



# the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

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## County taxes not source of vaccine lottery funds

The \$70,000 given out to county residents in the COVID lottery reported in last week's newspaper, did not come from county taxes a county official told the Gazette-Times.

The money came from state taxes passed down to

the county for use as incentives urging people to take the COVID-19 vaccine. The state money was earmarked for that use and if not used for incentives the county would have had to return the funds to the state, the official added.

## 4-H Fashion Revue kicks off 2021 Morrow County Fair



Arianna Worden of Heppner and Isabella Orr of Ukiah show off their custom sewn projects during the 2021 Morrow County Fair Fashion Revue on Monday.



Junior and Senior 4-H members participate in the My Favorite Outfit contest. L-R: Arianna Worden (Heppner), Ellie Sak (Boardman), Samantha Weiss (Boardman) and Isabella Orr (Ukiah).



Junior and beginner Ready to Wear participants model the outfits they purchased on tight budgets, a contest staple. L-R: Eva Worden (Heppner), Novalee Campbell (Ione), Savannah Browne (Boardman), Olivia Ogden (Ione), Audrey Sak (Boardman), Isabelle Ogden (Ione) and Madelyn Campbell (Ione).

The Morrow County Fair kicked off on Monday with the 4-H Fashion Revue. The fair runs August 16-22 and will include many more 4-H and open class contests as well as entertainment, food and fun for all ages.

The 4-H Fashion Revue judging was held on the outdoor stage at the Mor-

row County Fairgrounds on Monday. Contests included My Favorite Outfit, Ready to Wear, Fashion Challenge and Fashion Revue.

Winners in My Favorite Outfit category were Isabella Orr, Ukiah, as the senior champion; Arianna Worden, Heppner, intermediate champion; Ellie Sak, Boardman, intermediate

reserve champion and Samantha Weiss, Boardman, reserve champion. Juniors Eva Worden, Heppner and Isabelle Ogden, Ione, were awarded champion. Madelyn Campbell, Ione, was named champion in beginners. Also in beginners, Kinsley Hancock, Ukiah, champion and Andrew Kerwin, Ukiah, reserve

champion.

Senior Isabella Orr, Ukiah, received champion in Ready to Wear. Intermediate Arianna Worden, Heppner, was named champion and Ellie Sak, Boardman, reserve champion. Isabelle Ogden, Ione, was the junior champion and Olivia Ogden, Ione, reserve champion. For beginners,

Madelyn Campbell, Ione, was the champion.

Junior Audrey Sak, Boardman, was the champion in the Fashion Revue Challenge contest.

For Fashion Revue, Isabella Orr, Ukiah, was the champion; Isabella Orr, Ukiah, senior champion and Arianna Worden, Heppner, intermediate champion. Junior winners were Ol-

ivia Ogden, Ione, champion; Savannah Browne, Boardman, champion; Eva Worden, Heppner, reserve champion; Isabelle Ogden, Ione, reserve champion and Audrey Sak, Boardman, reserve champion. Beginner Kinsley Hancock, Ukiah, was named champion and Andrew Kerwin, Ukiah, reserve champion.

## County declares COVID emergency; Fair and rodeo goes on

### Hospital bed shortage concerns county officials

By David Sykes

A hastily called special meeting last week in response to the growing number of COVID cases in the county resulted in an emergency declaration by the county commissioners. The declaration did not, however, spell out any behavior or rule mandates for citizens or businesses, nor did it shut down the county fair and rodeo now in progress in Heppner.

"The Board of Commissioners shall be authorized to take and/or direct such actions and issue such orders as are determined to be necessary to protect the public and property and to efficiently conduct activities that minimize or mitigate the effect of the emergency," the declaration said in part.

The commissioners held a wide-ranging half hour discussion that covered topics all the way from the shortage of hospital beds, neighboring states not taking Oregon patients, to the COVID precautions being taken at the fair.

Newly hired Morrow County emergency manager Paul Gray said there are reports of hospitals in Idaho and Washington turning away emergency pa-

tients from Oregon because their intensive care units (ICU) are full of COVID patients. Gray told the Gazette-Times later that in state medical region nine encompassing Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Malheur and Baker counties there were currently only three ICU beds available. "One motor vehicle accident can take up all the beds," he pointed out. "People don't believe COVID is a big deal, but this shows that it is," he said. Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner does not keep any of the county COVID patients in its facility.

Gray told the commissioners that Oregon patients are being sent to Reno and San Francisco Bay area hospitals because of the shortages. He said the spike in COVID infections is putting the health care system in "dire straits," and a little bit more and it is "going to collapse."

Commissioner Jim Doherty wanted to know if Gray had specific numbers to give out about patients having to leave the state, and Commissioner Don Russell said the bed shortage was a "big problem. Someone might have other illnesses, cancer and accidents and it is pretty concerning when hospitals can't admit more patients," he said.

Doherty pressed Gray saying he wanted to have more information and spe-

cific data before he would vote for an emergency declaration for county government. "I need something empirical," he said. "When people ask me why are we doing this (emergency declaration)? I say because they said it is bad. How bad? I don't know how bad. Bad with a capital B." Doherty said he was frustrated with what he hears as only anecdotal and hearsay reasons driving the emergency declaration request.

Doherty asked if we were in such "dire straits" why was Gray, the emergency manager, not recommending the fair and rodeo, which started this week, be shut down? Gray said he was not asking for the fair closure because the governor's request (last week's announcement from Salem) for mask wearing only covered indoor events, while the fair and rodeo is mostly outdoors. "I know she did say outdoors is a little bit different," he explained. "I am worried that we are going to spread the delta variant around even in the outdoors, but I have to go with what the governor is coming out with," he told commissioners. Gray said his biggest concern is indoors and more and more people turning up positive. "That is my biggest worry, we are going to get more and more people sick, and the hospitals are already overflowing. If the numbers jump up even more, I may ask by Monday that we not do the fair," he told the commissioners.

Contacted by the Gazette-Times the following Tuesday, however, Gray said he did not recommend

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## Chronicles available for sale



Nancy Miller, MCHS treasurer, and Bill Monagle, MCHS editor, look over the 2021 MC Chronicles with Jodi Brisbois, clerk at Murray's Drug in Heppner, where issues may be purchased.

This year's Morrow County Chronicles are hot off the presses and ready for purchase.

Bill Monagle, Ione, took the helm as editor this year and gathered a collection of seventeen stories with photos about the area from a variety of authors, including the Chronicles recently retired and long-time editor, Doris Brosnan.

Articles include a tribute to 'The End of an Era' about the Boardman coal fired plant, the Jepsen chicken farm, the circus coming to Heppner in 1955, a Century Farm homestead in Lexington, pioneer Sam-

uel Easley and family, and A.C. Houghton, the first irrigation district manager in Irrigon. There are also accounts about Don and Jean Bennet, Louis Carlson, Father Gerald Condon, Earl and Verdie Isom, Glen Ward, Doc Sherer and Larry Mills.

This year's issue is dedicated to the late Dave DeMayo, retired Heppner city manager and past Morrow County Historical Society which publishes the Chronicles.

Nancy Miller, historical society treasurer, encourages people to write their

family stories and personal memories of Morrow County to submit to next year's Chronicles. "It is important to preserve that history for our next generations," she noted.

Issues may be purchased for \$7 at the Ione, Heppner, Irrigon and Boardman branches of the Bank of Eastern Oregon and at Murray Drug. A table will be set up and selling the Chronicles at the Morrow County Fair.

Past issues of the Chronicles are available for purchase by contacting KayProctor@gmail.com.



Recently hired Morrow County emergency manager Paul Gray

I have is patients are being flown out of state and this is all they (Oregon Health Authority) would tell me over the phone," he said. Commissioner Don Russell said the bed shortage was a "big problem. Someone might have other illnesses, cancer and accidents and it is pretty concerning when hospitals can't admit more patients," he said.

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