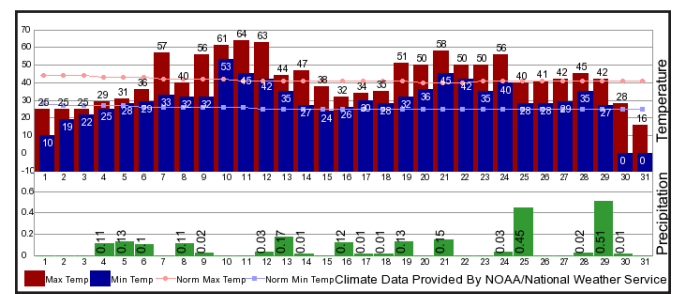


Gazette Times

Despite recent cold snap, weather expected to continue on the warm side

Despite last week's cold spell, the National Weather Service in Pendleton reports that temperatures in Heppner averaged warmer than normal during December, a trend that is expected to continue into January.

The average December temperature was 35.9 degrees, which was 2.5 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged 42.3 degrees, which was 0.9 degrees above normal. The highest was 64 degrees on the 11th. Low temperatures



December's overall warm trend, graphed above, is expected to continue into January, NWS reports.

averaged 29.6 degrees, which was 4.1 degrees above normal. The lowest was 0 degrees, on the 30th. There were 17 days with the low temperature below 32 degrees. There were seven days when the high temperature stayed below 32 degrees.

Precipitation totaled 2.12 inches during December, which was 0.80 inches above normal. Measurable precipitation of at least .01 inch was received on 18 days with the heaviest, 0.51 inches, reported on the 29th.

Precipitation in 2014 totaled 12.65 inches, which is 1.35 inches below normal. Since October, the water-year precipitation at Heppner has been 4.04 inches, which is 0.02 inches below normal.

Snowfall totaled 6.3

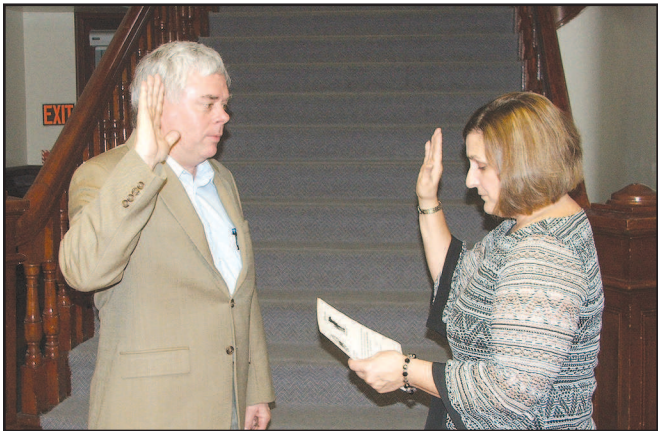
inches, with at least one inch of snow reported on two days. The heaviest snowfall was five inches, reported on the 29th. The greatest depth of snow on the ground was five inches on the 29th.

The highest wind gust was 88 mph on the 11th.

The outlook for January from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for above-normal temperatures and below-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.

The National Weather Service is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department.

County officials sworn into office



County officials elected in the November election were sworn into office earlier this week. Morrow County Clerk Bobbi Childers administered the oath of office to Don Russell (above left), who takes office as Morrow County Commissioner, and Mike Gorman (above right), Morrow County Assessor.

Town & Country Awards are just around the corner

Heppner Chamber of Commerce's annual Town and Country Awards, sponsored by Portland General Electric, will be held Thursday, Jan. 15.

The event will start at 6 p.m. with a no-host social time, with buffet or served dinner to start at 6:30 p.m. The awards program will start about 7:30 p.m.

Alvin Liu of Cornerstone Gallery will be cater-

ing the dinner and will be serving aged prime rib steak with au jus and horseradish aioli, toasted asparagus, garlic butter couscous dusted with Parmigiano-Reggiano; dinner rolls with butter, mandarin orange tapioca parfait, and beverage.

Tickets are \$20 and are now available at the Bank of Eastern Oregon, Heppner chamber office/city

hall, Community Bank and Murray's Drug.

Event coordinators ask that everyone who plans to attend purchase tickets so they plan on enough food for everyone.

Of course, the evening's highlight will be the awards, as the community celebrates Man of the Year, Woman of the Year, Business of the Year, Youth Recognition, Citizen-Educator

of the Year and Lifetime Achievement.

Also that evening will be the coronation of the Morrow County Fair and Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo Queen Macy Gibbs.

Contact the Heppner chamber at 541-676-5536 or heppnerchamber@centurytel.net to purchase ticket to be held and picked up the night of the event.

Klamath Falls crash claims life of Hermiston man

A fatal accident near Klamath Falls, OR claimed the life of Hermiston man Garrett Zimmer on Dec. 28, Oregon State Police reports. Zimmer was the son of Brad and Jennifer (Rill) Zimmer of Klamath Falls.

According to an OSP statement, at approximately 7:40 a.m. that day, troopers responded to the South Side Bypass on Hwy. 140 East on a reported single-vehicle rollover crash.

The red Ford Ranger pickup had been travelling westbound on the highway and left the north side of

the roadway, colliding with a roadside lamppost and highway sign, then rolling several times into an adjacent pasture.

Two of the vehicle's occupants, 22-year-old Zimmer and Marri D. Young-Wellbaum, 26, of Eagle Point, were ejected from the pickup and pronounced deceased at the scene. A third occupant, Guage L. Gray, 22, of Klamath Falls, was transported to Sky Lakes Hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

None of the occupants in the vehicle were wearing



A single-vehicle rollover crash near Klamath Falls claimed the life of 22-year-old Hermiston man Garrett Zimmer on Dec. 28. —Photo courtesy of Oregon State Police

safety restraints. OSP says the cause of the crash remains under investigation. —See obituary PAGE TWO

Libraries of Eastern Oregon receives \$10,000 award

Libraries of Eastern Oregon (LEO) has received a \$10,000 award from the Tom's of Maine natural products company in recognition of LEO's accomplishments to serve public libraries in the region.

One organization in every U.S. state and the District of Columbia was selected by a team of judges to receive the award. The 50

final award recipients for this year were selected from a pool of more than 3,000 national applicants.

The \$500,000 provided nationwide by Tom's of Maine's "50 States for Good" program is targeted to provide grassroots organizations with funding to support their projects serving children and families.

"We're awarding more

than \$500,000 to support organizations on the front lines of making communities stronger across the country," said Susan Dewhirst, programs manager at Tom's of Maine. "Every community advocate we heard from—reflected in thousands of nominations—has a unique and special vision for bringing a lasting, positive impact to where they live."

"We're delighted to have received this award," said Lyn Craig, LEO executive director. "LEO has worked hard behind the scenes over the past 14 years to provide area libraries with services that some couldn't otherwise afford on their own, such as community programs and Library2Go, the online service with free downloadable e-books.

"By collaborating

throughout the region, public libraries in eastern Oregon are able to do more together than each could do alone. It's the library directors who really deserve the recognition," Craig added.

The award to LEO will be used to further develop early literacy and community programs in the region. Based at Joseph, OR, LEO serves public libraries in 15 eastern Oregon counties. For further information, contact Craig at leolibraries@gmail.com.

Extreme wind in December was the top regional weather story

The year 2014 was a crazy year for weather in this region. In recognition of that, eight staff members of the National Weather Service in Pendleton voted on the 10 most important local weather events of 2014:

10. October warmth... Summerlike weather continued into October. Monument, Kennewick, and Walla Walla had the warmest October on record. Heppner was one of several cities reporting a top-five warm October.

9. Dry water year... From October 2013 to September 2014, Kennewick had the driest water year, receiving only 3.81 inches. The previous record was 3.92, set in the 1963-64 water year. Walla Walla had their fourth driest water year, and Redmond's water year was 10th driest.

8. Wildfires... Dry thunderstorms and dry vegetation led to numerous wildfires across the Inland Northwest during July and August. In the NWS Pendleton Fire Weather service area, there were 456,000 acres burned in 2014, compared to 135,000 in 2013 and 182,000 in 2012.

7. Damaging wind Jan. 11-12... Wind gusts 60-90 mph led to trees down, power outages, and roof damage. A semi-truck was blown off the road near West Richland.

6. Severe thunderstorms Aug. 12-14... Thunderstorms with heavy rainfall, damaging winds, and blowing dust hit many areas of the Inland Northwest. Hail up to golfball size fell southeast of Meacham. Over an inch of rain in an hour or less was reported in some areas, including west of Hermiston. A mudslide occurred on Highway

12. Wind gusts to 68 mph were reported on the Hanford Reservation and a tree was uprooted northwest of Pendleton.

5. Record November cold... Arctic air became entrenched the second week of November. Many locations did not reach above freezing for more than a week. After the snow fell and the skies cleared... temperatures plummeted even further. Several sites had one of their coldest all-time November mornings on record Nov. 15 and 16.

4. Mid-November snow... Early season snow was heavy in a several locations including Heppner. The heavy snow caused a roof collapse at a wood products mill in Prineville.

2. (TIED) Hot July... It was the hottest on record at Bend, Condon, Whitman Mission and Yakima. A top-five hot July was recorded at Heppner, among other locations.

2. (TIED) Heavy snow Feb. 6-9... Heavy snow fell in most areas with 1-2 feet accumulating in Condon, WNW Bend, WSW The Dalles, Echo and LaGrande. Three fatalities were associated with the heavy snow. Rain occurred during the snow melt a few days later with minor flooding across Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook and Wheeler counties.

1. December wind... A deep low pressure system moving north, just off the Oregon and Washington coast, brought widespread wind gusts over 60 mph, which caused tree and building damage, power outages, and vehicular accidents. Wind gusts of at least 80 mph were reported south of Ione, WNW of Ruggs, NW Heppner and Condon.

Heppner chamber annual meeting this week

The next lunch meeting of the Heppner Chamber of Commerce will be the chamber's annual luncheon this Thursday, Jan. 8, from noon to 1 p.m. The annual meeting will be held in the St. Patrick's Senior Center dining room.

Cost of lunch is \$10; Pudding on the Ritz will cater. Chamber lunch attendees are asked to RSVP at 541-676-5536 no later than the Wednesday before to guarantee a lunch.

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