

Gazette Times

VOL. 136 NO. 12 8 Pages Wednesday, March 22, 2017 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Kenny Family float takes first in Great Green Parade



The Kenny Family, the 2017 St. Patrick's Day Celebration grand marshals, took first place in the great green parade

The Kenny Family, grand marshals for the 2017 St. Patrick's festival in Heppner, took first place in the Great Green Parade held Saturday on Main St. in Heppner. The Desert Shrine Club was second.

The Heppner Methodist Church was first in the Irish Floats - Business category. Al Kader took second in the Antique & Custom Vehicles category, Morrow County Museum

took first with their 1930 Model "A" Ford Truck. Elgin Nagel was second with a '37 Chevy. First in the Merchant category was Heppner ODOT with Community Bank taking second.

County approves sheriff's dept. restructuring

The Morrow County Court last week approved a restructuring of the Sheriff Department, meant to improve efficiency and lower overtime costs.

Under the new organization plan both the chief civil deputy and the detective positions will be moved from an hourly union represented position eligible for overtime, up to management and not union represented or eligible for overtime. "The organization restructure is designed to create an efficient means to accomplish our mission, being efficient and productive while being fiscally responsible," Undersheriff John Bowles wrote in the reorganization plan presented to the court. "Our number one objective is public safety and providing the best possible service to the public," he added.

Out of a total yearly \$2.8 million budget for labor, the sheriff's department currently budgets \$80,000 for overtime, and department officials think they may be able, with these changes, to bring that number down, possibly to \$60,000 per year. "Do you feel you are going to decrease overtime?" County Commission Chair Melissa Lindsay asked Bowles. "Definitely," he said. He added that the local union is okay about moving salaried positions to management, and thus out of the bargaining unit, but "Portland may have a problem." The sheriff's department is represented by the Teamsters Union with headquarters in Portland. "People would be exempt from overtime by this restructuring," said Sheriff Ken Matlack who

was also in attendance at the meeting. "This rank of people will not be getting overtime anymore."

In addition to the changes in hourly to salaried positions, the reorganization will also make for a smoother running and efficient department, both Bowles and Matlack told the court. "This breaks management down into smaller units with better management and better results," Bowles said. "I see a much better product with this structure."

Commissioner Don Russell said he appreciated the work the sheriff put into the restructuring plan and said he would monitor its effects on the department's future budget needs. "The sheriff is elected to run his department and he should be able to shuffle the deck," Russell said. "But it's our responsibility to look after the finances."

In other discussions about budgets and finances, Matlack talked about the increased patrolling by the sheriff's department on Interstate Highway 84, which has led to a dramatic increase in fines coming into the county. Matlack said the Oregon State Police no longer covers the freeway as much as it once did. The county has assigned a deputy to patrol the approximately 28 miles of freeway cutting across north Morrow County, and that one deputy has brought in around \$280,000 in fines during a one-year period. Matlack said it was speeding tickets, with people going "80, 85, 95 miles per hour and truck tickets," that were the majority of offenses.

The sheriff also

pointed out that the one deputy has almost paid for two positions, and a large amount coming into the county general fund, with none of the funds going to the sheriff's budget. "There is no quota going on here," said Bowles, but we are talking public safety. More tickets doesn't reflect anywhere in our budget," he told the court.

The county court voted unanimously to adopt the new sheriff's department structuring.

In other business, the court heard from Rex Baker, the new loan officer for the Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation, GEODC, who gave an update on the county's equity fund. The equity fund was originally established in 2003 with funding of \$500,000 from the Oregon Legislature when Three-mile Canyon Farms was created. The fund is used to loan money for economic development such as real estate or equipment purchases in the county, and at this point has \$160,000. Baker said some money is starting to be repaid to the fund and he also needs to appoint several persons to fill the loan board. He said loan applications and information about the fund are available on the GEODC website.

In further business, the court heard from Morrow County Planner Carla McLane, who reported that FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) had approved the Morrow County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. With the plan now in place

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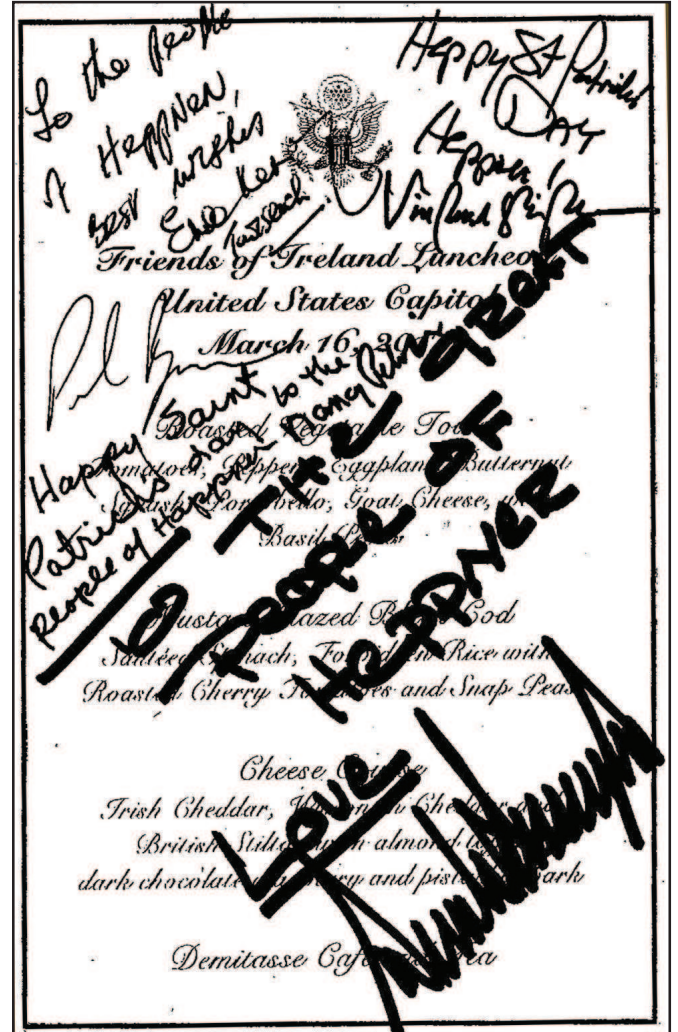
President Donald Trump and Irish Prime Minister send message to Heppner on St. Pats Day

Rep Walden brings greetings

By David Sykes
Representative Greg Walden made his annual trip to Heppner to help emcee the Coffee Hour Saturday during the St. Patrick's Day Celebration, and he brought with him greetings from Washington, DC, including from the Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny, Vice President Mike Pence, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and from the President himself, Donald Trump.

In presenting the signatures to St. Patrick's Day Chairman Sheryll Bates, Walden said he was attending the annual Speakers of Friends of Ireland Luncheon March 16 in Washington DC with the president and others before he departed, and he asked them to sign the menu. "To the people of Heppner best wishes," the Prime Minister wrote. "Happy St. Patrick's Day Heppner!" said VP Pence. "Happy Saint Patrick's Day to the people of Heppner," said Pelosi, and "To the great people of Heppner, Love," wrote President Trump. Ryan signed his name.

Right: Congressman Greg Walden (center, pointing) presented a signed greeting he brought from the President of the United States and several others to the Heppner St. Patrick's Day Celebration Saturday.



Signed menu wishing Heppner a happy St. Pats Day



Friends Helping Friends announces St. Paddy's Festival door prize winners

Friends Helping Friends has announced the door prizes, their sponsors and winners for the Friends Helping Friends Remembrance Event held during the 2017 Heppner St. Patrick's Festival.

The winners were chosen from random drawings from those who pre-registered and those that paid the morning of the event, said organizers.

-Bucknums: (four gift certificates): Kathy & Phil Carlson, Jim Crow, Latosha Hedman and Janelle Ellis.

-Eric and Traci Dickenson McCready: John Deere Products-Neon John Deere Wall Clock-Dick & Nancy Snider; John Deere Dominos-Shanna Sallee; John Deere Outdoor blanket/Pad-Kevin and Petra Payne.

-Peggy Fishburn: Blueberry Breakfast Basket-Keeley Nairns.

-Wildhorse Casino Package (\$220 value) motel, movie, and dinners: Judy Buschke first registered participant.

-Devin Oil gas cards: Don and Judy Barber and Kelly Boyer.

-Jaci Huges Drigen, Nike gift card and employee store pass: Adidas



Judie Laughlin with her Tumalo Lavender gift basket

employee store pass card, 50 percent off purchase-Toni Roach; Nike \$50 gift card, plus Nike employee store pass 50 percent off purchase-Healy Hisler.

-Gary and Barb Watkins, \$50 Shell gas card-Rex and Janice Anderson.

-Hattenhauer Distributing (The Dalles) \$100 gift cards: Hattenhauer

(Sinclair) gift card- Ashley Lindsay; Hattenhauer (Sinclair) gift card-Shelly VanArsdale; Hattenhauer (Sinclair) gift card: Cam Wishart

-Hamley's Steak House, \$75 gift certificate: Matt and Darlene Clark.

-Evan and Annie Weygandt, ECCO gift card, up to \$250-Joy Krein.

Spring has Sprung. WE ARE READY FOR SPRING!

NOW IN STOCK PANSIES & PRIMROSE, POTTING SOIL, AMENDMENTS, GARDEN SEEDS + MORE ARRIVING DAILY!!

Morrow County Grain Growers Green Feed & Seed
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