

The Official Newspaper
of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES

U.S.P.S. 240-420

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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Published weekly by Sykes Publishing and entered as periodical matter at the Post Office at Heppner, Oregon under the Act of March 3, 1879. Periodical postage paid at Heppner, Oregon. Office at 188 W. Willow Street. Telephone (541) 676-9228. Fax (541) 676-9211. E-mail: editor@rapidsolve.net or david@rapidsolve.net. Web site: www.heppner.net. Postmaster send address changes to the Heppner Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Oregon 97836. Subscriptions: \$31 in Morrow County; \$25 senior rate (in Morrow County only; 65 years or older); \$37 elsewhere; \$31 student subscriptions.

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All News and Advertising Deadline is Monday at 5 p.m.

For Advertising: advertising deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Cost for a display ad is \$5.25 per column inch. Cost for classified ad is 50¢ per word. Cost for Card of Thanks is \$10 up to 100 words. Cost for a classified display ad is \$6.05 per column inch.

For Public/Legal Notices: public/legal notices deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Dates for publication must be specified. Affidavits must be required at the time of submission. Affidavits require three weeks to process after last date of publication (a sooner return date must be specified if required).

For Obituaries: Obituaries are published in the Heppner GT at no charge and are edited to meet news guidelines. Families wishing to include information not included in the guidelines or who wish to have the obituary written in a certain way must purchase advertising space for the obituary.

For Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor MUST be signed by the author. The Heppner GT will not publish unsigned letters. All letters MUST include the author's address and phone number for use by the GT office. The GT reserves the right to edit letters. 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.

St. Patrick's fan visits Heppner



Dr. DesJardin, a dentist from John Day and Condon and fan of everything St. Patrick's, attends the non-existent St. Pat's celebration in Heppner Saturday, waving his family's Irish flag. DesJardin is pictured with Ann Murray (right) in front of Murray's Drug. -Contributed photo.

WCVEDG grant funds available

The Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) has funds available to be used for community and public enhancement grants for south Morrow County communities. Applicant organizations must be a local organization, club, special district or a governmental entity who resides in the south Morrow County service area (as defined by the WCVEDG Service Area Map). The requestor must have at least 50 percent of the funding, which may

include in-kind and cash contributions from local and regional sources, for the total project budget committed before applying. Exceptions may apply at the discretion of the board.

Completed grant requests will be accepted Friday, March 20 through Friday, April 24. The review and decision of grants awarded will be decided by the WCVEDG board.

To receive a grant application form and an eligibility and exclusions information sheet, contact Sheryll Bates at 541-676-5536 or email heppnerchamber@centurytel.net. Forms can also be picked up at Heppner, Ione and Lexington city hall offices or printed from the Economic Development tab on the Heppner Chamber website at www.heppnerchamber.com.

All completed grant applications must be forwarded to Sheryll at the chamber office to be eligible for consideration of funding. Grants can be emailed, mailed, hand delivered or faxed to 541-676-5656, but must be received in the chamber office no later than Friday, April 24 to be eligible for consideration in the grant review and decision process.

LCAC meetings cancelled

All LCAC meetings scheduled between March 16 and April 8 are cancelled, including the April 2 Morrow County meeting.

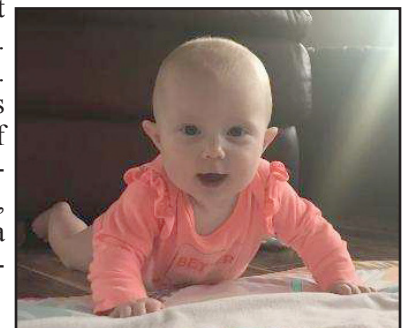
The next LCAC meeting will be held in Heppner on May 7 at 9 a.m. at the Bartholomew Building. The March 31 Regional Community Advisory Meeting (RCAC) meeting will take place electronically.

Ione Library board to meet

The monthly meeting of the Ione Library District's board of directors will be held Monday, March 23 at 6 p.m. at the Ione Public Library, 385 W Second Street. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Births

Addilyn Marie Stevens – A daughter, Addilyn Marie, was born to Harold and Tara Stevens, Tillamook, OR, on September 4, 2019, at OHSU, Portland, OR. She weighed 5 lbs. 12 oz. Grandparents are John Stevens of Waldport, OR, Marie Mallory of Fossil, OR, and John and Lisa Seymore of Beaverton, OR.



Addilyn Marie Stevens

Great-grandparents are Bob and Judy Stevens of Hardman, Donald and Barbara Seymore, and Helaine Phiophi.

Guest Editorial

DOE explains radioactive material transport

By Don Russell, Commissioner

On February 13 a notice of violation was issued by the Oregon Department of Energy to Chemical Waste Management in Arlington for disposing of radioactive material. This resulted in several news stories that sensationalized the story trying to sell papers rather than just reporting the news. A couple of weeks ago the Heppner Gazette-Times quoted Commissioner Jim Doherty in a tirade about the Union Pacific Railroad violating the trust of the people and demanding answers on how this could have happened. In his excitement he went so far as to offer we should park county equipment across the tracks until we got answers.

On March 4 the Gilliam County Court held two open houses with representatives of the Oregon Department of Energy and Waste Management in attendance to explain what happened, how it happened and what next steps were being contemplated. I attended the meeting in Condon and Commissioner Lindsay attended the meeting in Arlington.

At the Condon meeting, the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) explained that an individual from North Dakota had called and made the claim that Waste Management was illegally taking radioactive material in violation of Oregon Law. In the 1970's Oregon passed a law that banned any radioactive material from being disposed of at any landfill in Oregon. ODOE pointed out that there was naturally occurring radioactive material all around us, and the Oregon law would make it impossible to have a landfill in Oregon. They admitted that the rules were confusing and need to be clarified.

The first thing that ODOE assured us was that there was no imminent threat to human health. There was no threat to the employees of Waste Management or the residents of Gilliam County. The material that Waste Management had been taking was largely water filters used in the fracking process in the North Dakota oil fields. They held one up for the crowd to look at, and to me it looked like an oversized tube sock. The material was shipped by truck and not rail.

I will say, at the meeting, there were about 25 citizens including myself in attendance. About half of them were initially irritated. They had read the stories in print or reposted on social media and wanted their pound of flesh.

The material filtered out of the process of re-

claiming the water so it could be used again does in fact contain traces of naturally occurring radium found in the earth's crust. They said that the average load contained 90 picocuries per gram of radioactive material. When asked if this would have required the load to be labeled as radioactive with the appropriate radioactive warning label, the answer was no. The minimum requirement for a substance to be labeled radioactive material per the US Department of Transportation is 2000 picocuries per gram. They went on to explain that the average person who lives in the United States absorbs radiation just by walking around and breathing. The amount of radiation absorbed is calculated in millirems. The amount of millirems absorbed fluctuates based on several factors such as elevation, diet and natural surroundings. They used average radiation absorption per person per year of 360 millirems. They estimated that if one individual was responsible for unloading all of the material that was disposed of at Arlington that he would have absorbed an additional 4 millirems of radiation. To give perspective, if you get a chest X-ray you would absorb 10 millirems of radiation.

Waste Management, when notified by ODOE, of the violation immediately stopped taking the material. They notified the Gilliam County emergency manager and the Gilliam County Court of the situation. They also notified all employees involved. According to ODOE Waste Management has been very transparent and cooperative. They will be required to do a risk assessment to determine next steps. The risk assessment will look at thousands of years from now, not just today. The ODOE stated that unless something not expected was uncovered in the risk assessment, the material would stay where it was. They went on to explain that this was a chemical waste site and already had additional safeguards over a traditional landfill.

My takeaway for us as county government is as follows: We should look for the facts before we go on a tirade especially in a public meeting with or without the press present. Gilliam County is a neighbor and Waste Management is their largest private employer, and an important part of their economy. It would have been easy to pick up the phone and give anyone of our counterparts at Gilliam County a call to get the facts.

ZONING

-Continued from PAGE ONE

not possible. The sheriff will enforce county laws within the town limits of Lexington, but it will not enforce town ordinances such as animal restrictions.

In other action at last Tuesday's monthly meeting, the council was informed by maintenance man Scott Lamb that the new chlorination system was up and working well. He also reported he has been getting gravel in some of the pot holes around

town. He thought maybe he could get some cold patch from the county to do some pot hole work also. Lamb says he had also been working on the parks getting them ready for spring. He was also considering getting some firemen volunteers together to do some burning around the city well.

It was also noted that the first budget meeting will be held April 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Community lunch menu

Hopeful Saints volunteers will serve lunch on Wednesday, March 25 at St. Patrick's Senior Center. Lunch will be turkey sloppy joes, roasted Brussel sprouts, mixed vegies and molasses cookie.

Milk, coffee and tea is served at each meal. Suggested donation is \$3.50 per meal. Menu is subject to change.



Stephanie Derowitsch, RN
Home Health & Hospice
Since 2018

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it's who I choose to be."*

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A Healthier Morrow County is Within Me.

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Read About How We are Working
Together to be a Healthier Community
Today and TOMORROW

HealthyMC.org

