

## Town of Lexington employees receive safety award



Town of Lexington employees, Ed Dickenson and Janette Eldrige, with the safety award they received from the League of Oregon Cities and Citycounty Insurance Services for having zero injuries in 2016-17.

## Heppner's Heritage Plaza dressed up for Christmas



The city of Heppner Public Works Department dressed up Heppner's Heritage Plaza for Christmas with a dazzling light display. The light show, at the entrance to the city of Heppner, includes Christmas lights on the antique farm machinery displayed at the plaza.

## Man allegedly kidnapped, shot

A 48 year-old male alleges he was kidnapped, shot and dropped off near milepost 151 on Interstate 84 on Dec. 21. The victim reports his abductors were operating a maroon van and fled the scene after dropping him off.

The man, with a last known address in Eugene, OR, waved down a passing vehicle and was taken to Love's Truck Stop where the incident was reported to authorities. There is no evidence at this time indicating there is a threat to the general public regarding this incident.

Oregon State Police

reports that the preliminary investigation revealed the victim was indeed shot at another location and was transported to Love's Truck Stop by a passerby. He was later transported to Good Shepherd Medical center for treatment of the gunshot wound.

The Oregon State Police Criminal Investigation Division is leading the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the shooting and reported abduction with assistance from the Morrow County Sheriff's Office, Boardman Police Department,

Hermiston Police Department and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Local investigators have also been assisted in the investigation by law enforcement agencies in the Portland Metro area, Willamette Valley, and State of Washington.

Anyone who may have witnessed any suspicious circumstances or observed the victim and suspect vehicle on Interstate 84 near milepost 151 are asked to call the Oregon State Police Southern Command dispatch center at 1-541-664-4600 and reference case number SP17461025.

## Juvenile Department creates new counselor position

*'Boots on the ground' will replace office worker*

By David Sykes

In what was described by one commissioner as a "boots on the ground" position, the County Commission last week voted to create a new juvenile probation counselor job, to replace a retiring assistant to the director employee.

Juvenile Director Tom Meier came to the Dec. 20 commission meeting asking for the changes, saying it will allow his department to better keep up with the Morrow County case load.

Currently Meier is the only one in the office directly handling juvenile cases and he is carrying the entire case load of the department. So, with the January retirement of assistant John McCabe, it presented an opportunity to add the counselor position, without increasing total staff or expense in the Juvenile Department.

"Over the past 10 years there have been many changes in the Juvenile Justice System," a memo

to the commission said. "In order to keep up with the many changes, the Juvenile Department would be best served with a Juvenile Parole and Probation Counselor (JPPC) as a replacement employee. The JPPC would work directly with the juvenile offenders. They would meet with them at their home, at school, at work, etc. Currently the juvenile director is carry-

-See JUVENILE DEPT/ PAGE THREE

## A look back at 2017



See page eight for a collection of happenings in 2017, such as the line of traffic coming down into Heppner after the eclipse on Aug. 21.

## Neighborhood Center receives food bank donation



(L-R) John LaRue, Neighborhood Center assistant coordinator, Judi Hall customer service manager at Community Bank, and Lisa Patton executive director of the Neighborhood Center accepting donation check.

The Neighborhood Center received a nice gift from the community and Community Bank last week, just in time for the holidays. The Center was presented with a check for \$1,703 which will be used in the Center's food bank.

Each year around the holidays the local Community Bank branch pledges to match 50 cents for every dollar donated from community members at the

bank, for a worthy community project chosen by the branch. This year the bank chose the Neighborhood Center Food Bank, and community members, both bank customers and others, gave \$1,203. Community Bank kicked in \$500 to reach the total donation of \$1,703.

"This is a great program and we are happy to help those who need it in our local community,"

said Judi Hall customer service manager at Community Bank, in presenting the check. "This is going to help so many families," Neighborhood Center executive director Lisa Patton said when receiving the funds. "All our money goes out to the community. It's amazing how generous the community has been to the Neighborhood Center," Patton added.

## Three suspects indicted by grand jury in last week's car theft

In addition to original suspects Daniel Faustino Arce and Deserea Delane Devin, Vera Rose Smith was also indicted by the Morrow County Grand Jury on multiple charges related to theft of a Jeep on Dec. 17 near R u g g s . All three cases were heard by Judge Eva Temple on

Dec. 22.

Smith, 35, a resident of Madras, was arrested by the Pendleton Police Department on Dec. 19 for possession of a stolen vehicle. The vehicle matched the description of a vehicle that was seen with the Jeep that was stolen in Morrow County. When she was arrested, a key to the stolen

Jeep and a key to the house where the Jeep was stolen were found in her possessions.

Arce and Devin were both indicted on 14 counts including three counts of robbery in the first degree with a firearm, burglary in the first degree, two counts of burglary in the second degree, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle with a firearm, theft in the first degree with a firearm, criminal mischief in the first degree, unlawful use of a weapon with a firearm, theft in the third degree, attempted arson in the second degree and two counts of criminal mischief

in the second degree.

Smith was arrested and charged with burglary in the first degree, burglary in the second degree, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle with a firearm and theft in the first degree.

The court set bail at \$350,000 for Arce, \$150,000 for Devin and \$15,000 for Smith. All are currently being held at the Umatilla County jail, with new court dates set for the start of the year and trial dates in February.

Arce and Smith also have warrants out of Jefferson County, so will be transported back there eventually.



Vera Rose Smith



Deserea Delane Devin



Daniel Faustino Arce

### 2017 DEMO IN THE BLUES

SATURDAY, DEC. 30 • NOON-4:00PM • KELLY PRAIRIE, USFS RD.

JOIN MCGG POLARIS AND 4 CORNER'S SNOWMOBILE CLUB FOR THEIR ANNUAL PLAY DAY AND GET YOUR PART OF \$1,500 IN POLARIS MERCHANDISE

MCGG will have the 2018 AXYS 800 PRO RMK 155 LE, AXYS 600 PRO RMK 155 & SKS 800 146 for rider demonstration. All riders that register and demo will receive a chance to win a piece of \$1,500 in Polaris Merchandise

POKER RUN WILL BEGIN AT NOON

Contact/Questions: Cliff Dougherty 541-676-5491 or Jason Hanna 541-989-8221 Ext. 204

Morrow County Grain Growers

Lexington 989-8221 • 1-800-452-7396 For farm equipment, visit our web site at [www.mcgg.net](http://www.mcgg.net)