



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

50¢

VOL. 139 NO. 52 10 Pages Wednesday, December 23, 2020 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon



Birthright of Morrow County open and ready to help

'Our goal is to help a woman carry her baby to term'

By David Sykes

A new all-volunteer donation-supported service called Birthright of Morrow County has opened its doors in Heppner and is now welcoming young girls or women who need help coping with an unplanned pregnancy. "We offer free pregnancy testing and friend to friend counseling," says volunteer Julie Finch. "But most of all we want to just give a girl the opportunity to tell us what is going on and why she is in crisis. We don't judge," says Finch of the service, manned completely by trained volunteers and funded by donations from the community. "We show love and support and try to help her have the resources she needs to have her baby. That is our goal; to help her carry her baby to term," Finch explains of the new community organization. All services for the expectant mother are free.

Birthright of Morrow County is part of a larger Birthright International group offering the same support and counseling services. Locally a girl or woman can receive anonymous counseling and help, such as free pregnancy tests, free maternity and baby clothes, and community referrals like where to find a doctor, health insurance for herself and her baby, or maybe a place to stay, depending on her situation. "This is not just for young girls, this is for any woman who finds herself in a stressful situation if she is pregnant or is afraid she



Julia Finch (left) and Jean Creswick are just two of the volunteers ready to help a girl or woman with her pregnancy. Their office is in the former optometrist office on Willow Street in Heppner. -Photo by David Sykes

is pregnant," adds volunteer Jean Creswick. "They can phone us and make an appointment, or just walk in," says Creswick, who explains that all volunteers are screened, background checked, trained and ready to help. "We also have some supplies a young mother may need like maternity and baby clothes," she says showing the supply of baby things stored at the office.

Finch says there are already four volunteers in Heppner who have been screened and trained and the organization is still looking for more help in order to expand its office hours. Now the office is open Monday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Thursdays 5-7 p.m. and Saturdays 1-3 p.m. "We

take walk-ins, or you can call us at 541-676-0530," Finch says. The office is located 128 West Willow Street in Heppner, the former optometrist office.

The new organization is also looking to do outreach into the community and let organizations and people know what they offer. "As a new service in Morrow County, we wish to broaden our outreach. Our hope is that many others will direct teens and women to Birthright," their brochures says. "You can be in the center as a trained friend-volunteer, offering love, hope and resources," they say. Adding that there is a "need for prayer partners, donors and promoters out in the community."

Anyone who would like to make a financial contribution to help out the new center can make their checks payable to Birthright of Morrow County and give them to Finch or Creswick or drop a check in the mail to PO Box 923 Heppner, OR 97836. The organization is a nonprofit, so any donation is tax deductible.

"It is the right of every woman to give birth, and the right of every child to be born," the organization's brochure says in quoting Mrs. Louise Summerhill, mother of seven children and founder of Birthright International in 1968.

Shooting victim dies

Heppner resident, Marlen Bowles, 42, died December 18 from a gunshot wound she received at her home in Heppner on December 15. She was initially transported to a local hospital before being life flighted to Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) in Portland in critical condition.

Just before 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 15, the Morrow County Communications Center received reports of shots fired. When sheriff's office deputies arrived on the scene, they discovered the female with a gunshot wound.

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office has asked Oregon State Police to take over the investigation into the shooting. OSP is currently looking for David Bowles, age 43, as a person of interest in the case. His location is unknown. He was last seen driving a brown Chevrolet Impala

with Oregon license plate URG552. David, a white male with graying hair and blue eyes, is 5' 6" tall and weighs approximately 180 pounds.

Law enforcement is asking for the public's help locating Bowles and are asked to call 911 or OSP dispatch at 800-442-2068, reference OSP case # SP200348879, if he is located. Law enforcement advises the public should not try to confront him. He is considered armed and dangerous.

Editor's Note: A GoFundMe has been set up to help Marlen's boys with her funeral expenses. It can be found on Facebook, "Help Marlen's boys with funeral and other expenses" or https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-marlens-boys-with-funeral-and-other-expenses?qid=c4edc34dc1dbd-660517794488012fb59.



David Bowles is a person of interest in a Heppner shooting. The public is asked to notify law enforcement if Bowles is seen.

Santa stops off at Murray's



A special North Pole guy made a visit to Murrays Drug Tuesday and was seen visiting with clerk Jodi Brisbois. Santa is getting ready for his big night coming up Thursday making sure all the children will be happy on Friday.

G-T closed for Christmas

The Heppner Gazette-Times will be closed December 24 and 25 for the Christmas holiday. The paper will be delivered on

its regular day, Wednesday, December 23 and Wednesday, December 30.

The office will be open for normal business hours

December 28 - 31 and closed on Jan. 1.

The G-T wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Port of Morrow donates loads of firewood



The Port of Morrow donated two pickup loads of firewood to the Neighborhood Center of South Morrow County, in Heppner, to help local citizens with winter heat. Port Commissioner, Jerry Healy (right), and his son-in-law, Jon Ellis, cut and delivered the donation for the Port of Morrow. -Contributed photo.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE: MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

POLARIS

GOING ON NOW!

Morrow County Grain Growers Inc.

MORROW COUNTY GRAIN GROWERS
350 MAIN STREET LEXINGTON OR 97839
CONTACT JUSTIN BAITLEY 541-256-0229, 541-989-8221 EXT. 204

POLARIS.COM/SNOWMOBILES

WINTER STARTS NOW
UPGRADE YOUR RIDE

REBATES UP TO \$2000 ON SELECT MODELS

Have a news story or photo for the Gazette? e-mail editor@rapidserve.net call 541-676-9228 or stop by the office on Willow St., Heppner Today