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HEPPNER
Gazette Times

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Morrow County queen promotes fair, rodeo

Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail pro Rodeo Queen Krysten Powell has been busy this month.

She travelled to Myrtle Creek, OR for the 2013 Miss Teen and Junior Miss Rodeo Oregon coronation, held at the Feathers Casino and Resort. There, she met several other county queens, state queens, directors and the 2012 Miss Rodeo America, Mackenzie Carr.

Queen Krysten participated in the auction and photo session with other visiting royalty, making several new friends. Then she introduced herself and invited them to her coronation on March 2, as well as Morrow County's 100th fair and 91st rodeo, held the third week of August.

Queen Krysten is planning on attending the Miss National Pro Rodeo Association coronation in Bend the weekend of the Jan. 26, as well. There, she will meet several more neighboring county queens and courts that she will seeing a lot of throughout her reign.

"It's looking like a great year, for sure," stated Queen Krysten.

Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Queen Krysten (second from right) with other state-wide royalty at the 2013 Miss Teen and Junior Miss Rodeo Oregon coronation. *–Contributed photo*

Garbage truck overturns on Heppner Hill

A garbage truck traveling northbound on Highway 207 south of Heppner, from John Day on the way to Finley Buttes landfill, overturned Jan. 9 on Heppner Hill. The driver, who was not identified, was transported to Pioneer Memorial Hospital; however, no further information was available concerning his condition. *-Photo by Megan Futter*

New Ducks coach mentions Heppner

Gives small towns a shout-out during NCAA press conference

Heppner received a shout-out from new Ducks head coach Mark Helfrich.

The mention came Sunday during Helfrich's speech during a NCAA college football news conference at the stadium club at Autzen Stadium in Eugene.

Helfrich, described by USA Today as "...a personable 39-year-old native Oregonian," tossed the shout-out to small towns like Heppner when he talked about re-opening portions of practice for fans and signaled on open mind regarding booster functions, which predecessor Chip Kelly famously detested.

"That's part of the job. I grew up in this state, and I know what Oregon football and Oregon athletics mean to a guy in Coos Bay, a guy in Heppner, or wherever. That's a big part of it," Helfrich said. "We're going to do our best to make everybody feel involved."

Water Street closed

Water Street in Heppner will be closed from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday beginning Jan. 23 and continuing for approximately one month.

No access through the street will be available during that time.

Jack Robinson & Sons Construction is in charge of the project.

Ione celebrates inauguration

Ione Community School celebrated the 57th presidential inauguration on Jan. 17 with a bit of pomp and circumstance of its own. The Ione gym had standing room only as a group of dignitaries, played by Ione students and ranging from President Barack Obama and Chief Justice John Roberts to U.S. Rep. Greg Walden and Ione Mayor Linda LaRue, enacted the inaugural events. The historic event ended with the inaugural ball.

Top: Presentation of the colors and introduction of dignitaries started the inaugural formalities in Ione last Thursday. Middle: The grand march after the benediction led the way into the ball. Bottom left: Retired Ione teacher Barbara Collin was recognized for her key role in the last 32 years of the inaugural reenactment. Collin came out of retirement briefly to help again this year. Bottom right: President and Mrs. Obama (Junior Verduzco and Annabelle McDaniel) await their introduction. *–Photos by April Sykes*

Higher education at a higher level

Heppner woman gives new sense of adventure to learning

By Andrea Di Salvo

While many might consider higher education to be an adventure, not many take it to the lengths one local woman did. How far did she go?

Well...Kenya, Africa.

Andrea Nelson, 29, of Heppner is in the first year of her doctorate program, pursuing a Doctorate of Education in educational leadership through George Fox University, a Quaker university based in Newberg, OR.

Nelson, junior high language arts/social studies teacher at Heppner Junior/Senior High School, was already balancing school and a career with her marriage to Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson and being a mother to their three-and-a-half-year-old daughter...something most working parents would attest is quite enough. Not one to do things by halves, though, she jumped at the chance to go just a little bit farther.

She first heard of the opportunity to go to Kenya when doing coursework at George Fox in Newberg last summer. One of her professors, she says, had done a sabbatical in Kenya. Nelson was fascinated by the stories her professor told, and excited by the possibilities.

Andrea Nelson (far right) with her George Fox professors and several Kenyan teachers and administrators in front of one of the schools they visited in Kenya last fall; Nelson says school conditions were challenging, with many of the school buildings having mud walls like this one. *-Contributed photo*

"I jumped right on board and said, 'When can I go?'" she says.

Nelson was granted leave from her position at HHS and found herself on a plane for Africa at the end of September. She was gone two weeks, from Sept. 29 to Oct. 12.

With work and family commitments right up to the day she left, Nelson says she was "Too busy to be nervous," not even getting a chance to pack until right before her departure.

She says she travelled with some of her professors from George Fox and they then met up with other teaching professionals in Kenya, including the leader of all the Quaker schools in Kenya. Nelson says she didn't find the trip daunting...but, then, she has a history of overseas travel, including two weeks in Zimbabwe when she was 12, time in Costa Rica, and travel throughout Europe and Mexico.

"I like to travel," she says, though she adds that the trip to Kenya could have been difficult on her

-See KENYA TRIP/PAGE SIX

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