

Fall sports are just around the corner

With the hint of fall in the air comes a reminder that school is about to begin and fall sports season is almost upon us.

School will begin in both Heppner and Ione schools next Monday, Aug. 31. Heppner High School has posted a start time of 7:50 a.m. Monday, while Ione's start time 8 a.m.

Friday night lights will begin for Heppner High School on Friday, Sept. 4, at 7 p.m. with a non-league game versus Imbler at Eastern Oregon University.

Ione High School's football kickoff will take place Saturday, Sept. 5, at 4 p.m. when they take on Triad at the non-league Dufur Classic.

Before football, though, volleyball action will already be underway, as volleyball players from Heppner take on Umatilla at the Umatilla Jamboree this Friday, Aug. 28, at noon.

Ione girls will travel to Irrigon on Sept. 3 for their first game; game time is 5 p.m.

Look for full sports schedules on PAGE FOUR in this issue of the Gazette-Times.

G-T closed for Labor Day

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed for the Labor Day holiday on Monday, Sept. 7. The deadline for all news and advertising for the Sept. 9 issue will be Friday, Sept. 4, at 5 p.m.

The G-T wishes everyone a happy and safe Labor Day weekend.

Kickin' back at the fair



Carson Eynetich of Ione takes a break from tending to his fair pigs last week during the Morrow County Fair. See more fair and rodeo photos PAGE EIGHT -Photo by Mallorie Jones

Public gets look at proposed 292-tower wind farm

Wheatridge Wind Facility spans Morrow and Umatilla counties



Wheatridge Wind Energy LLC President Andrew O'Connell speaks with Cindy Greenup about the project at an informational meeting held in Boardman August 11. -Photo by David Sykes

By David Sykes

A new Morrow County wind farm moved one step closer to reality recently, when the Oregon Department of Energy held an informational meeting in Boardman Aug. 11.

The Wheatridge Wind Facility will have up to 292 towers and be located both in Morrow and Umatilla counties, with a corridor

containing overhead transmission lines connecting the two. Andrew O'Connell along with Jerry Rietmann of Ione are two of the major owners of the project, which has been in development since 2008.

Wheatridge West is the portion located in Morrow County, with the edge of the facility located five miles northeast of Lexington and

Lightning sparks multiple blazes across county

By Andrea Di Salvo

A lightning storm that moved through the area Monday night sparked several grass fires throughout the area, including at least eight separate fires to which volunteer firefighters and civilians responded in South Morrow County.

Calls started coming in to the Morrow County emergency dispatch as the lightning storm moved across the region around 9 p.m. Monday. While some locations reported rain,

-See LIGHTNING FIRES/ PAGE TWO



This fire caused by a lightning strike on Kenny Jones' property west of Lexington was one of several fires caused by a storm that moved through the area Monday night. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

Columbia Basin Electric warns consumers of scam

Columbia Basin Electric Co-op has issued a scam alert to its members, warning consumers of a telephone scam that has been going through its service territory.

CBEC issued a release stating that some electric utility members recently received telephone calls from an 888 number.

The callers identified themselves as someone from Columbia Basin Electric and claimed that the member's electric bill was past due and that if they didn't go to the local Safe-

way or 7-Eleven and deposit funds, a local service technician would be by to turn off the power. The scam artists even went into detail, providing seemingly legitimate details like cut-off order numbers.

Anyone who receives a phone call like this and has questions is asked to give Columbia Basin's office a call at 541-676-9146 in Heppner or 541-384-2023 in Condon.

No one who receives one of these calls should ever give out any personal information over the phone.

Private plane crashes near Jepsen ranch



This private plane crashed near the Jepsen property Aug. 16, but the pilot walked away with only minor injuries. -Contributed photo

A pilot walked away with only minor injuries after his private plane flipped over while landing near the Jepsen ranch in South Morrow County last week, Morrow County Undersheriff Steven Myren reported in a news release.

Myren said the crash occurred Aug. 16 next to Liberty School Road. After MDCSO was advised of the crash on Tuesday, preliminary investigation revealed that the plane landed on a

small, private runway between 3 and 4 p.m. Sunday afternoon. The pilot, Steven Huggins of Beavercreek, OR, apparently lost control of the Cessna 180H during the landing, and the plane flipped onto its top.

Huggins received minor injuries but walked away from the hard landing, Myren reported. Huggins notified the NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) right after the incident.

Local banker beefs up his fitness to support Ag awareness

By Andrea Di Salvo

A local banker is putting his money where his mouth is, so to speak, by going the distance in the

cause of beef awareness.

Ed Rollins of Ione, who works at Bank of Eastern Oregon in Heppner as Senior Vice President of Cred-

it Administration, donned a red jersey and cowboy hat last month to join the Montana Running Ranchers relay team that took part in

the Ragnar Relay Series Northwest Passage race.

The overnight event, which took place July 17 and 18, began in Blaine, WA and covered about 200 miles, wrapping up in Langley, WA. Because it was an overnight relay, team members were running around the clock.

"You're running clear through," says Rollins.

Rollins ran three legs of the relay—the first, at 9:25 a.m., ran from Blaine, WA six miles south. His second

leg, the race's 13th, began at 6:02 p.m. and went from Burlington, WA four and a half miles south. His final leg, the 25th leg of the race, went 3.1 miles from Oak Harbor High School to the Oak Harbor beach park. That leg began at 4:13 a.m.

Rollins, who turns 40 next month, wouldn't bill himself as a running fanatic; far from it. When asked if he'd ever done anything like this relay, "Not even close," was the immediate response. He says he's only

been running since 2012, and mostly keeps to local races.

"I run a few 5Ks. Whatever run happens in Heppner, whatever run happens in Ione," he says, adding that he has also branched out to a few short races in the larger Eastern Oregon area. He says the experience of the larger relay race was "phenomenal."

"The couple of days leading up to it, I was thinking -See RUNNING FOR BEEF/ PAGE THREE



Ed Rollins (back right) and the rest of the Montana Running Ranchers drew a lot of attention for beef awareness with their red shirts and cowboy hats. -Contributed photo

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