation Bond Authorization. Question: Shall the Town of Lexington issue \$200,000 in general obligation bonds to provide a new fire station? If approved, the measure would help finance a new fire station and pay costs of issuing bonds.

Ione will vote on several positions for the

Ione Library District. The positions and candidates are as follows:

Director at large, two year term (vote for three):

Betty Gray  
Nancy Lee Anderson

Margo Sherer  
Director a large, four year term (vote for two):

Anne C. Morter  
Lisa Rietmann

Ballots are due November 8 by 8 p.m. Ballot drop locations are available in Heppner, Lexington and Ione.

Heppner drops locations are at the county clerk's office in the courthouse or in the outside drop box in the courthouse parking lot.

The Lexington outdoor drop box is in the Lexington public works parking lot on Highway 74.

Ione drop locations are the outdoor box on Spring Street or at the Bank of Eastern Oregon Ione branch. Voters are asked to note that the bank closes at 4 p.m., so ballots returned after that time will have to use the outdoor drop.

## HHS volleyball, football teams head to state

The Heppner High School volleyball team won the district championship by beating Elgin and Weston-McEwen and now will go on to state competition.

The Mustang girls will host a home game this Saturday, Nov. 5. The time and opponent were not available at press time

Tuesday, but should be posted later on the high school website.

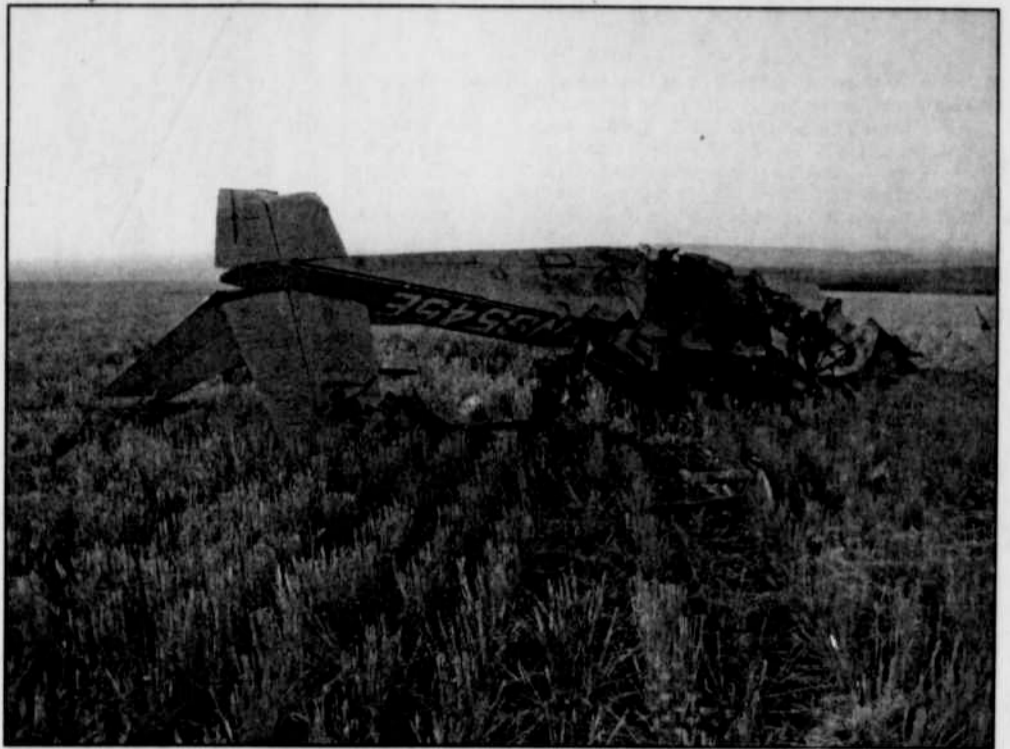
If the girls win that game they will play in Forest Grove the following week. If they do not win, their season will come to an end.

The Heppner High School football team will

play in the first round of the state playoffs on Saturday, November 12, with the time, date and place to be announced. The boys will go into the playoffs in second or third place.

The boys will play a home game against Irrigon this Friday night.

## Plane crash kills one, sends one to hospital



It doesn't look like anyone should have walked away from the wreckage of this Cessna 182R Skylane that crashed near the Lexington airport around 11 p.m. on October 26. One survivor, 37-year-old Jeffrey Smock of San Francisco, did survive the crash, crawling to the home of Bill and Cindy Greenup for help. Smock was airlifted to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend and remained in serious condition at last notice. The pilot, Smock's father-in-law, 65-year-old Stephen Lunceford of Driggs, ID, was killed in the crash. Lunceford was a partner in the Flying Buffalo Ranch on Upper Rhea Creek along with his close friend Jim Martin. He was flying from Pasco to Lexington and was on his final approach to the airport when the plane went down just a couple miles east of the runway. The FAA and National Transportation Safety Board are investigating the crash, but have not announced a cause. —Contributed photo

## Morrow County DA opens Boardman office

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson has announced the opening of a north Morrow County satellite office.

The satellite office will be used part-time by the district attorney, deputy district attorney and victim's advocate. The office is located at 101 Boardman Avenue in Boardman.

The office will be used as needed, and the

public is encouraged to call 541-676-5626 to make an appointment to meet with a representative from the district attorney office at the Boardman location.

"I believe it is important to have a strong presence in north end of the county. With the addition of the satellite office, we will be able to provide an easily accessible location for residents of Boardman and

Irrigon to meet with a representative from the Morrow County district attorney office," says Nelson. "The addition of this office will also make it easier to work closely with the Boardman Police Department and the Oregon State Police on criminal investigations. I appreciate the assistance of the Morrow County commissioners in making this possible."

## Health district ends September in the black

By April Sykes

The Morrow County Health District ended September \$24,600 in the black, according to figures released in September's profit/loss statement.

The board did not hold a regular meeting on October 31, since they had held an all-day work session earlier in the month.

According to the profit/loss statement, the district showed \$577,822 in gross patient revenue for September, \$80,036 in revenue deductions, including \$11,397 in bad debts and \$68,639 in contractual and other adjustments (Medicare and Medicaid reductions).

MCHD took in \$94,291 in taxes and \$4,984 in other operating revenue

for total operating revenue of \$597,061. The district had \$596,817 in total operating expenses and a non-operating gain of \$24,355 for the \$24,600 profit.

The district showed a \$112,506 loss for the year, for a \$37,502 average monthly year-to-date loss.

In other business, the board:

—received the following report: Pioneer Memorial Clinic had 431 patient visits in September, with 30 new patients, 43 seen by a nurse and 14 no-shows; Irrigon Medical Clinic had 172 patient visits, with 31 new patients, 59 seen by a nurse and 13 no-shows; Heppner Ambulance had 20 total page-outs with 16 transports for \$18,871 in revenue; Boardman Ambulance had 27 page-outs with 14 transports for \$18,511 in revenue; Irrigon Ambulance had 19 page-outs with nine transports for \$10,701 in revenue; Pioneer Memorial Hospital had three admissions, one swing bed admission, seven admitted for observation, 411 outpatients, 73 total emergency room encounters, 1445 lab tests, 91 x-ray procedures, 27 CT scans, 16 EKG tests, one treadmill procedure, six colonoscopy procedures, two endoscopy procedures, three respiratory therapy procedures; Home Health had 104 patient visits; Hospice had two admissions and 181 patient days; and pharmacy had 892 drug doses for \$62,191 in drug revenue.

## Cardinal volleyball team in playoff match Saturday

The Ione Cardinal volleyball team, Big Sky District Champions, will host the winner of the Old Oregon League (Imbler) vs. the High Desert League (Jordan Valley) this Sat-

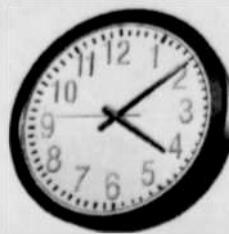
urday, Nov. 5. Imbler and Jordan valley play each other mid-week.

The Saturday game is an official state playoff match.

Ione was one of

only three undefeated teams in the state in all classifications with a 28-0 record.

The state tournament is set for Nov. 11-12 at Pacific University at Forest Grove.



## Fall Back Nov. 6

The Gazette-Times would like to remind everyone to set their clocks back for the end of Daylight Savings Time this Sunday, November 6.

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@rapidsolve.net.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:  
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