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Gazette Times

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Showing country pride, county wide

Fairgrounds get sprucing up before big week

Miranda Taylor (front) and Emily Taylor (back) plant fresh flowers around the Morrow County Fairgrounds as part of a 4-H project to brighten up the grounds before the fair next week. The girls are members of the Boardman community 4-H club. *–Photo by David Sykes*

Queen sightings

You have to be up early to catch a glimpse of Morrow County's Fair and Rodeo Queen Maggie Collins as she travels down the road to another parade and rodeo.

It has been a busy summer for Maggie as mile after mile is put on her dad's pickup truck…Maggie has put in more than 2,750 miles with more than 18 appearances both in and out of the county.

She has traveled to Redmond, OR for the Miss Rodeo Oregon and Miss NPRA coronations in February and March. She went to Coulee City, WA for a Rodeo Queen/Bible Camp in June, and then to Chief Joseph Days in July in Joseph, OR, with many stops in between.

If you haven't seen her on the road or on the town, you may have heard her voice promoting Morrow County Fair and Rodeo on various radio stations. She has been on Y102.3 FM The Dalles, 103.5 KWHT in Pendleton and, just recently, Hermiston's 1360 KOHU.

Maggie says she is having a great time promoting our county and inviting everyone she meets to come to her county and meet the wonderful people here.

"She has impressed many people whom she has met, and they are impressed with her friendly, outgoing personality, and genuine compassion," says mom Jeannie Collins. "Children love to follow her and little girls want to be a rodeo queen, too."

Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Queen Maggie Collins (R) and Miss Rodeo Oregon Shelby Ross. *-Contributed photo*

Maggie's next appearance is Saturday at Fossil for the parade and rodeo. She is getting ready for the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo and wants to invite everyone to come and enjoy the festivities all week long. Remember that the Friday night during the rodeo is Tough Enough to Wear Pink Night. Maggie has a lot of surprises in store for the audience, so everyone is encouraged to come and enjoy the performances.

Maggie is still selling raffle tickets for two halves of a hog donated by Mike's Mobile slaughter. Tickets are $1 each or 6 for $5. Call Maggie's home phone number at 541-676-8037 and ask for Maggie or Jeannie for tickets or ticket information, call Jeannie's cell phone at 541-922-7204, or see Maggie or her mom at the fair, as tickets will be available there. Winners will be drawn Saturday and Sunday during the rodeo performances; winners need not be present.

One thing is for sure; if you want to catch a glimpse of Queen Maggie, you need to come join Maggie and celebrate this years' Country Pride, County Wide at the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo.

Learn more about Queen Maggie in this week's special fair edition.

Whooping Cough hits Morrow County

Morrow County Health Department has received confirmation from the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory that two county residents have recently tested positive for Pertussis, also known as Whooping Cough, the department reported this week.

"This news was expected," says Shelley Wight, Communicable Disease Coordinator for the Morrow County Health Department. "We have been closely monitoring the situation in partnership with the Acute and Communicable Disease program of the Oregon Health Authority and our local medical providers. While most cases have occurred in western Oregon so far, the number of cases in northeast Oregon has been slowly increasing over the past few months."

Pertussis is a respiratory disease caused by bacteria that live in the nose, mouth and throat of infected individuals. It often causes serious problems in babies, but is usually milder in older children and adults. While Pertussis can occur at any age, infants and young children are at the highest risk of life-threatening consequences. Almost half of the 525 infants diagnosed with Pertussis in Oregon since 2000 have had to be hospitalized.

The first symptoms—runny nose, sneezing, mild fever and cough—usually appear five to 21 days after a person is infected. After one or two weeks, the cough gets worse and starts to occur in strong "coughing fits." In young children, these coughing fits are followed by a whooping sound as they try to catch their breath, and the strong coughing may cause people to vomit or turn blue from a lack of air. It may be hard for babies to eat, drink or breathe. The disease can last six weeks or longer.

There are things you can do to help protect yourself and your family from Pertussis:

-Get yourself and your family vaccinated. See your medical provider or call the Morrow County Health Department to check on your immunization status.

-All children should have the complete DTaP vaccination series.

-At age 11-12, children need a booster shot in order to extend their protection.

-All adults over age 19 who have not received a booster shot should get one. While an adult with Pertussis may not become very sick, they can infect a vulnerable infant.

-It is especially important that pregnant women be vaccinated after their 20th week.

-Use good health manners, as Pertussis is highly contagious and spreads easily by coughing and sneezing:

-Cover your sneeze or cough with a tissue or your sleeve—not your hands,

-Touching a tissue or sharing a drinking cup can also spread the disease,

-If you are sick, stay home and avoid being near infants,

-If sick or caring for someone sick, wash your hands often to avoid spreading germs,

-See your medical provider if you have a severe cough or a cough lasting more than two weeks. Your doctor can diagnose the disease based on symptoms and laboratory tests.

"Pertussis is a dangerous disease, especially for infants and young children who are not yet fully immunized," says Health Director Sheree Smith. "Even if you are fully immunized, there is no guarantee you won't get the disease. It is important that everyone knows their current immunization status and that of their family members. Unfortunately, the number of cases in the state and in northeast Oregon continues to climb and there is no way to predict when the outbreak will be over."

To stay informed about the situation or to get more information, see Pertussis in Oregon at http://l.usa.gov/PertussisOregon or the Centers for Disease Control at http://vvww.cdc.gov/features/pertussis/.

NOAA issues monthly climate summary

According to preliminary data received by NOAA's National Weather Service in Pendleton OR, temperatures at Heppner averaged near normal during the month of July.

The average temperature was 70 degrees, which was 0.2 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged 85.3 degrees, which was 0.4 degrees below normal. The highest was 98 degrees on the 9th. Low temperatures averaged 54.6 degrees, which was 0.7 degrees above normal. The lowest was 42 degrees, on July 4.

On seven days, the temperature exceeded 90 degrees.

Precipitation totaled 1.04 inches during July, which was 0.71 inches above normal. Measurable precipitation of at least .01 inch was received on six days with the heaviest, 0.50 inches, reported on the 18th.

Precipitation this year has reached 11.43 inches, which is 2.44 inches above normal. Since October, the water-year precipitation at Heppner has been 13.23 inches, which is 0.18 inches above normal.

The outlook for August from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for near-normal temperatures and near- to below-normal precipitation. Normal highs for Heppner during August are 85.5 degrees and normal lows are 53.5 degrees. The 30 year normal precipitation is 0.39 inches.

The National Weather Service is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Retirement open house planned

City bids farewell to DeMayo

A retirement open house is planned for outgoing Heppner City Manager Dave DeMayo on Tuesday, Aug. 21 from 3-6 p.m. at Heppner City Hall. Everyone is invited to stop by and wish him well. Refreshments will be served.

Special fair section in this week's paper

A special 28-page Fair and Rodeo section is included in this week's Heppner Gazette-Times. The section contains articles, interviews, photos and other information about the upcoming Morrow County Fair and Rodeo.

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