

Man donates firewood

By Bobbi Gordon

Cole Crosthwaite, Heppner, recently donated several cords of wood to people in the Heppner area who were unable to afford it themselves. He shared a post on Facebook asking people to send him a private message or call him with names of people who could use some help.

Crosthwaite said he was blessed with a great wood cutting spot this year and he felt like giving back to the community of Heppner. He said, "I'm honestly just tired of hearing all the negative and no one actually doing anything about it. I've been down and out before with not very many people that were willing to lend a hand, so I know how it can be." He said he still had to pay for the permits and going to get the wood, but he knows it went to a really good cause.

He was able to donate five cords of wood to separate households who were elderly and could rarely afford firewood, as well as to some people who were normally his good customers who couldn't afford it this year. "So I just looked at it as if they were in my shoes or if they were my grandparents or family," he stated.

Shannon Boor told the Gazette about his moment of goodness directed toward her family. She said Crosthwaite delivered a cord of wood to her parents at no charge. "He didn't even tell them it was from him, just that he had a cord of wood that was a donation for them," she said. She said her dad has stage four Mantle Cell Lymphoma and her mother has health issues as well. They are living on a very fixed income and have to travel to Portland and Walla Walla to the VA



Pictured is another Heppner firewood cutter, Matthew (left), who was gracious enough to help Cole (right) go cut, load, split and deliver the wood. -Contributed photo. Dentes Cupimmo



Cole Crosthwaite

for medical care frequently, which leaves them without much extra. "This was a blessing for them and it touched me today," she stated.

Cole said he grew up ranching and training horses his whole life until about four years ago when he fractured his back and couldn't do very much, let alone take care of himself. "It took a while to be able to get back to cutting firewood and now I'm in some of the best shape of my life. I was blessed with the healthy healing of my back. I just wanted to be able to return the favor because I felt like something kept telling me to do it." He said he has lived in and around Heppner for about 10 years

and so does his mother. He said she is the big reason he is still here; it is so hard through the winters. "We are all we have and have lost family, so know how important it is to cherish them while they are still around," he said.

Crosthwaite told the Gazette, "I don't want it to just be about me. My intentions were to show everyone that if even someone like myself could donate a portion of what I make my living on, it just might inspire others."

He ended by saying, "Imagine if this entire community would come together how many people we could help. I do odd jobs here and there to make a living so it's not like I have much to contribute, but if we all got together, just imagine the wave we could cause. The only thing holding most of us back from helping is because we are worried no one will help if we get into a bind or we will help too much and go broke. We can change that, but it's going to take a community to do it."

Community pride meeting draws scant attendance

Only 11 show for follow-up gathering



Morrow County Commissioner Melissa Lindsay (left) listens and documents thoughts of community members attending a community pride meeting last week

By David Sykes

In what was meant to be the next step in building community pride in Heppner, an open town meeting last week drew a low turn-out when only 11 people showed up. The meeting was called as a follow-up to the hugely successful community meeting in August where over 200 people came out to address

problems like drugs, vandalism and crime in Heppner. It was decided at that time to follow up with the community pride meeting to discuss economic development, jobs, government and faith-based services as well as parental and school support. Although turnout at this meeting was low, many important topics

were discussed.

The meeting led off with discussion about the Community Action Program of East Central Oregon (CAPECO) and how to get that agency more involved with Heppner. According to CAPECO's website its vision is "the success of

-Continued on PAGE FOUR

Murray's/Breaking Grounds take first in light parade



Above: Murray's Drug / Breaking Grounds Coffee were the winners of the this year's light parade. Below: Six month old Bennett Eberhardt son of Danielle & Lynn Eberhardt of Heppner meets Santa for the first time after the light parade in Heppner.

The Murray's Drug/Breaking Grounds Coffee float took first place at the holiday light parade held on Main Street in downtown Heppner last Thursday evening.

The Columbia Basin Electric float took second place.

Various merchants offered refreshments and some stayed open late for the parade viewers. Santa and Mrs Claus also made a visit to Market Fresh after the parade



The story of the star at Cutsforth Corner

as told by Justin Nelson

I had just gotten home from my first winter break at Oregon State University in December of 2000. My father, Chuck Nelson, a local wheat farmer, had been hatching a plan for a new addition to our Christmas light display. Generally we would have a few lights on our house, but being so far out in the country no one usually saw them. Dad thought it would be nice to make a star and light it up, but wasn't sure where to put it. At first we did not have a place in mind, and we put it on our house the first year (I think). Dad had a lot of heavy angle iron around the shop, and decided to use that for the star. We called my friend and classmate, Matthew Van Liew, for some guidance on the engineering of the star. Matt was attending Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey majoring in civil engineering, and we thought he could be helpful. After talking with Matt for a bit and getting some diagrams, Dad went to work and put together the star in one day.

The star was very heavy and required our old hoist truck to move around.

At first the star was lighted with incandescent c9 bulbs. Even though it was bright, it was hard to see from different angles. Not too long after the star was done we moved it to Cutsforth Corner, on Jeff Cutsforth's property so more people could see the star. Jeff has never charged

us for the electricity and has let us keep the star on the property for the whole time. Dad also thought having the star on the corner might help people driving at night in the fog. The 90-degree corner can be a dangerous spot in the fog and icy conditions, but if drivers see the star they realize that the corner is coming up.

After a few years my dad realized that with the C9 bulbs the star looked great when you looked at it straight-on, but if you got behind the star, or looked at different angles, you either could not see the lights or it looked off. He decided to wrap the whole star in rope light, and now you can see the star from any angle.

The hard part with rope light is that the rubber outside ages quickly in the sun during the summer. We ended-up replacing the rope lights with a new set of LED rope lights which should last longer, but also be very cheap on electricity.

My dad is currently



Star at Cutsforth Corner



Chuck Nelson (left) and Justin Nelson

at the Veterans Home in The Dalles with liver failure and dementia issues, but I have wanted to keep the star tradition alive. I appreciate the help of my wife Andrea Nelson taking the time to help with the lights- usually involving several hours in the cold, rainy weather to put on those new lights every few years, and a lot of effort to lift the star back up.

I don't think my dad ever really made a big deal about the star to folks. It was just something he wanted to share with people and I would like to continue to do the same.

Pastors invited to submit messages

The Heppner Gazette-Times will publish Christmas messages from area pastors on Wednesday, December 19. The deadline to submit messages will be Monday, December 17, at 5 p.m.

Those planning to submit Christmas messages

188 West Willow, Heppner, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Pastors are also invited to submit separate news articles for Christmas church services or activities.

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