

# Gazette Times

VOL. 134 NO. 5 8 Pages Wednesday, February 11, 2015 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

## Bedortha appointed to Heppner City Council

By David Sykes

Teresa Bedortha was appointed Monday to the Heppner City Council, filling out the term of Skip Matthews, who moved up to the mayoral position following his election to that spot in November.

Bedortha, who was born and raised in Heppner and has spent the past 34 years here, works as a loan processor for the Bank of Eastern Oregon.

"Being raised in Heppner I would like to help keep Heppner up and going as a strong community to live in," she said in her application for the position. "I would like to help find ways to bring more people to Heppner," she added.

As qualifications for the position, she pointed to her history in Heppner and the community and her financial knowledge from working in the banking and title business.

Bedortha's was the



Teresa Bedortha is sworn into office by Heppner Mayor Skip Matthews. -Contributed photo

only application received from the public for consideration for the position.

In other business, the council heard from Richard Stoddard of Barnett & Moro CPAs about the completed 2014 financial audit. Overall the city received high marks and a clean bill of health; however, the auditors did raise two areas of "concern." Stoddard

said the bond taken out to finance the city's water project in 2005 requires net water revenues equal to at least 110 percent of yearly debt service.

"The city's 2014-15 budget appears to not comply with this covenant... We recommend that city review its costs to operate the water and sewer systems, cut costs if possible, and raise

## Lock-out at elementary school ends without incident

Parents of Heppner Elementary School students were notified of a "lock-out" that occurred at the school related to a police incident Monday morning.

According to information released by the school, an incident in which police officers were involved occurred in the HES back parking lot. The Morrow County Sheriff's Office requested that Heppner



Heppner Elementary underwent a "lock-out" Monday morning due to a police incident in the school's back parking lot. -Contributed photo

## OSU economist to speak at WCVEDG annual meeting

The Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) will hold its annual luncheon Thursday, Feb. 19, from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. in the St. Patrick's Senior Center dining room.

The guest speaker will be Oregon State University Extension Service Economist Bruce Sorte, who will give a presentation on "Rural Economics."

Sorte received his bachelor's and master's degrees 30 years apart at Oregon State University. He worked in banking, manufacturing and retail prior to returning to OSU. He now analyzes the economic impacts of

policy options for state and local government agencies and organizations on topics as varied as globalization, a bottled-water plant, affordable housing, tourism, alternative energy, local foods to schools, the viability of small or adaptive farms, and grazing on public lands. One of his current projects is estimating the economic impacts of agriculture and food in the five western states.

Sorte has published numerous reports and articles, and he is a regular presenter at service clubs and workshops. He also served as a

-See WCVEDG MEETING/

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## 14<sup>th</sup> annual Cruz-In set for March 14



The annual Cruz-In, set this year for March 14, shows off classic cars ranging from vehicles like this oldie-but-goodie to modern street rods. -File photo

On March 14, the 14<sup>th</sup> annual St. Paddy's Cruz-In will be held during the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual St. Patrick's Celebration in Heppner.

The car show area will be on Willow Street, between Heppner Family Foods and St. Patrick's Senior Center, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For anyone who has a classic vehicle and wants to join the show, registration will start at 9 a.m. The entry fee is \$20 per vehicle.

Awards this year will include Leprechaun's Choice, Mustang's Choice, Best Convertible, Best 1910s - 1920s Car or Pickup, Best Street Rod, Best Paint, Best Restomod Car, Best of Show, and more. Also, there will be a Participant's Choice award to be voted on by the car owners themselves. Judging will begin at 10 a.m. The awards will

-See CRUZ-IN COMING/

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## Heppner planning commission to hold hearing on medical marijuana zoning

The Heppner Planning Commission has announced it will conduct a public hearing at 7 p.m. on March 2 at Heppner City Hall regarding proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance.

The proposed amendments are regarding land use regulations in response to medical marijuana dispensary legislation.

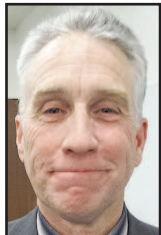
The commission says it is considering either commercial or industrial zones for any medical marijuana facility, grow site or laboratory, though both would require a conditional use permit.

## Next school year to have Aug. 31 start date in county district schools

School board gives Dirksen high marks on evaluation

By April Sykes

The Morrow County School Board, at its regular meeting in Irrigon Monday night, gave Superintendent Dirk Dirksen high marks on his annual performance evaluation. Board Chair Thad Killingbeck said that Dirksen received all excellent or outstanding marks in all categories, and commended him for his "outstanding" work.



Dirk Dirksen

Also at the meeting, the board approved option 1 for the 2015-16 school calendar with school beginning before Labor Day, on Aug. 31. Option 1 was the overwhelming choice of site council members, teachers and administrators. With this option, staff in-service

will be held Aug. 24-27, with students beginning Aug. 31 and the students' last day June 9. Christmas

break will be from Dec. 18 to Jan. 3 with school resuming on Jan. 4. Spring break is the week of March 21-25. Also, when Monday is a holiday, school will be held on Friday.

Calendar option 2 also called for staff in-service Aug. 24-27 and students beginning Aug. 31. However, with this option there would be no school on Friday when Monday is a holiday, so the last day of school would have been June 16. Option 3 called for an early start date, with staff in-service Aug. 17-18 and Aug. 24-25 and students beginning Aug. 26 with students' last day June 7. Option 4 had staff in-service Aug. 17-18 and 24-25, students beginning Aug. 26 and students' last day June 15. With this option there would have been no school on Fridays when Monday is a holiday.

The board also touched briefly on a "lock out" at Heppner Elementary School on the morning of Feb. 9. HES Principal Matt Combe said the Morrow County Sheriff contacted him and advised him to institute a lock-out at the school because of an incident with a suspect in the school parking lot. He said the person in question was arrested and then the lock-out was discontinued without incident.

Dirksen commended teachers, administration, parents and students concerning the news that the district's graduation rates for all three high schools far exceed the state average. Heppner High School

had a 96.3 percent four-year graduation rate, "nearly 25 percent higher than the state average." Riverside High School in Boardman had an 83.1 percent four-year graduation rate and Irrigon High School had a 79 percent rate. The district's average was 83.23 percent, compared to the state average of 71.98 percent.

Concerning school enrollment, Dirksen said that enrollment was still up around 67 students district-wide.

In other business, the board:

-adopted new graduation requirements.

-adopted new bidding requirements.

-approved a resolution on open enrollment. The board will accept no non-resident students for the 2015-16 school year, based on current enrollment projections, staffing and available resources.

-received the following enrollment report: A.C. Houghton Elementary, Irrigon-288; Sam Boardman Elementary, Boardman-354; Heppner Elementary-180; Irrigon Elementary-168; Windy River Elementary, Board-

-See MCSUD MEETING/

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## FIND THE SHAMROCK!

The Shamrock Hunt is back! After a long hiatus, the St. Patrick's Day shamrock treasure hunt is back. The first person to find the hidden shamrock will win a 2014 Silver Eagle donated by the Bank of Eastern Oregon, which is on display at the Heppner branch. The Silver Eagle is valued around \$50.



- RULES-**
1. A new set of clues to guide you to the hidden shamrock will appear in each edition of the Heppner Gazette-Times.
  2. A total of five clues beginning with the Feb. 11 edition will be published each week on the front page.
  3. The hidden shamrock is not on private property and no digging or moving of objects, dirt or other materials is necessary to find the shamrock.
  4. The first person to find the shamrock and bring it to the Heppner Gazette-Times office will claim their prize.

### CLUE #1

A chatty stone is just the Rx  
To contemplate here about beginning your quest  
Listen close to what it says  
And you may just end up out there ahead  
3 Numerals on this clue reside  
Add them up - don't be shy  
Keep this integer in your mind  
So in your search you don't fall far behind

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