

What a science fair!

The eighth annual lone science fair boasted 113 entries this year, including a solar heater, a giant robotic claw, a study on bacteria and dog saliva, and the opportunity to smell socks drenched in skunk spray.

The lone elementary school had 46 different projects entered, some done by individuals and others done with mixed-grade teams. The team projects allowed sixth-graders the opportunity to develop leadership skills and share the learning process with their first- and second-grade partners.

There also were 18 entries from the middle school, and 49 individual entries from the high school.

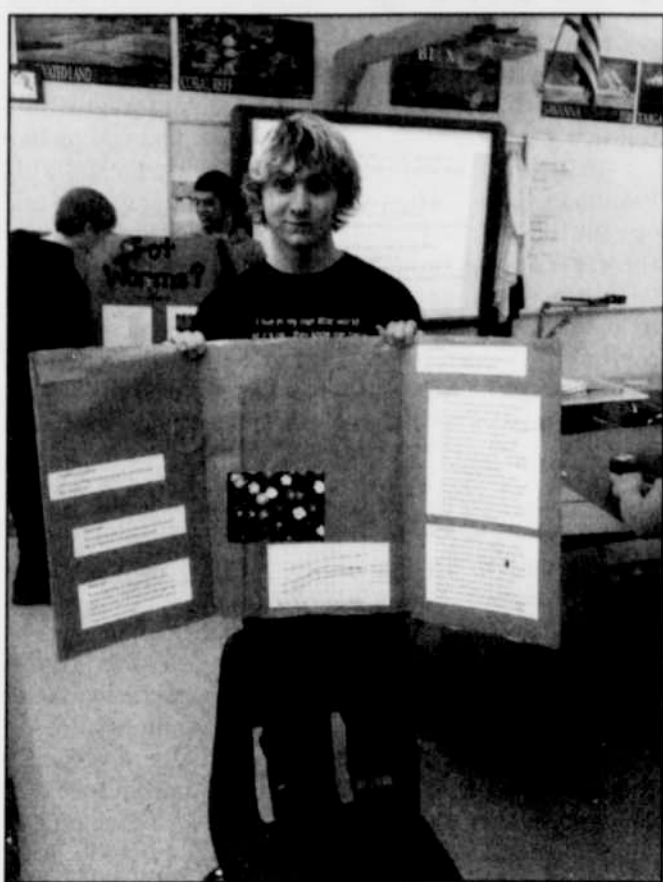
The grand prize winners included Ann Rietman in the high school, Dayshawn Neal, Wyatt McNary and Roman Rodriguez in the middle school, and Matt Orem in the elementary school.

Many students walked away with other awards. Category winners for the high school included Rachel Holland, Marisol

Avila-Ramirez, Jenna Taylor, Daniel Doherty, Sadie Hasbell, Hannah Flynn, Maddie Camp, John Maier, Katie Gilbert, Elizabeth Ayala, Jared Snyder, Hannah Padberg, Tristan Estabrook, Ashley Medina, Jessie Flynn, Hector Aguilar, Sydney Qualls, Brendan Thompson and Ann Rietmann.

Middle school category winners included Dayshawn Neal, Wyatt McNary and Roman Rodriguez; Aidan Barresse; Hayden Qualls and Nestor Ramirez; JD Aleksa; Gabe Harper; Sonia Medina and Morgan Orem; and Sydney Stefani.

Category winners from the elementary school included Jessica Median (fifth), Katelynn Thompson and Hailey Heideman (fourth), Jesus Escalante (fifth), Emma Rietmann and Cameron Proudfoot (sixth and second grades), Zoey Gilbert (sixth), Lilly Chamberlin (sixth), Matt Orem (sixth), Faviola Juarez and Gary Walls (fourth), Mackenzie Heideman and Katie Spivey (sixth and first grades), Elaina Ehrmantraut



Foreground: Rory Barresse displays his findings regarding vinca growth. Background: Jason Juarez and Brendan Thompson wonder, "Got worms?" —Contributed photo

(sixth), Matt Orem and Corey Rice (sixth grade and first), Emma Rietmann and Mackenzie Heideman (sixth), Lily Chamberlin and Liam Heideman (sixth and first), Jayne Simpson and Emily Ehrmantraut (fourth), Jake Heideman (sixth), Josaylyn Nichols, Hailee Peck and Ethan Ramos (sixth, first, and second grades), Karen Cambero (sixth), Annabelle McDaniel and Madison Alldritt (sixth).

Once again, parents and community members were encouraged to vote for their favorite presentation from each age group. This year the high school winner for the people's choice award was tied between

Yaniva Garcia and Sydney Qualls. Yaniva worked on a project that looked at the way light traveled through different liquids, while Sydney presented work on the effects of natural and artificial dyes.

In the middle school, "Da Claw," presented by Austin Morter, Tyson Epperson and Daniel Eubanks, drew quite a few votes, tying with Hayden Qualls and Nestor Ramirez's work on crystal growth in different temperatures.

In the elementary school, the catapult built and tested by Matt Orem was a clear crowd pleaser and won the People's Choice award for the elementary school category.



Lexie Garret and her science fair project on yeast. —Contributed photo

USDA encourages early registration for FSA programs

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia Friday recommended that farmers and ranchers who plan to participate in FSA programs register in advance. Producers are encouraged to report farm records and business structure changes to a local FSA Service Center before April 15.

Enrollment for the disaster programs authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, including the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) will begin by April 15.

"We expect significant interest in these programs," said Garcia. "Early registration should help improve the sign-up process and allow us to expedite implementation of the programs. I strongly encourage producers to complete their paperwork ahead of time."

Examples of updates or changes to report include:

- New producers or producers who have not reported farm records to FSA.

- Producers who have recently bought, sold or rented land. Those producers need to ensure that changes have been reported and properly recorded by local FSA

county office personnel. Reports of purchased or sold property should include a copy of the land deed, and if land has been leased, then documentation should be provided that indicates the producer had control of the acreage.

- Producers that have changed business structures (e.g. formed a partnership or LLC) need to ensure that these relationships and shares are properly recorded with FSA. Even family farms that have records on file may want to ensure that this is recorded accurately as it may impact payment limits.

Farm records can be updated during business hours at FSA service centers that administer the county where the farm or ranch is located. Producers can contact their local FSA Service Center in advance

to find out what paperwork they may need. In addition, bank account information should be supplied or updated if necessary to ensure that producers receive payments as quickly as possible through direct deposit.

- While any producer may report farm records and business structure changes, it is especially important for producers who suffered livestock, livestock grazing, honeybee, farm-raised fish, or tree/vine losses for 2011, 2012, 2013 or 2014, and may be eligible for assistance through one of the four disaster programs.

For further information about our disaster programs and USDA's Farm Bill implementation plan, visit FSA's 2014 Farm Bill webpage. FSA Service Center locations can be found on the FSA website.

Community lunch menu

St. Patrick's Catholic Parish members will serve lunch on Wednesday, April 2, at St. Patrick's Senior Center. The meal will include baked fish with a parmesan crust, rice pilaf, mixed vegetables, pickles, hot rolls and orange tapioca. Milk is served at each meal. Suggested donation is \$3.50 per meal. Menu is subject to change.

Agriculture secretary announces more opportunity for producers in new Farm Bill

WASHINGTON—Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack Monday announced increased opportunity for producers as a result of the 2014 Farm Bill.

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for many of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of loan term limits for guaranteed operating loans;

- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size;

- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to two percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor

of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at five percent;

- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership down payments from \$225,000 to \$300,000;

- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit;

- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal

government;

- Increase of the guarantee amount on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers;

- Microloans will not count toward loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Visit the FSA Farm Bill website for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

Ione students 'dig deep' during special presentation



Ione Middle School Leadership Team with national speaker Bill Cordes. His slogan is YOGOWYPI: "You get out what you put in." During his talk, Cordes focused on relationships and respect; he had students laughing but also digging deep emotionally in a three-hour presentation March 18. Students at 4-H camp heard Cordes this summer and came back to school ready to hear him again and share him with the rest of the student body. The Ione Education Foundation and the leadership team funded Cordes' trip to motivate, inspire and encourage all Ione middle and high school students. Pictured with Cordes: Morgan Orem, Karsen Rios, Kaitlin Garrett and Sonia Medina. Not pictured: Maggie Flynn. —Contributed photo

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10.

A job well done from the Heppner community

To the editor:

I am writing to commend the Heppner community for doing an excellent job of preparing the town for the St. Patrick's Day celebration. The town looked great, thanks to the efforts of businesses, individual citizens and several organizations, including the Heppner Chamber of Commerce, the Heppner Maintenance Section of the Oregon Department of Transportation, the employees of the Bank of Eastern Oregon, the Heppner Lions Club, the Morrow County employees union, the Heppner Elementary School staff and the Heppner Ranger District employees. The town was completely litter-free and in great shape for both ourselves and our visitors.

(s) John Edmundson, Heppner

Gone days versus modern ways

Forgetfulness? Aging doesn't help with memory retention but you are still alright if you realize that somewhere in your gray matter is the answer to that burning question, like "Who was that I just spoke with?"

However, like pain, sometimes its best to not remember certain things. But one simply can't forget some of the past experiences. A reminder of things past was sent to me with pictures of antiquated things from years ago. There was a picture of a flimsy child's car seat that hung loosely over the back of the passenger side facing forward in the front seat. Nothing like today's heavily padded and reinforced car seats that take two people to install in the back seat so children face backwards, a much improved safety factor. Somehow my three kids escaped car-related injuries before there were safe car seats, yet it would have saved some gray hair if restraints had been available for toddlers wrestling in the back of a station wagon.

We have definitely outgrown some of the things that were so common years ago. The old crank wall phone is now an antique, as are farmer party lines. Nowadays kids have more gadgets than they have pockets; no wonder their pants sag to their knees. It amazes me how they can walk, chew gum and constantly text someone who might be just an arm's length away. I sure hope face-to-face conversation, an important social skill, won't become a lost art. Do some families actually get through a meal without ringing gadgets?

Aside from the miraculous technology that keeps us in touch with world-wide issues and everyone else's problems, there are some things that should be censored. The vile gutter language of rappers is disgraceful. Such negative free speech can influence the behavior of people, especially younger folks, who are also subjected to lewd sexual innuendoes, nudity and raw violence. People can become desensitized to such vulgarity that does affect impressionable young minds.

Okay I'm not suggesting returning to Grace Kelly or Fred Astaire and Ginger Rodgers movies. But today's dancing has taken provocative poses to a whole new level as seen on "Dancing with the Stars" program. Formal ballroom dancing looks like a cake walk compared to the gyrations and holds that were deemed inappropriate ages ago. Jitter bugging days were once considered risqué even though gals wore head-to-toe outfits including poodle skirts bouffant with petticoats.

Then there are television shows that make me cringe. Again, I'm not suggesting returning to the Brady Bunch type show, but does there have to be so much bloody violence in what is supposed to be entertainment? There will probably never be another Archie Bunker or Cosby's Dr. Huckleberry, but they made people laugh out loud for days. Now there are reality shows supposedly based on real life. Whimsical bearded characters act stupid and make duck calls while the money jingles in their pockets. Or how about Alaskans trying not to freeze their buns in an outhouse that's in danger of falling over during sub-zero weather? It also boggles my mind that some idiots are willing to bare it all and supposedly go empty handed (and everything else) as they tromp through a swamp or jungle so viewers can sympathize? Does all that whiteness pose a reflection issue for cameramen or blind first-aid teams close at hand?

Looking at folks in the buff may be entertainment for some but hopefully modesty won't become another endangered human behavior.

(s) Merlyn Robinson, Heppner