

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

Good News Only

By Doris Brosnan

On October 16, on the floor of the Pendleton Roundup grounds, Taighler Dougherty, daughter of Cliff and Dawna, and Bo Pickett, of Idaho, exchanged wedding vows. Their guests were delighted to see Taighler arrive in what had been her grandfather Jerry's 1965 red pickup, which Cliff had completely restored. A reception followed in the convention center of this town that the couple will now call home.

Together for nineteen years but never having had a "twosome" vacation in sixteen years, since their first child was born, Peter Wenberg and Sheena recently had such a getaway to Hug Point Recreation Site, on the coast about five miles south of Cannon Beach. Hug Point was so named because it was necessary to hug the rocks to get around the point on the ocean front without getting wet, which is what the couple did (got a bit wet). Peter insisted that Sheena take a selfie of them with the ocean in the background, but while she was preparing to do that, he went to his knee and surprised her as she turned by expressing his love and giving her a beautiful diamond ring, something he did not accomplish nineteen years ago.

Good news for Kite (Healy) Thorne, who lives at the McKay Estates in Pendleton: Covid shutdown did not preclude a celebration of her 91st birthday but just created an opportunity for a week of celebration. Her Healy girls; Patty, Joan, Mary, Maureen and Susan made certain that at least one of them visited every day. Her grandchildren were also able to be in touch, either in person or through their cards. That was true, also, of her many friends and other family members who kept the birthday wishes coming. Among Kite's neighbors, Carlene West is one of the best-wishers and Kite enjoyed getting better acquainted with Bev Wright.

Lorene Montgomery of Lexington and Edna Dalzell of Ione celebrated their October birthdays at lunch with nine friends at the Route 74 Restaurant in Ione last Thursday. Lorene, 83, and Edna, 79, both stressed the importance of health and sharing good times with friends.

At last Thursday's football game in Heppner, spectators included a couple who enjoy attending sporting events in small eastern Oregon communities, though they have no con-

nection to the visited towns. The wife said that, without a doubt, the Heppner High School cheerleaders were the best – enthusiastic, synchronized, attentive – that they have seen this season. These comments added to the positives frequently voiced among the local fans. Kudos, cheerleaders.

Also, in the stands at last Thursday's game were many HES students. What great contributions they made to the cheering section. Brook Baker, new music teacher, had taught the kindergartners-through-sixth graders the words to the HHS fight song and some cheers and encouraged them to attend. They were so impressive. Though these students were spread throughout the rooting section, the ones closest to the pep-band section numbered thirteen kindergartners who were having such a great time participating with the cheerleaders. Such strong voices.

Kane Sweeney is at it again. When he learned that Oregon State University theatre's next production was going to be "It's a Wonderful Life," he knew he wanted to audition. This play/movie is one of his all-time favorites and during his senior year at Heppner High School, he selected this play as their main production in which Kane played the lead role of George Bailey. He is looking forward to playing the darker character, the antagonist Mr. Potter, for the OSU theatre production. The cast and crew are very excited over production of this first live performance in Withycombe Hall since 2019. Those who may be in the area for either of the first two November weekends, Kane would love to see you in the audience.

Drew Brannon was the epitome of neighbor-watching-out-for-neighbor on Sunday when I fell at the Heritage Park while trying to tip down a large "no thru traffic" barrier that wind gusts were pushing around in the traffic lanes. He interrupted what he was doing at his home several houses away to rush my way. No need for help, thankfully, but his thoughtfulness is a lesson for us all.

Please, share your reasons to smile by sending your good-news tidbits before Monday afternoon to dbrosnan123@gmail.com, or call 541-676-5382 or 541-223-1490, or stop me on the street.

Here's hoping that some good news comes to everyone reading this.

Morrow County schools to update HVAC systems

The Morrow County School District has received approval from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to use \$2.4 million of federal funding to upgrade and improve heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems in schools throughout the district.

The funding approved is part of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) provided to the district as part of the federal coronavirus relief package allocated through ODE. Because ventilation and circulation are an important part of improving air quality and maintaining a healthy environment, these funds can be used to upgrade HVAC systems.

The Morrow County School District prepared a study of its HVAC systems as part of its overall long-term facility planning and found that multiple projects in Heppner, Boardman and Irrigon qualified for the funds. These upgrades include replacing rooftop units and outdated heat pumps, testing and rebalancing airflow through current ductwork and installing new controls to improve ventilation and monitoring.

By updating these systems, the school district will be able to reduce energy and maintenance costs while maintaining more consistent temperatures throughout school buildings in winter and summer.

"We all become very aware of how an HVAC system is working when the weather gets cold, and especially when the electric bills come in," said Morrow County Superintendent Dirk Dirksen. "The Morrow County School District will be able to make substantial upgrades to our systems in our older buildings using federal dollars. This will create a better learning environment for our students while allowing us to spend less time and money keeping aged systems up and running."

Work will begin this year and is expected to conclude in summer of 2022. The district will continue to address other HVAC upgrades discovered during the long-range facilities assessment that did not qualify for the grant. For more information about the ESSER funding, visit <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/schools-and-districts/grants/Pages/CARES-Act-Resources.aspx>.

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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.

Obituaries

Raymond Jesse French

Raymond Jesse French was born May 18, 1927, to Rose Hirl and Herbert French at St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton, OR.

Heppner Elks Lodge, member of Heppner Chamber of Commerce, American Legion and Willow Creek Country Club.



Raymond Jesse French

He died September 5, 2021, at Willow Creek Terrace Assisted Living in Heppner.

Raymond spent his early childhood at the family ranch on Big Butter Creek attending Lena school. His father passed away when he was nine years old. He attended St. Joseph's Academy in Pendleton for one year following his father's death. The family moved to Heppner where he spent the rest of his school years. During high school he met a cute Condon cheerleader, Norma Denton. Immediately following graduation, he enlisted into the US Navy. Following basic training, he volunteered for the naval aviation program and was in Seattle, WA completing his last six weeks of bomber pilot training to ship out to the South Pacific when the WWII ended. He was honorably discharged and returned home to marry Norma on October 26, 1946. They moved back to his childhood home and built a herd of horned Herefords. They would have been married 75 years this October.

Raymond was committed to his faith, community, his industry, state and country. Some of his contributions include president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, chairmanships of the Morrow County Livestock Growers, Heppner Soil and Water Conservation District, Morrow County School board and member of the Columbia Blue Mountain Resource and Conservation Development Association board and USDA Forest Service Advisory board. He served as director and then district vice president of the National Cattlemen's Association, and director of the Pendleton Production Credit Bank. He was a volunteer and served on the Heppner rodeo board. He served as an Oregon State Representative for District 59. He was elected as a Morrow County commissioner. He dedicated service to St. Patrick's Catholic church from the time he was an altar boy to teaching adult bible study classes and was eventually nominated for the Wall of Honor at the church, following in his mother's footsteps. He was a member and trustee of the

Acknowledgements of his dedication include Morrow County Cattleman of the Year, Heppner Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award, Grand Marshall of the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo, honorary member of the National Block and Bridle Club, and Distinguished Service Award as a Charter Member of the Oregon State University Withycombe Club.

With Norma's encouragement, he enjoyed learning to dance and play golf. Television service was a long time coming to the ranch. His favorite programs were football and baseball games, Star Trek and Jeopardy. The family also knew not to interrupt Paul Harvey on the radio. He and Norma were avid fans of Heppner High School events still frequenting many sports games after retirement. He enjoyed meeting his friends downtown to visit and have morning coffee every day. While living on the ranch, a Sunday tradition included mass in Heppner, a stop downtown to buy candy bars for Norma and his daughters and a Sunday newspaper for himself—all for 25cents.

He is survived by his wife and three daughters, Karen Wood (Joe) of Tigard, OR, Verina Schiller (Tony) of Round Rock, TX, and Susan French (Matthew Greenup) of Heppner; sisters Dorothy O'Rourke, Pendleton, OR, and Francine Evans, Irrigon, OR, nine grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. His parents and brother, Joe French, preceded him in death.

With consideration for the health of Raymond's family and community, funeral services will be held at a later date. Condolence messages may be sent to the Raymond French Family, c/o Susan French, 84176 French Lane, Heppner, OR 97836, or online to SweeneyMortuary.com.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Patrick's Church, PO Box 633, Pioneer Memorial Hospital, PO Box 9, Willow Creek Terrace Assisted Living, 400 Frank Gilliam Drive, or Heppner Elks Lodge, PO Box 494, all in Heppner.

Cross country prepares for districts and middle school state

By Hannah Finch

Last Thursday, the high school cross country team traveled to John Day for their final meet before district meets. The boys placed fourth as a team and the girls placed seventh.

The high school districts meet is this Friday, October 29 in John Day. The 1A/2A varsity boys will race first at 3 p.m. followed by the 1A/2A/3A varsity girls at 3:30 p.m. There, the Heppner runners will compete for a spot at state. The state meet will be held at Lane Community College on November 6.

Currently, the boys are ranked second in the district behind Union. The girls are in third place behind Union and Burns. The top two teams from this next meet will go to state, not counting any individual qual-

fiers. Individually, Trevor Nichols is ranked second in the district. Hailey Heide-man is ranked third for the girls, along with Hannah Finch at fifth and Kylie Boor in tenth.

The middle schoolers competed in the Eastern Oregon XC Championships last Friday in Pendleton. Cooper Wight finished eighth with a time of 11:04.0, followed by teammates Olson Anderson (13:43.7) and Lincoln Ellsworth (14:12.7).

For the girls' race, Lily Nichols finished second with a time of 11:41.0. Riley Archer was right behind her and finished fourth (11:55.5) and Brooklyn Hendricks finished eighth (12:12.3). After those three were Hailey McDaniel, Jules Archer, Lizzie Ginn and Rebecca Ellsworth. Overall, the girls placed third as a team.

Lily Nichols, Riley Archer, Brooklyn Hendricks, Hailey McDaniel, Jules Archer and Lizzie Ginn will be competing Sunday, October 31, in the middle school state meet at Western Oregon University. The girls will race at 1 p.m. Good luck to all of our runners this week.

2021 COLUMBIA BASIN ANNUAL MEETING

To keep our employees and members safe during COVID, we have reached outside the box this year and will be holding an Old-Fashioned "Drive In" Annual Meeting

Park your vehicle in the Fairground's Parking Lot
Facing the Wilkinson Arena
On November 4, 2021 @ 12:00 Noon
In Heppner, OR.

We will provide a lunch, goodie bag and a brief presentation!



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