



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

Halloween decorating contest winners announced

Winners of the decorating contests held in the communities of Lexington and Heppner have been announced. Cash prizes were awarded to the winners.

The first-place winner in Lexington, earning the \$250 prize donated by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District, went to Steve Lankford's house on C Street. Ashli Gould took home the \$100 second place

prize donated by Trent and Bria Wright for her decorated house on Arcade Street.

Kraig Cutsforth took the \$200 first place prize in Heppner. Dean Handbury got second with the \$100 prize and Robert Whalen took third winning \$50.

The organizers from both communities appreciate all those who entered the contest with their creative ideas.



Steve Lankford's house on C St. in Lexington took first place.



Ashli Gould's house on Arcade St. in Lexington took second place.



Robert Whalen took third in Heppner.



Kraig Cutsforth took first in Heppner.



Dean Handbury won second in Heppner.

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Morrow County still Trump country

President gets 70 percent, nearly same as 2016



Jim Doherty wins with 61 percent

By David Sykes

President Donald Trump's popularity did not waiver in Morrow County over the past four years, as the president garnered 70 percent of the vote in the Nov. 3 election, nearly the same as he got in 2016. There were more votes cast in this election however, with 5,060 votes cast for presidential candidates this time, and only 3,738 in 2016. Every precinct in the county voted in favor of Trump.

On the local front, there were four hotly contested races where voters decided on a County Commissioner, Justice of Peace, Sheriff and Treasurer. Incumbents did very well with all three being elected. Commissioner Jim Doherty won all but the Ione precinct, his opponent's hometown, with a county-wide 61 percent vote margin. Sheriff Matlack won reelection by beating his opponent in every precinct except Boardman, with a total of 60 percent of the vote. Glen



Ken Matlack reelected with 60 percent



Jaylene Papineau garners 62 percent

Diehl had the closest race at 52 percent of the vote, but still managed to prevail and remain Justice of the Peace, a position he has not run for but was earlier appointed to. His opponent Theresa Crawford won Lexington, Heppner and Ione precincts, but by not enough margin to win. Jaylene Papineau is a newcomer to politics and won the Treasurer race by a 62 percent margin. She beat her opponent in every precinct in the county. Bobbi Childers won re-election as county clerk, running unopposed. Childers got



Bobbi Childers runs and wins unopposed



Glen Diehl prevails at 52 percent

99.54 percent of the vote with 4,296 against only 20 write-ins.

On the state-wide measures, Morrow County said yes to campaign finance reform by a 67 percent yes margin, no to higher tobacco tax by a slim 51 percent no vote; a big no to legalized psilocybin by 66 percent and a smaller percentage of no, 60 percent to decriminalizing hard drugs.

In other races Morrow County voters turned out well for native son State Representative Greg Smith giving him 80 percent of

their votes to give him his tenth consecutive term in the Oregon Legislature. Smith has held the District 57 seat since 2001 making him Dean of the Oregon Legislature.

But the conservative Morrow County did not give many votes to liberal Democrats like US Senator Jeff Merkley, who got only 31 percent of their vote against his Republican opponent. The county went big for Republican House Representative candidate Cliff Bentz, however, voting 73 percent for him over his Democratic opponent. Bentz is replacing long-time congressman Greg Walden who decided not to run again. Voters also gave thumbs up to Republican State Senator Bill Hansel, voting in favor of the incumbent by a 79 percent margin.

On the whole the county had a good turn out with 5,209 people casting ballots out of a total 6,753 registered voters for a 77 percent participation rate. The county trailed the statewide turnout however, with all of Oregon voting at 81 percent. We did beat neighboring Umatilla County, which registered only a 72 percent voter turnout. Trump garnered a lower percent, 65, in Umatilla County, however.

Other mostly unopposed races around the county were: City of Boardman councilmembers elected Brenda Profitt, Paul

-See MORROW COUNTY RESULTS/PAGE THREE

County approves \$379,000 grants to cities

Holds wider discussion on where increased county tax revenues are going

By David Sykes

The Morrow County Commission approved \$379,000 in grants to cities recently, and the action sparked a wider discussion on how increasing tax funds coming into the county coffers, through business expansion and energy projects, should be distributed throughout the county. The discussion asked whether the county should look more at need, or city population when allocating this new money.

The grants to cities program have become an annual allocation of funds from county government down to the five cities in the county. Commissioners had earlier delayed the decision on the funds, wondering if more money was needed in the Health Department this year to fight COVID-19. At its Oct. 21 meeting commissioners decided to move forward with the popular annual cities grants, and to allocate the available funds

based on 62.5 percent an even split and the rest 37.5 percent based on population of each city (see table below).

Morrow County is now seeing large amounts of tax money coming into both the county coffers and the Enterprise Zone mainly from Amazon's new data farms, the expansion of food processing plants at the Port of Morrow, and the large scale wind, solar and gas generating facilities locating here. How that money will be spent is a decision both the county and the enterprise board will be making in the coming years.

At its Oct. 21 meeting, Commissioner Melissa Lindsay laid out her vision of how money should go to those areas of the county most in need, and not just the cities with the highest populations. She used Ione, and its current need of a new sewer system, as an example. All of Ione is on individual septic systems

and that method of waste disposal is just not working anymore. The city needs to upgrade to a central sewer system, but that is an expensive project city members are working on at this time.

"The city proper will be decimated without a sewer system," she told the other commissioners at the meeting. "Homes have been abandoned because they cannot replace their septic systems. It's growing pretty dire," she emphasized. Lindsay said some people talk of replacing systems "in the dark of night" because they (Department of Environmental Quality, DEQ) will not allow septic system replacements when they fail. "We need to keep our small towns alive. We can't just end up with Hardmans or we don't have anything," she said.

Lindsay pointed out when there are conversations of needs in the

towns and cities of south Morrow County, "We don't talk about who is putting public money toward golf courses (in reference to the Port of Morrow recently buying and operating the Boardman golf course). In Lexington we talk about the water. We have to look not only at population but on need. I have to talk not only about helping our

-See GRANTS TO CITIES/PAGE FOUR

Distribution Comparison for Morrow County Grants to Cities (FY 20-21) - \$379,000 Total						
	Boardman	Heppner	Irrigon	Ione	Lexington	Total
Population	4,505	1,295	2,030	330	265	8,425
% of total county population	53.47%	15.37%	24.09%	3.92%	3.15%	100%
37.5% Population	\$ 75,997	\$ 21,846	\$ 34,245	\$ 5,567	\$ 4,470	\$ 142,125
62.5% Even	\$ 47,375	\$ 47,375	\$ 47,375	\$ 47,375	\$ 47,375	\$ 236,875
Total	\$ 123,372	\$ 69,221	\$ 81,620	\$ 52,942	\$ 51,845	\$ 379,000



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