

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

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For Public/Legal Notices: public/legal notices deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Dates for publication must be specified. Affidavits must be requested 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.

**Engagements**

Send engagement and wedding announcements to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

**Kilkenny-Russell engagement announced**



**Katherine Kilkenny and Thomas Russell**

John and Diane Kilkenny of Heppner are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter, Katherine, to Thomas Russell of Portland. Thomas' parents are Steve and Beth Russell, also of Portland. Katherine is a graduate of Heppner High School. She obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Gonzaga University, and then received her

Doctorate as a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner from the University of San Diego. She practices at Portland Mental Health and Wellness.

Thomas graduated from Lincoln High School in Portland, and then graduated with a degree in Communications from Portland State University. He is employed as a Software Developer in Portland.

**A View from the Hill**

**By Doris Brosnan**

New, important cleaning/sanitizing changes at the Terrace due to Covid. Sounds as though 2022 might be starting as did 2021. Fingers crossed by residents and staff for a year more relaxed and less threatening.

Viewing snow-covered Mother Nature can be relaxing when toasty warm inside, and routine activities can contribute to a relaxing atmosphere, so residents have those to look forward to this month. Possibly making a comeback to routine activities this month is the sharing of the jigsaw puzzle in the common area.

The morning discussion group tends to become a bit more animated sometimes, depending on the topics, but some of this month's topics lend themselves just pleasant memory-sharing. An example will be on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Make-a-Dream-Come-True Day, as participants share dreams they have held. And surely spouses will deserve many compliments when they become the discussion topic on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

And other specially-designated days on the calendar will provide discussion kick-offs: Peace was on the first; Wheel of Fortune the 6<sup>th</sup>, compliments the 24<sup>th</sup>, and puzzles, the 29<sup>th</sup>. Trivia Day on the 4<sup>th</sup> provided some morning fun.

Of course, some foods get attention on their designated, celebrated days, so the kitchen will be working to get them included in the menus: crème puffs (were on the 2<sup>nd</sup>), apricots (9<sup>th</sup>),

hot pastrami (14<sup>th</sup>), bagels (15<sup>th</sup>), chocolate cake (27<sup>th</sup>) and blueberry pancakes (28<sup>th</sup>).

Only time will tell how many times pizza will appear on menus during National Pizza Week, beginning on the 10<sup>th</sup>, though daily would not be too often for some residents.

Only National Hat Day on the 15<sup>th</sup> seems to be one on which some residents and staff members might grace the halls and dining room with uncommon clothing, a variety of chapeaux.

No one at the Terrace will be celebrating a birthday this month, but two new employees are getting into the rhythm on the hill and will be ready to help celebrate next month. Luis Larracuente, of Heppner, and Joseph Reyes, of Ione, are the latest new faces.

Residents and staff welcome the new help with daily living at Willow Creek Terrace, and they are eager to welcome new residents, as well. Information is available on their Facebook page and by calling 541-676-0004.

The new year began with what has become a tradition at the Terrace, the prime-rib meal. That such a pleasant tradition continues could be considered a good omen about the year ahead – even though the long electricity outage was a chilly beginning that kept everyone snuggled in bed longer than usual - which would be viewed with relief by everyone at Willow Creek Terrace.

*~ Letters to the Editor ~*

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. 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. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

**Downfall of rural healthcare**

To the editor;  
Power hungry "leaders" are the downfall of rural clinic healthcare. A year ago, the Morrow County Health District had 12 full time providers serving the residents of Heppner, Irrigon, Ione, Boardman and all others in between. In a matter of one year, turnover rates skyrocketed and there are now two full time providers, two plus part time providers and other "supervising" providers who are out of state. All are left to serve the health needs of over 11,000 people in Morrow County.

At what point do the people of Morrow County stop looking at the providers as the problem and start looking at the administration and the board? Despite constant reminders of the complete lack of patient care, we are allowing those in charge to dictate what rural healthcare looks like. These are our friends, neighbors and families. This is OUR life and OUR healthcare Stand

up for what YOU want your healthcare to look like. It's time to stand up for the employees who spend their lives taking care of you but have nobody taking care of them.

Your care team should consist of people who are 100 percent focused and invested on your healthcare and not overworked and underappreciated. Your health should be their number one priority while at work, not their job security. Over 20+ employees have left or been forced out by administration in the past three years. 90 percent of those within the year.

What does that mean for your healthcare? Those employees of the Morrow County Health District may not be working there anymore but we are still fighting for you to have access to a fair healthcare system and the healthcare you deserve. Now it's your turn to stop asking where they went and start asking why they went.

Victoria Waltz,  
Heppner

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

**Local Pharmacists praised for efforts in 'unfair' drug fees fight**

*'Ann and John Murray deserve credit for keeping Wyden team apprised'*

**By David Sykes**

Senator Ron Wyden's office recently praised the efforts of local pharmacists John and Ann Murray in their help to fight the imposition of unfair middleman fees on small independent pharmacies in Oregon. Wyden claims these fees are contributing to the loss of rural pharmacies, such as the recent Bi-Mart announcement of closing its



**Independent pharmacists John and Ann Murray of Heppner have been working with US Senator Ron Wyden's office helping to protect rural hometown pharmacies from "unfair" drug pricing practices.**

56 pharmacies in Oregon and the northwest.

"These community mainstays now face a growing threat from an unfair practice by big insurance companies and pharmaceutical benefit managers (PBM) that's threatening the small pharmacies' ability to stay open," Wyden said of his efforts to stem the practice.

He recently announced that two federal agencies are responding to his call for action tackling this

"troubling growth in unfair fees imposed by middlemen," and at the same time praised the help of small pharmacists such as the Murrays in causing the action. "Ann and John Murray deserve a lot of credit for keeping the Wyden team apprised about the on-the-ground impacts of these fees," Wyden's La Grande Field Representative Kathleen Cathey said. Cathey said Wyden is still working on the problem, and added

the Murrays, owners of pharmacies in Boardman, Condon and Heppner, have "done a great job of keeping us informed."

"I very much look forward to the upcoming regulations that will put a full stop to these anti-free enterprise practices that starve independent pharmacies of revenue and deprive consumers of reliable and accessible pharmacies in their communities," Wyden added.

**Public Works Director resigns**

Morrow County Public Works Director Matt Scrivner has resigned, the county has confirmed. "His last day will be January 7,"



**Matt Scrivner**

County Administrator Darrell Green told the Gazette-Times Monday.

"After this week, staff will handle day to day operations. If they have projects or situations they would like some help on, they will contact me," Green said. Green said the county hopes

to have someone in place by the end of January to the first part of February.

Scrivner served as assistant road master from Jan. 2015 to Nov. 2017 when he was then appointed Director of Public Works following the retirement of Burke O'Brien.



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