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Gazette Times

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2013 fair and rodeo queen named

Krysten Powell, 19, of Pendleton, has been named the 2013 Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Queen. Queen tryouts were held Nov. 4, with three young ladies vying for the coveted title.

Though from Pendleton, the 2013 queen has family and history here in Morrow County, tracing back to the fair and rodeo court. Powell is the daughter of Mike Powell of Pendleton and Annette Wilgers Powell, 1982 Morrow County princess. She is the granddaughter of Vi Wilgers and John Wilgers, long-time Morrow County residents. She served on the last mounted Umatilla County Fair Court in 2010 as a princess and has shown her paint horses for many years with her mother.

2012 Morrow County and OTPR Queen Maggie Collins (L) with newly-chosen 2013 queen Krysten Powell. *–Contributed photo*

When asked why she wanted to become Morrow County Fair and OTPR Queen, she responded, "While growing up, my favorite stories were those my mom told me from when she served as a princess. I begged her to tell them over and over. It sounded like so much fun! Not only did it involve my favorite thing in the world—horses—but also my favorite place."

2013 is going to be a landmark year for Morrow County, being the 100th year for the fair and the 91st year for the rodeo and the royalty. The first court was crowned in 1922 with Marjorie Clark riding as queen with princesses Bea Gentry and Jane Allstott. For three years during World War II, and from 2009 through 2011, the fair and rodeo royalty was absent. In 2011 and 2012, the fair ambassadors were created to help fill the need for public relations for the fair and rodeo without having to ride horses.

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Fire department 'smokes' old apartments

The Heppner Fire Department put the torch to the old, dilapidated apartments on Chase Street Sunday. Fire Chief Rusty Estes said the burn went "real well." *–Photo by David Sykes*

Local firefighters end record season

Wildland firefighters log 275 days fighting fires throughout the West

By Andrea Di Salvo

Most people who hear the name of Bruce Young Logging think of, well, logging. For this company, though, the call of duty in the forest can involve some real firefighting.

Yes, employees of Bruce Young Logging apply their skills to wildland firefighting in logging's off season. The company, owned by local man Bruce Young, is headquartered on land Young inherited from his parents in the Blakes Ranch area near Heppner.

Young, 53, says his crew recently finished one of the most severe fire seasons they have seen in several years. The season started earlier than normal, with the team heading out to a fire in Utah on July 2. The last man to return home from a fire was Young himself, on Oct. 2. That's three months of fires, far more than the "typical" fire season of 30-60 days. Young says local fire season often begins in late July and goes into September, a length of four to six weeks.

"(This was) our best year ever in terms of most days out," he says.

Bruce Young Logging's fire crew had its two engines out 105 days total, with a whopping 275 days out for

-See WILDLAND FIREFIGHTERS/PAGE EIGHT

WCVEDG holds county housing forum

Plans discussed to deal with influx of wind farm workers

By David Sykes

If construction on the number of proposed wind farms and transmission projects planned for Morrow County actually moves forward, residents here could expect an influx of temporary construction workers, and then permanent workers looking for housing, a forum sponsored by the Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) discussed last week.

A large group of community leaders including mayors, city managers and elected county officials, along with a number of state officials, discussed how the county could handle the influx of people and do it to our economic benefit. Planning Director Carla McLane, along with WCVEDG director Sheryll Bates, put together the conference, with President Michael Blauer giving the introduction and closing remarks.

Held at the Port of Morrow, the morning session was attended by about 30 people. It started with an outline from McLane of the various projects slated to come to Morrow County, including wind farms, gas-powered generating plants and transmission line facilities. Although a total number of workers is not known at this time, McLane did lay out a timeline showing the biggest influx should hit in the second quarter of 2014.

Associate county planner Layne Wolfmueller gave

-See HOUSING FORUM/ PAGE SIX

New kiosk planned for cemetery

Cemetery improvement will help visitors find gravesites more easily

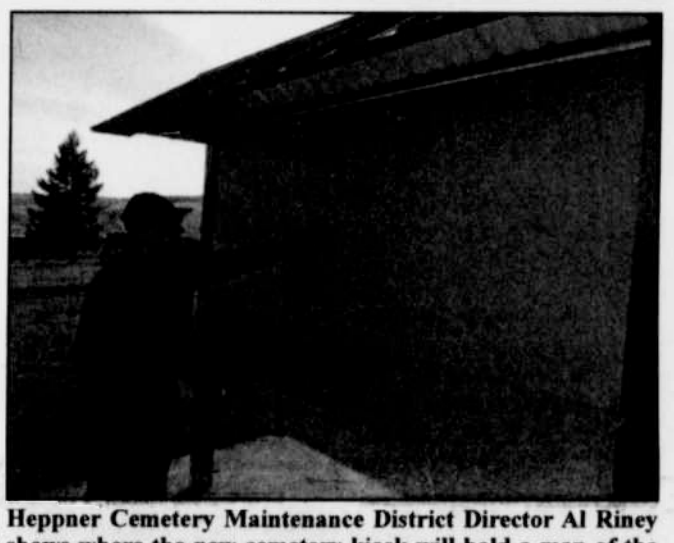
By Andrea Di Salvo

Visitors to Heppner's Masonic Cemetery will soon see a new fixture designed to make life easier for visitors.

A kiosk designed to help family members, friends and genealogy buffs visit and research gravesites within the historic cemetery has been constructed at the edge of the cemetery's small parking lot, near the workshop.

Heppner Cemetery Maintenance District Director Tom Wolff says he and fellow directors Kit George and Al Riney started work on the kiosk because they saw a need.

"Every year, especially around Memorial Day, there are phone calls and questions about grave locations, and this is going to aid in a lot of ways," says Wolff.



Heppner Cemetery Maintenance District Director Al Riney shows where the new cemetery kiosk will hold a map of the cemetery, placed under glass, so visitors can easily find gravesites. *–Photo by Andrea Di Salvo*

Riney, whom Wolff calls the "driving force" behind the project, says the kiosk was a long time coming.

"This is something we've been thinking about for a number of years, and we're finally getting it to completion," he says. "We're trying to update our cemetery so it's more acceptable to the public and they can locate friends and relatives without having to call us."

He added that the book

-See CEMETERY KIOSK/ PAGE TWO

Morrow County follows rest of Eastern Oregon voting Romney

By David Sykes

In last week's general election, Morrow County voted much like the rest of Eastern Oregon, 65 percent Romney and 30 percent Obama. However, 10 largely-populated counties out of the 36 Oregon counties ultimately gave the state to Obama.

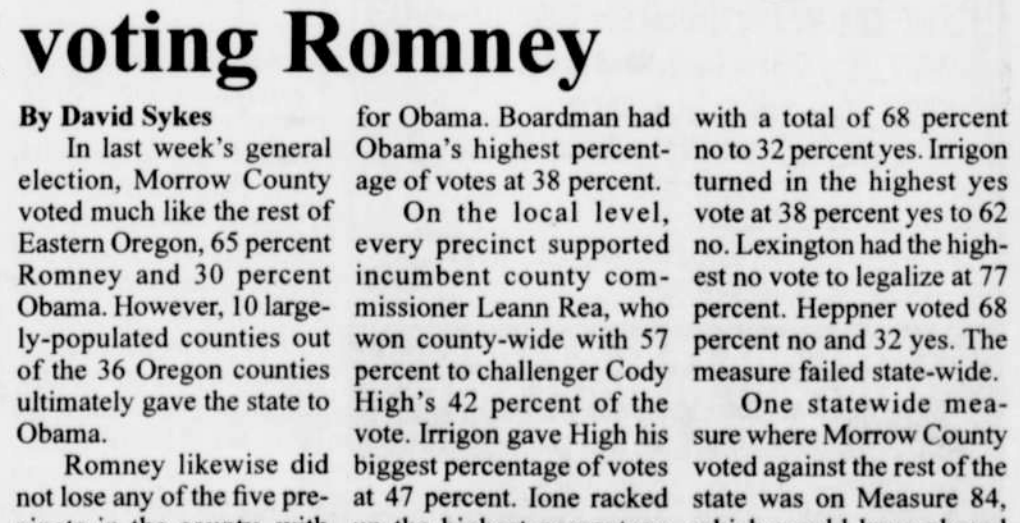
Romney likewise did not lose any of the five precincts in the county, with Ione giving him the highest percentage, 78 percent to Obama's 21 percent. Heppner came in at 68 percent for Romney and 28 percent for Obama. Boardman had Obama's highest percentage of votes at 38 percent.

On the local level, every precinct supported incumbent county commissioner Leann Rea, who won county-wide with 57 percent to challenger Cody High's 42 percent of the vote. Irrigon gave High his biggest percentage of votes at 47 percent. Ione racked up the highest percentage for Rea at 70 percent.

On the state-wide issues, every precinct in the county voted down the marijuana legalization law with a total of 68 percent no to 32 percent yes. Irrigon turned in the highest yes vote at 38 percent yes to 62 no. Lexington had the highest no vote to legalize at 77 percent. Heppner voted 68 percent no and 32 yes. The measure failed state-wide.

One statewide measure where Morrow County voted against the rest of the state was on Measure 84, which would have phased out existing inheritance taxes on large estates and

-See MORROW COUNTY VOTES ROMNEY/PAGE FIVE

G-T closed for Thanksgiving

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed in observance of the Thanksgiving Day holiday Thursday, Nov. 22, and Friday, Nov. 23. Normal business hours will resume Monday, Nov. 26. We wish everyone a safe and happy Thanksgiving weekend.