

HEPPNER

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# Gazette Times

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## Police arrest masked man after I-84 car chase

Morrow County Sheriff Steven Myren has reported that Morrow County police chased and eventually arrested a masked man who had been reported to be driving erratically on Interstate 84. Morrow County Sheriff's Office reports that on Dec. 31 around 3 p.m., police were advised of a light blue Ford SUV driving westbound on I-84 near the Morrow/Umatilla line. The vehicle was reportedly swerving in and out of traffic, operating at speeds ranging from 50 to 70 mph and running with hazard flashers on. MCSO units responded and observed the vehicle, driven by an individual wearing a "mask of some sort" and a dark colored hood. Police attempted to stop the vehicle as it approached

Boardman, at which point, they said, the driver began to "wave his hands in the air and honk his horn" but did not pull over. MCSO advised Gilliam County police, who waited for the driver at the Morrow/Gilliam line. Myren said one MCSO unit passed the suspect on the interstate and assisted GCSO in setting up spike strips. It was those spike strips that flattened both the vehicle's tires and ended the car chase near milepost 141. Police arrested the driver, identified as Adolfo Martin Mendez-Lopez, 32, of Hermiston. The undersheriff said Mendez-Lopez initially claimed there was a bomb in the vehicle.



Adolfo Martin Mendez-Lopez

The vehicle was cleared, but the search uncovered a handgun on the passenger seat, a machete under the driver's seat and a large kitchen knife under a floor mat. The suspect refused to say why he was driving in the manner he was. He was booked into Umatilla County Jail on charges of reckless driving and attempting to elude a police officer. Police say the investigation is ongoing. MCSO said Boardman Police Department and Gilliam County Sheriff's Office assisted in bringing the incident to a peaceful resolution.

## No surprise to South Morrow County, December was chilly

Recent news from the National Weather Service won't come as a surprise to residents in South Morrow County...December was a little colder than normal. The NWS reports that the average temperature was 32.3 degrees, or 1.1 degrees below normal. High temperatures averaged 42.4 degrees, which was one degree above normal. The highest was 61 degrees on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Low temperatures averaged 22.3 degrees, which was 3.2 degrees below normal. The lowest was -6 degrees, on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Heppner experienced 24 days with the low temperature below 32

degrees and one day below zero. There were six days when the high temperature stayed below 32 degrees. Precipitation only totaled 0.58 inches during December, which was 0.74 inches below normal. Measurable precipitation of at least .01 inch was received on 10 days with the heaviest, 0.15 of an inch, reported on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Precipitation in 2013 totaled 10.89 inches, which is 3.11 inches below normal. Since October, the water-year precipitation at Heppner has been 2.37 inches, 1.69 inches below normal. Snowfall totaled

5.5 inches. The heaviest snowfall was 5 inches, reported on the 7<sup>th</sup>; those five inches of snow on the 7<sup>th</sup> was also the greatest depth of snow on the ground. The highest wind gust was 46 mph, which occurred on the 1st. The outlook for January from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for near-normal temperatures and near-normal precipitation. Normal highs for Heppner during January are 43.6 degrees and normal lows are 26.7 degrees. The 30-year normal precipitation is 1.47 inches.

## Town and Country Awards planned for Jan. 16

Heppner Chamber of Commerce's annual Town and Country Community Awards will be held on Thursday, January 16, at the Morrow County Fairgrounds. The event will start at 6 p.m. with a no-host social hour provided by Bucknum's. The dinner and program will begin at 7 p.m.

Tickets are now available for purchase at Bank of Eastern Oregon, Heppner chamber office, Community Bank and Murray's for \$20 per person. The theme for this year is "Heppner Magic, It's the People." As in years past, special

recognition will be given to Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Business of the Year, and Citizen-Educator of the Year, as well as a Youth Award and Lifetime Achievement Award. The event is sponsored by Ambre Energy's Morrow Pacific Project and Portland General Electric.

## 'Katie goes to Haiti'

By Andrea Di Salvo  
Most people have heard the saying, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime." For Morrow County native Katie Heath, the idea behind that quote came to life in a dramatic way that most people never experience...teaching radiology to medical students in a hospital in Haiti last month.



Katie Heath (center) with some of her 27 radiology students at Bernard Mevs in Port-au-Prince. -Contributed photo

Heath, 28, who grew up in Lone, is the daughter of Theresa Crawford of Heppner and Craig Hams of Lone. She and her husband, Heppner native Ryan Heath, now live in Pendleton, OR, but Heath is a distance student with Linn-Benton Community College in Lebanon, OR. She is studying radiology and, when she graduates in two months, will be a radiologic technologist, doing x-rays and computed tomography (CT). So how did she end up in Haiti? Linn-Benton Program Director for the Diagnostic Imaging Program Stacy Mallory, one of Heath's instructors, was part of a disaster relief team after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake in 2010 devastated Haiti and killed a quarter of a million people. Mallory was also involved in developing a program called Project Medishare. Project Medishare's website states that its goal is, "...to build capacity and empower Haitians to create and sustain their own healthcare system by investing in the training, education and employment of local medical professionals." Among its other work,

"That's part of what this program is about." Heath was in Haiti from Dec. 7 to Dec. 23, 2013, a little more than two weeks. She admits that it seemed longer than that, but says that the experience was also amazing in ways she never expected. "Initially I went to Haiti to teach radiology students about radiation safety and how to take x-rays. I felt blessed to be teaching these amazing people, but I quickly realized the Haitian people/culture were teaching me more about life, happiness and tragedy than I could have ever imagined," Heath wrote in her journal about the experience. "I quickly fell in love with the island and culture. It is so beautiful there even with crumbled buildings and poverty. There's a certain sense of tranquility within island you just do not get here in America." In fact, Heath says she was surprised by many things about her trip. "I didn't realize how much more they still need there. It's hard to

wanted. "There was running water but it would be cold, and you couldn't drink it, it would make you sick," she adds. She also says, though, that there was a bright side. "It was nice because the weather was like 95 degrees during the day, so some days a cold shower felt nice." She says the language barrier was difficult; she had to teach via an interpreter. However, that was more than offset, she says, by seeing how eager her students were to learn. "It made me feel really good to be there. Everything I said or showed them, they were so involved with," Heath says. "You don't see that so much here. They saw it as a gift." Aside from teaching her 27 students, Heath says she also volunteered time with the hospital. "When I was done with my students for the day, I volunteered with the ER, with pediatrics, took x-rays. I pretty much worked while I was down there," she says. Heath says it was difficult not having the proper supplies, as well as seeing the shortages with which the hospital had to work. "Just seeing what little the hospital has for the medicine for patients because there's no way for them to get it. Volunteers coming down lots of times will bring medications," Heath says, but adds that those supplies don't come close to covering the needs. Heath says one of the most memorable experiences of the trip happened through her volunteer work. It was an infant they called Baby Bernard, named after the



Katie Heath (second from right) with the Bernard Mevs radiology director and two technologists that graduated from the program last year. -Contributed photo

Project Medishare operates Haiti's only critical care and trauma hospital, Hospital Bernard Mevs in Port-au-Prince. Part of Mallory's involvement with the project was in setting up a radiology program for medical students down there. Last year was the first year one of Mallory's own students had made the trip to Bernard Mevs; this year Heath was one of several students chosen to travel to Port-au-Prince to teach Haitian natives. "My school chose a couple students to go," she says. "They sent us over individually. We don't know anyone until we get there." "People were calling my trip 'Katie Goes to Haiti,'" she says. "We go to teach these people so they're self-sustainable," she adds. That way, she says, the Haitian people can do things for themselves rather than relying on volunteers.

envision a place without seeing it; it was nothing of what I expected. I also didn't expect it would be so beautiful. It is a stunning country," she says. "There's so much rubble everywhere still from the earthquake, but then you see the landscape, and it's just gorgeous." According to Project Medishare's website, Haiti was chosen as a focus because it is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. "A mere 90-minute plane ride southeast of Miami, Haiti's people suffer almost unimaginable hardship. In the nation's poorest communities, 1 in every 10 children dies before reaching age 5," states the site. In a nation that poor, of course, there are challenges. "The littlest things that you take for granted every day and just don't have," Heath remembers. "When I came back, a hot shower was the one thing I really

Baby Bernard, well and happy one and a half weeks after he arrived at the hospital. "Bernard Mevs can do amazing things with what little they have," says Heath. "I'm blessed to be a part of it." -Contributed photo hospital that saved his life. "Baby Bernard was found in some kind of facility by Christian missionaries. He was found on the floor being chewed on by rats and hadn't been fed the six days; he was -See KATIE IN HAITI/PAGE TWO

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, mail them to PO Box 337 in Heppner, email them to editor@rapidserve.net or text cell phone photos to 541-980-6674.

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