

HEPPNER

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# Gazette Times

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## Kaelyn Lindsay chosen for Round-Up court

Kaelyn Lindsay of Lexington was introduced as one of the four princesses for the 2018 Pendleton Round-Up court at a breakfast hosted at the home of Dr. Doug Corey, DVM, outside of Athena. The new court also consists of Queen Betsy West of Athena, Princess Josilyn Fullerton of Dayton, WA, Princess Elizabeth Herbes of Union and Princess Charla Simons of Pendleton.

Princess Kaelyn Lindsay is the 19 year old daughter of Barney and Kimberly Lindsay of Lexington. She graduated from Heppner High School in 2016 where she was team captain her senior year in volleyball, basketball, and track. She also excelled in 4-H, drama, FFA, and was recognized as the FBLA state champion in banking and financial systems. When asked to describe the characteristics she has seen of Pendleton Round Up Court members, Kaelyn responded, "Kind, poise and genuine are three words that come to mind when I think about the Pendleton Round-Up Court. They are

role models for many young girls." Kaelyn grew up on her family's ranch, gathering and working cows. She was a frequent competitor in various local rodeos. She now attends Blue Mountain Community College pursuing a degree in nursing, where she made this winter's dean's list. In a letter of support, Blake Knowles, three-time steer wrestling qualifier to the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo writes, "Kaelyn's kindness is a standout characteristic. She has a knack for lifting others up and creating a positive environment. When I think of the Pendleton Round-Up Court, I think of hardworking, talented cowgirls who have a way of bringing the Wild West to modern life with impeccable grace and integrity in all aspects of life. I could not think of a better young lady to represent the Pendleton Round-Up."

The Pendleton Round-Up is the largest four-day rodeo in America with the PRCA's fifth richest contestant prize money purse. Its competitive events are



Kaelyn Lindsay

contested on a pristine grass arena, with historic wooden bucking chutes and one of a kind run-in system for timed events; all of which are historic presentations which cannot be seen anywhere else in the PRCA. The Pendleton Round-Up is the reigning PRCA Large Outdoor Rodeo of the Year (2003, 2010, 2015, 2016) and the 2015 PRCA Remuda award winner for having the most consistent pen of bucking stock. One thousand volunteers work together to produce this annual event, which will celebrate its 108th year September 12th - 15th, 2018. Let 'er Buck!

## Heppner FFA competes at district and state



Pictured front (L-R): Cami VanArsdale, Jaiden Mahoney, Sydney Wilson, Suzy Cason. Back (L-R): Alex Lindsay, Matthew Orem, Kenneth Troxell, Blake Carter, Justin McAninch, Keegan Gibbs.

The Heppner FFA Chapter's Ag Sales and Service teams recently competed at the district level in Athena. Representing the chapter/community were Sydney Wilson, Justin McAninch, Jaiden Mahoney, Blake Carter, Matt Orem, Kenneth Troxell, Suzy Cason, Cami VanArsdale, Alex Lindsay and Keegan Gibbs.

The alternate team of McAninch and Wilson placed third and McAninch received top honors in his practicum.

The beginning team placed first and included some top awards, Orem and Troxell in their practicum and Carter received the highest sales score of the contest.

The advanced team placed first and qualified for the state contest, which

was held in Hermiston later in November. At the state contest, the team competed at the highest level and placed second in the state.

Brandi Sweeney, Cam Sweeney, Jennifer Wilson, John and Ashley Gould, Stephanni McAninch, Kevin Gray, Eric Orem, Sheryll Bates, Jan Huddlestone and Jason Hanna were instrumental in preparing the teams for the contest.

## O'Brien retires from Public Works

17 years at the helm



Burke O'Brien at the Spring Hollow Bridge kiosk

By David Sykes

Burke O'Brien has seen lots of changes in Morrow County since he started with the road department back in 1997. And now sitting in his office at the public works headquarters in Lexington, and preparing for retirement at the end of this month, O'Brien can look back and reflect on some of the accomplishments he has seen since he took over the head job from Guy VanArsdale back in 2000. Those accomplishments he attributes much to those around him, and the support he's received from elected officials and "the great crew I have had to work with."

A good example of one of the biggest accomplishments during his time at Public Works, is the locating and building of an off-highway vehicle park in the mountains. Original planning started for the park in 2003, and that included a fairly contentious public meeting at the Catholic church in Heppner. There was local and vocal opposition to the park as it was proposed, and O'Brien was asked if he didn't just feel

like giving up on the whole idea at that time. "We got lots of criticism," he recalls, pointing to a video tape he has of the meeting on a shelf in his office.

O'Brien says he and others persevered however, thinking since South Morrow County had recently lost its industry and jobs with the closure of the Kinzua sawmill, it needed some economic activity to help sustain the area.

He recalls that following the meeting he thought to himself, "With the opposition to the proposed location, if not at this location, then where?" At the end of the meeting, someone mentioned to him that Kinzua had a large tract of land that may be for sale, and from that the Off Highway Vehicle Park was born. It was not all his doing, however, saying "I had support from Judge Tallman and a really great staff."

From that vision he says the park has since grown to 9,000 acres in both Morrow and Grant counties, and sees visitors from all over, the coast, central Oregon and out of state. The park now has a



O'Brien at his office in Lexington

restaurant, treatment room and helicopter pad, miles of trails and thousands of visitors. And that brings money and needed economic activity into the area that otherwise would not be here. "That's was what it was about, creating some jobs and helping out the local business people. There are benefits from that park that many people don't realize," he says.

O'Brien says funding for the road department has always been a challenge, recalling that when he took over in 2000 there were 23 people on the crew, which was then reduced by five through retirement for

-See O'BRIEN/PAGE THREE

## Ione to host basketball tournament this weekend

Ione will be hosting the 20th Annual Basketball Bonanza this weekend, Dec. 1 and 2. The tournament will consist of 16 JV, varsity, girls and boys games over the two-days. Players will come from Weston-McEwen, Enterprise, Irrigon and Ione.

AJ's Printed Apparel will be on site Saturday personalizing tournament shirts, sweatpants and even socks. Bonanza concessions will provide food and beverages, such as root beer floats, loaded nachos, brownie sundaes and more. See's candies will be available for sale as well as raffle tickets for a chance to win an Apple watch. Games begin at 1 p.m. on Friday and end with championship matches at 4 and 5:30 p.m. on Saturday.



Morgan Orem (L), Ione, stays away from the opponent in a previous tournament. -Photo by Sandi Pointer

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