

Tom and Arlynda Gates named Ione grand marshals

By Andrea Di Salvo

The grand marshals for this year's Fourth of July parade in Ione will be Tom and Arlynda Gates, the Fourth of July committee has announced. The parade will take place Tuesday, July 4, at 1 p.m. on Ione's Main Street.

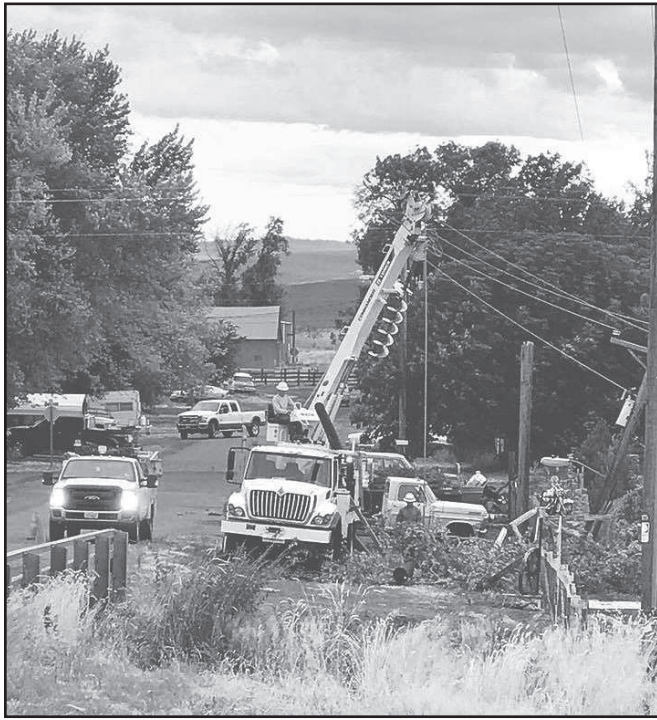
The Gateses say they are "very honored, very appreciative," though they say the honor was never something they looked for. In fact, according to those who know them, their designation as grand marshals

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Tom and Arlynda Gates have been named grand marshals of this year's Fourth of July parade in Ione. The parade will go down Main Street beginning at 1 p.m. Tuesday, July 4. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

Storm unleashes fury on Morrow County



This downed tree on Arcade St. in Lexington, and another on Water St. in Lexington, took out power to the town Monday night during a thunderstorm that wreaked havoc throughout the area. -Photo by Sandra Pointer

Monday night, a severe thunderstorm swept through Morrow County, wreaking havoc with

power lines and property with thunder and lightning strikes, heavy rain and, of course, heavy winds. Morrow County Undersheriff and Emergency Manager John Bowles reported that wind gusts reached up to 50 mph as the storm front traveled across Morrow County.

Among the damage was a power outage that took out much of Lexington. Josh Coiner with Columbia Basin reports that downed trees went through two separate transformer poles in Lexington, one on Arcade St. and one on Water St. Coiner says the two lines fed different parts of town. While CBEC crews had the bulk of customers, about 157 meters, back in service by around 8:30 p.m., several homes on Water St. remained blacked out until 11 p.m. Coiner also

said there were a few other isolated outages around the Morrow County service area, but none as large as Lexington.

Aside from damaged power lines and poles, Morrow County Sheriff's Office reports multiple downed trees and tree limbs, as well as fires. Fires were reported Monday evening in the areas of Gooseberry Rd. and Tews Ln., Ione; Baseline Ln., Lexington; and Blackhorse L. and Sand Hollow Rd., Heppner.

"We were very lucky, and no injuries were reported as a result of the storm," Bowles said in a statement. "Morrow County had deputies working with other emergency responders, county wide, to help keep the public safe. We made many contacts to make sure no one was hurt or injured."

Fun is heating up at Ione Fourth of July

Summer is finally heating up—with a vengeance—and Ione Fourth of July celebration is offering some cool ways to have fun and celebrate Independence Day.

July 1

The festivities kick off this Saturday, July 1, with a volleyball tournament at 9 a.m. at Ione City Park. Stay in town for dinner and a poker tournament, plus Bingo, at 5 p.m. at the Ione Legion Hall.

Dinner is by donation and will include a selection of chicken thighs with bacon bourbon jam, bacon ranch pasta salad, corn on the cob, cheeseburgers with bacon bourbon jam, pulled pork sandwiches, bratwurst and coleslaw.

Texas Hold 'Em poker sign-ups begin at 6 p.m. with play beginning at 6:30. Poker buy-in is \$40, and re-buys are allowed. Cash prizes will be awarded. Bingo begins at 6:30 p.m. and is 25 cents per card.

The day will wrap up with a free showing of

the moving "Sing" in the park at dusk. The movie is funded by Ione Community Agri-Business Organization (ICABO) with concessions available from the Ione Cardinal Booster Club.

July 3

Monday, July 3, golfers can tee off at 9 a.m. at Willow Creek Country Club during the annual golf tournament.

July 4

Tuesday, July 4, the real action begins, starting with the Fireman's breakfast at the Ione Fire Hall from 7-10 a.m. Stretch your legs—and maybe work off the calories—at the Creative Care Preschool 5k walk/run. Registration is at Ione City Park and costs \$10; registration begins at 7 a.m. with the walk at 7:30 a.m.

The Ken Turner Memorial Horseshoe Tournament will take place at the horseshoe pits at 9 a.m., and basketball players can form teams of three and shoot for

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Pioneer Memorial still waiting on state endoscopy facility approval

Health district settles on \$14,984,737 budget for the next fiscal year

By April Sykes

The Morrow County Health District Board, at its monthly meeting in Irrigon Monday night, learned that resuming endoscopic procedures at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner has still not been approved by the state.

CEO Bob Houser told the board that the district has still not received the go-ahead to begin offering endoscopies (including

colonoscopies) once again. Offering the procedures at PMH in Heppner not only enabled patients to have the procedures done locally, but also added to the district's bottom line. The procedure room remodel, required by the state, was completed some time ago.

Also at the meeting, the board approved changes to the proposed budget for 2017-18, and adopted a \$14,984,737 budget for

the next fiscal year. Board members expressed their confidence in the budget.

"I thought we were over-optimistic," said board member Joe Perry, "but we're really close."

"You're only looking at about a 20 percent increase," said board member Jill Parker. "But I don't think we're too far off," adding that she and Perry are bankers and used to dealing with finances.

Chief Financial Officer Nicole Mahoney noted a \$200,000 Medicaid/Medicare adjustment to the positive that the district is receiving, which will help the district's bottom line. "It's a really fine dance to come up with these numbers," commented Mahoney. "We've spent many hours to come up with our best guess."

Board member Aaron Palmquist stressed that the district is a nonprofit organization.

The budget includes \$8,916,556 for personal services (including salaries), \$3,330,844 for materials and supplies, \$1,122,036 for revenue deductions and bad debt, \$1,307,240 for capital purchases, \$258,061 for capital lease and loan reduction and \$50,000 for community benefit grants.

The board also imposed taxes at the rate of \$.6050 cents per \$1,000 assessed value for operations and \$.39 cents per \$1,000 assessed value for the local option tax for operations.

Also at the meeting, the board learned from Houser that the district has hired Dr. Gayle Johnston, doctor of osteopathic medicine, as a general practitioner for the Irrigon Clinic. Houser said that once Dr. Johnston receives approval from the state of Oregon, she will begin her practice in Irrigon.

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Brittner retires after 44 years with health district

By Andrea Di Salvo

Pioneer Memorial nurse Peggy Brittner, LPN has hung up her scrubs this year after several decades with Morrow County Health District. Brittner, 72, worked a total of 44 years with the health district.

"I really enjoyed working up there...most of the time," says Brittner.

Though her path took a few twists and turns, Brittner has deep connections with Morrow County, including being related to several local families throughout South Morrow. She was born in The Dalles, OR and raised by her grandparents, Louis and Margaret Cason, on their ranch near Madison Butte. Her



Peggy Brittner stands in front of a wall of family photos, including one showing her grandfather Louis Cason as grand marshal of the Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Parade in 1968; he was riding Floyd Jones's stud horse. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

grandparents were heavily involved in the community;

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Window smashed in apparent vandalism



This window on the front door of Artisan Village fabric store in Heppner was broken in what appears to be an act of vandalism Monday night. Store manager Sheena Shank says there was no debris to indicate the breakage was related to the storm that passed through the area, and Dr. Ken Wenberg said glass was scattered across the sidewalk in front of the store. Shank reports that nothing was taken from shop. Morrow County Sheriff's Office is investigating. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

Mahoney kids qualify for international rodeo next month; Stewart qualified for junior high nationals

Three young rodeo contestants who competed at the Oregon High School Rodeo Association

(OHSRA) Finals in Prineville recently qualified for other key rodeos around the nation; Jaiden and Blane Mahoney and Jett Stewart

all earned the right to travel to prominent high school and junior high rodeo competitions this summer.

Jaiden and Blane Ma-

honey of Heppner have qualified for the Silver State International Rodeo, held

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Gazette will be closed July 4

Deadline for July 5 is Friday

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed Tuesday, July 4, due to the Independence Day holiday.

The Gazette will go to print on Monday, July

3, so the deadline for all news and advertising will be Friday, June 30, at 5 p.m.

Normal business hours will resume Wednesday, July 5.



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