

~ 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.

Keeping Heppner litter free

To the editor:
Many people and organizations help with keeping Heppner clean, tidy and litter free. We do this to make our community nice for ourselves and our visitors.

Various retired people pick up and dispose of litter as they go on their walks around town. A few of these folks are Ginger, Frances and Marilyn. There are many others. They don't do this for recognition. They do this because it is a good thing to do.

The Chamber of Commerce participates in the Oregon Department of Transportation Litter Pick Up Program on the state highways through town. The town's main highways are litter free and the entries to town are litter free too, thanks to several organizations that have adopted highway segments leading into Heppner. These organizations include the Heppner Lions Club, the County Employee Association, the Heppner Elementary School staff and the employees of the Bank of Eastern Oregon. Also, the U.S. Forest Service employees of the Heppner Ranger District do litter pick up on the first two miles of Morrow County's Willow Creek Road.

Here is a big THANK YOU to all the people who pitch in to keep Heppner litter free.

John Edmundson, Heppner

Students attend chess tournament



Pictured top row: Mary Ashbeck, Owen Guerra, Joe McMasters, Delilah Saucedo and Journey Cavan. Bottom row: Claire Lindsay, Isabel Payne, Julius Wright, Jasper Hanna, Isiah Martin and Avia Botefuhr.

Eleven students from Heppner Elementary school attended the Chess for Success regional tournament in Hermiston on Feb. 2. Owen Guerra took first place in the K-5 division. Claire Lindsay and Joe McMasters tied for first place in the fourth-grade division.

The team, consisting of the top five players and an alternate, will head to the state tournament at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland on Mar. 8 and 9. Currently there is a four-way tie for the team members.

Snowmobile club holds playday



Snowmobile club members enjoy the snow on a recent outing.

The Four Corners Snowmobile club held its annual Holiday playday at Kelly Prairie Sunday, Dec. 29. Over 70 snowmobile enthusiasts and their families were there to enjoy the fresh powder snow on the prairie, the groomed trails and the annual poker run that paid out 100 percent of the entry fees.

The poker run course spanned about ten miles and some lucky snowmobilers took home some cash. Trevor Rhea took first place, winning \$225, and Suzanne Rea won \$110 for second place. Papa Murphy's gift cards were awarded to Gigi Peterson, Elsie Winters and Coby Dougherty. Other blind draw prizes were awarded as well.

After the poker run, chefs Mike Gorman and Steve Peck served hot dogs

and chili for the riders as they warmed up next to the bon fire.

The club also met on MLK weekend when 21 club members made the trek to Granite, with a stop for refreshments at the Dougherty cabin out of Ukiah. Other events



FOR SALE

235 SKYLINE DRIVE, HEPPNER
Enjoy a great view of Heppner from this well-kept 3 bedroom 1700 square foot home with large double garage on a .7 acre lot.

Also available, .7 acre adjacent lot with easy access to Chase Street and all utilities.

Accepting purchase offers until March 1. Call Bill Jepsen- 541-667-7498

BEO Bancorp reports 2018 earnings

BEO Bancorp and its subsidiary, Bank of Eastern Oregon, announced consolidated year end 2018 earnings of \$3,949,000 an increase of 27.6 percent when compared to \$3,094,000 in 2017. Average earnings per share were up 28.1 percent at \$3.33. Total assets were up 0.5 percent from \$414.5 million to \$416.6 million. Net loans were up 1.8 percent at \$324.6 million, while deposits decreased 0.7 percent year over year to \$368.2 million.

"While after tax income was considerably higher than 2017, pre-tax earnings were down 2.9 percent year over year, due primarily to an increase in loan loss provision and write down of a legacy problem asset," said president and CEO Jeff Bailey. "The December 2017 reduction in corporate tax rates equated to approximately \$700,000 for 2018, this coupled with an increasing interest rate environment helped contribute to strong earnings."

According to chief financial officer Mark Lemmon, "2018 Return on Average Assets is 0.95 percent compared to 0.78 percent in 2017. Return on Average Equity is at 11.91 percent compared to 10.06 percent in 2017. Our book value per

share is up 9.5 percent at \$29.21 compared to \$26.67 one year ago. Shareholder equity is also up 9.0 percent year over year."

Chief operations officer Gary Prophet said, "In 2018 we opened a new loan production office in Dayton, WA. We also continued to expand our deposit taking ATMs in the region providing enhanced banking options for our customers across our branch and loan production office network."

"We are pleased with the 2018 results. Solid earnings for 2018 and an improved renewal season for our agricultural borrowers are encouraging for the year ahead, but time will tell," said Bailey. "It is also important to note that our application with the FDIC to acquire the four Umpqua branches (Colfax, Dayton, LaCrosse, and Pomeroy, WA) has been approved and the conversion is set for the first weekend in February. While there will be expenses associated with the acquisition, the prospects for those markets is encouraging. We look forward to having the employees in those branches join our banking family and welcome our new customers," concluded Bailey.

On-site salon benefits seniors

Senior residents at Willow Creek Terrace are able to get their hair done at the on-site salon at the facility. Jan Stroeber, a former hairstylist in Heppner, visits that salon to provide beauty services for the residents once a week. Lea Hyatt, another hairstylist sees clients at the salon also.

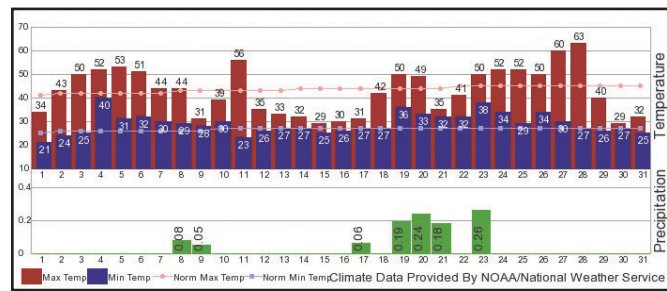
Stroeber, a stylist for 51 years before retiring three years ago, says, "These women came to my salon for many years, so now I come to them. Everyone wants to look good at any age, and it's a really wonderful space provided by Willow Creek."

Willow Creek's administrator, George Nairns says the salon has been a great asset for their residents. "They do not have to worry about transportation to a salon and it helps the facility stand out from other small assisted living facilities in the region. An hour of primping and pampering can go a long way for senior mental health and well-being," Nairns said.

Resident Mary Jean during (below) and after (right) her salon visit with hairstylist, Jan Stroeber.



January slightly warmer



According to preliminary data received by NOAA's National Weather Service in Pendleton, temperatures at Heppner averaged slightly warmer than normal during the month of January.

The average temperature was 36 degrees which was 0.8 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged 43 degrees, which was 0.6 degrees below normal. The highest was 63 degrees on the 28th. Low temperatures averaged 29.1 degrees, which was 2.3 degrees above normal. The lowest was 21 degrees, on the 1st.

There were 22 days with the low temperature below 32 degrees. There were five days when the high temperature stayed

below 32 degrees.

Precipitation totaled 1.06 inches during January, which was 0.41 inches below normal. Measurable precipitation, at least .01 inch, was received on seven days with the heaviest, 0.26 inches reported on the 23rd.

Since October, the water year precipitation at Heppner has been 5.07 inches, which is 0.46 inches below normal.

The outlook for February from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center calls for below normal temperatures and near normal precipitation. Normal highs for Heppner during February are 47.4 degrees and normal lows are 28.2 degrees. The 30 year normal precipitation is 1.12 inches.

Rural cemetery signs repaired



Cemetery steward Dana Wilson and cemetery director Gerald Arnsen stand beneath the recently repaired Pleasant Point Cemetery sign.

Two rural cemetery signs, removed for maintenance in December, were recently repaired and re-installed by the Heppner Cemetery Maintenance District. District directors Gerry Arnsen and Tommy Wolff, along with cemetery steward Dana Wilson, repaired and rebuilt them and re-installed the signs this past week.

Upper Rhea Creek cemetery signs are now back in place identifying these historic cemeteries. The Heppner Cemetery Maintenance District is responsible for the activities and maintenance of four local cemeteries; Heppner Masonic, Pleasant Point (on Little Butter Creek), Upper Rhea Creek Pioneer and the Tippet cemetery.

The Pleasant Point and





HEPPNER ELKS 358
676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 North Main

122ND ELKS ANNUAL SATURDAY FEB. 23
"Diamonds are Forever"
Ladies Tea 2 pm - Indoctrination 3pm
Lodge 4pm
DINNER 6 PM
LIVE MUSIC BY WICKED MARY 8 PM

Tickets will be available to purchase at the lodge for a men's and women's raffle basket. Drawing will be Feb. 23

RSVP
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