

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$10.

Barb's Place at OHV park closes

To the editor:
Barb's Place located at the Morrow County OHV Park has been closed and I would like to explain to all who supported the restaurant.

On Monday, July 23 a fire was spotted on property that borders the Morrow County OHV park. The staff at the park jumped into action to determine the location and size of the fire in hopes of extinguishing it. After realizing that more help was needed to fight this fire, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) was called into action.

Barb's Place was contacted by ODF in John Day to assist by feeding the next group of firefighters to arrive Tuesday morning. We fed the county employees on the line Monday and the rest of the week and notified the Public Works director and park manager that we were feeding the firefighters. My contract with the county states that I am not allowed to take any subcontract of any kind without their permission. These meals for the firefighters were not on a contract with ODF.

As the fire grew, so did the number of firefighters. On Tuesday afternoon I was requested to feed up to 100 for dinner. Still no word or complaints from the county and still not under contract with ODF. I was closed that day so there was no harm to park guests. These firefighters were protecting the park. I was told by ODF on Tuesday night a food truck for the firefighters was coming in on Wednesday to take over. They asked if I would do a Wednesday morning breakfast buffet for 100 and then I would be relieved. Still no comment from the county and still not under contract with the state. The buffet for breakfast was before we open, so again no harm to park guests. Later Wednesday I was asked again by ODF to help. They were up to 250 firefighters and no way to

feed them as the food truck was not up to doing it. I had no help, so ODF stepped in with five people to help me so those on the line had a hot meal. I did what needed to be done. I repaid ODF for their people. Still no word from the county nor a contract with the state.

During the course of the day we ran the restaurant as normal and had a very large freight delivery.

We successfully fed 292 firefighters on Wednesday night, feeding them everything that we had. At 1 a.m. I finally got out of the building to rest until 4 a.m., when I had to go back to clean and get back to normal. Still no word from the county nor under contract with ODF.

Thursday things got crazy. I had a restaurant to get back in shape, dishes to do and a dishwasher to get running while running the restaurant as normal. The dishwasher repair required being given instructions over the phone which took a bit of doing as cell service is not the best. During a busy time and on the phone getting instructions, a young man came in and wanted a milk shake. I told him I was in the middle of a mess, gave the whole crew free sodas and asked if he would return later and I would give him a shake. All my girls were busy with a full restaurant. Apparently, that's where I went wrong.

The week progressed as normal. CFS night, sold out prime rib and a great senior Sunday. Still no word from county.

Monday morning I got a call from USFS in Heppner asking me what I could do to feed the 40-60 firefighters that were going to remain since the fire was well controlled and crews were being released. I told them I would do a breakfast and dinner buffet before open and after close as to not interfere with park guests. As the day progressed and crews were leaving I was approached

by ODF and USFS management apologizing to me for not being allowed to use the restaurant for the remainder of their stay. They had come from a meeting with county personnel who told them not to use us for their current needs as they had received a complaint that I refused to serve a milkshake. They want their park guests to be the main priority. After contacting USFS in Heppner, I was advised they were asked to call me as a courtesy, but use vendors from Heppner.

I then chose to tender the termination of my contract with Morrow County. Of course this was one week with no complaints from the county and no signed contract. The county counsel emailed me to remind me to contact the park management for the proper exit and accounting information. No one else from the county has responded.

I did talk to the park manager and road department director who stated they have no idea how this happened, how the agencies knew details of something that happened and the county said they didn't know anything about a complaint still intrigues me.

When I was paid for my services, it was brought to my attention that taking a credit card could be construed as a contract. This was confirmed by my lawyer. It does no good to argue with anyone. It's clear they want a restaurant here for park guests, but they want to run it at the vendor's expense.

I want to apologize for leaving but I won't. I want to apologize for those who feel we did not meet their needs but I won't.

I did the moral and ethical thing: help those that were helping save the park that is enjoyed by many and owned by all of you in Morrow County. And I would do it again. Barbara Richmond-Harris Barb's Place

4-H members participate in pre-fair presentations

Morrow County 4-H members recently participated in pre-fair demonstrations and presentations. The results are:

Isabella Orr, Presentations, 4-H Pledge Contest (Pre-Fair) County Only, Int, Blue, CH; Arianna Worden, Presentations, 4-H Pledge Contest (Pre-Fair) County Only, Int, Blue, RCH; Daemon Worden, Presentations, 4-H Pledge Contest (Pre-Fair) County Only, Int, Red; Rylee Palmer, Presentations, 4-H Pledge Contest (Pre-Fair) County Only, Jr, Blue, CH; Liam Heideman, Presentations, 4-H Pledge Contest (Pre-Fair) County Only, Jr, Blue, CH; Isabella Orr, Presentations, Celebrate Our World Inspired Presentation, Int, Blue, CH; Isabella Orr, Presentations, Individual Demonstration, Int, Red; Cody Fletcher, Presentations, Individual Demonstration, Int, Blue, CH; Liam Heideman, Presentations, Individual Demonstration, Jr (county only), Red; Isabella Orr, Presentations, Individual Illustrated Talk, Int, Blue, CH; Harley Anderson, Presentations, Individual Illustrated Talk, Int, Red; Moira Di Salvo, Food and Nutrition, Junior Measuring Contest (county only), Blue, RCH;



4-H members who participated in the pre-fair demonstrations are top row (L-R); Harley Anderson, Gage Heideman and Rylee Palmer. Bottom row (L-R): Casey Fletcher, Liam Heideman and Isabella Orr. -Contributed photo.

Liam Heideman, Food and Nutrition, Junior Measuring Contest (county only), Blue, CH; Brionna Serrano, Food and Nutrition, Quick and Easy Ground Beef - Junior (county only), Blue; Jolene Serrano, Food and Nutrition, Quick and Easy Ground Beef - Junior (county only), Blue, CH; Isabella Orr, Performing Arts, Performing Arts, Int, Blue, CH.

Absolutely Nobody to perform



Pictured (L-R): Tom Phelan, Cory Cooley, the late Jeremy Miller, Joe Lindsay and Rick Pullen. -Contributed photo.

Absolutely Nobody is scheduled to perform Sunday, Aug. 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Ione City Park.

Joe Lindsay, a member of the group, says he and some friends formed the group while they were attending Blue Mountain Community College. He said they sang and entertained through school, singing familiar tunes and twisting up the lyrics. The four members, Joe Lindsay,

Cory Cooley, Rick Pullen and Tom Phelan, have agreed to regroup for this performance and promise a night of music, fun and laughter.

Also scheduled to perform are the Lindsay and Cooley families to top off the evening.

Ione's Music in the

Ryan Neal named new Port of Morrow manager

Ryan Neal was recently selected to fill the role soon to be vacated by his father, Gary Neal, as the new manager of the Port of Morrow. Ryan, the current general manager of warehousing for the port will take over this fall, probably sometime in October.

Commissioner Rick Stokoe said the commission has given Neal a conditional offer of employment, which is contingent on his passing a background check and going through contract negotiations. Stokoe indicated they decided Ryan was the best fit, although all of the applicants were

highly qualified. Neal was one of four finalists for the position interviewed by the commission. All four appeared at a public meeting last Monday and shared a little about themselves and their vision for the port.

The other candidates were Dean Gardner of Selah, WA; Stephanie Seamans of Kennewick, WA and Peter Wilhelm of Wallula, WA.

"I feel honored that the commission selected someone that I know well," said Gary Neal. "It's a pretty exciting opportunity for him."

Sept. Chamber meeting scheduled

The next lunch meeting of the Heppner Chamber of Commerce will be held Thursday, Sept. 6 at noon, in the Heppner City Hall conference room. This meeting will be for all entities reports.

Lunch will be provided by Tacos Hometown for \$10. A choice of a small beef or chicken burrito, chips, salsa and dessert will be served. RSVP is required

no later than Friday, Aug. 31 due to the Labor Day holiday on Monday, Sept. 3.

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to Sheryll Bates at 541-676-5536.

Ione area power outage scheduled

Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative has announced the Bonneville Power Administration will have a planned power outage at the Ione substation.

Ione area residents can expect the outage to begin Thursday, Aug. 16 at 10 p.m. and re-energization at 3 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 17.

BPA personnel will be

replacing damaged equipment that aids in the protection of the CBEC distribution lines outside the substation. CBEC apologizes for the inconvenience, but states that every measure was taken to schedule the outage at the least disruptive time possible.

The five-hour outage will affect only the CBEC members served by the Ione substation, which include

the town of Ione, Ella Rd., Lower Rhea Creek, Brenner Canyon, Ione Gooseberry Rd., Dry Fork, Lower Willow Creek, North Lexington and the surrounding areas. The communities of Heppner and Lexington will not be affected by the outage.

For additional information, contact CBEC at 541-676-9146.

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