

Morrow County Republicans to meet Jan. 12

The Morrow County Republicans will meet at 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 12, at the Bartholomew Building in Heppner. Precinct Committee Persons (PCPs) and anyone interested in the county Republican Party are encouraged to come and join the discussions.

This meeting will establish goals and set the calendar of meetings and events for 2023. PCP positions are open in Heppner, Lexington, Boardman and

Irrigon. Individuals interested in one of these positions are encouraged to attend this meeting.

The Republican Party is open to individuals interested in conservative ideals and values. The Republican Party platform can be found at <https://oregon.gop/>. For more information on the Morrow County Republican Party, contact mocoreps@gmail.com.

No surprise, weather data shows December colder than normal

It won't surprise anyone in Morrow County to learn that December was just a little cooler than normal this year, according to preliminary data received by NOAA's National Weather Service in Pendleton.

According to Heppner weather data, the average temperature was 30.9 degrees, which was 3.9 degrees cooler than the normal average temperature for December. High temperatures averaged 39 degrees, with the high of 58 degrees being recorded on the 27th. Low temperatures averaged 22.8 degrees, with the low of 0 degrees being recorded on the 22nd.

There were 25 days when the low temperature

was below 32 degrees and one day with a low temperature below 0 degrees. Heppner also reported seven days when the high temperature was less than 32 degrees.

Precipitation at Heppner was slightly below normal during December, however, totaling 0.97 inches, or 0.29 inches below normal. Precipitation of at least .01 inch was reported on four days. The heaviest amount of precipitation was 0.23 inches, which was reported on the 12th. Snowfall for the month totaled one inch. The heaviest snowfall was one inch, reported on Dec. 5. The highest snow depth was one inch, occurring on Dec. 8.

Smith announces legislative committee assignments



Rep. Greg Smith

Oregon State Representative Greg Smith (R-Heppner) has announced his committee assignments for the upcoming 82nd Legislative Session. Rep. Smith has been assigned to the House Committee on Revenue, Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures, Joint Commit-

tee on Ways & Means (Co-Vice Chair), Joint Ways & Means Sub-Committee on Capital Construction, Joint Ways & Means Sub-Committee on General Government (Co-Chair) and Joint Committee on Legislative Administration.

"It is an honor to be the sole Republican that holds a gavel!" said Smith.

The 82nd Oregon Legislative Assembly will be sworn in on Monday, Jan. 9. The 2023 legislative session will begin on Tuesday, Jan. 17. After the swearing in, Rep. Smith will be the longest-serving member in the entire body, serving 12 terms in office.

To contact Smith, visit his Facebook page or email rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov.

Heppner Chamber to hold annual luncheon

The Heppner Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual luncheon Thursday, Jan. 26, from noon to 1 p.m. at the Gilliam & Bisbee Event Center in Heppner.

A lunch of turkey or ham sliders with minestrone soup will be provided by Heppner Market Fresh. Cost will be \$12 per person.

Attendees are asked to RSVP to heppnerchamber@gmail.com no later than 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24.

Nominations are also open for two board of director positions. The last day to submit a nomination will be Friday, Jan. 20.

Marriage Licenses

The Morrow County Clerk report issuing the following marriage licenses for the month of December:

Dec. 1—Clayton Lee Moon, 67, of Irrigon and Linda Jean Joy, 71, of Irrigon.

Dec. 9—John Francis Flynn, 63, of Heppner and

Polly Maureen Peltier, 55, of Echo.

Dec. 12—Robert Jay Fetter, 41, of Heppner and Deborah Jolene Wilson, 47, of Heppner.

Dec. 16—Whitney Rose Smith, 31, of Irrigon and Antonio James Ervin, 45, of Irrigon.

Good News Only by Doris Brosnan

Alyse Wentz traveled during a window of opportunity on the Gorge freeway before Christmas for almost a week's visit in Heppner, where she joined her mom, Sandra, and brother, Brodie, for the holiday. Alyse is a student in the Dental Hygienist program at Linn Benton, so had a long winter break between terms, but she also works at TJ Maxx, with just a six-day break from that obligation. Her return trip to Corvallis was more challenging because she first went to Prineville, where she picked up the Brosnan Boys, who had been visiting their parents, Damon and Carie, and then had to chain up for part of the trip through the mountains.

On Dec. 28, family and friends gathered for lunch at the OMG Restaurant in Hermiston to celebrate Mark and Kristi (Edmundson) Smalley's 37th wedding anniversary. The group included Cal and Midge Harris, Dennis and Ann Doherty, Jeff Edmundson, and Roger Otis from Hermiston. Kristi's parents, John and Pat Edmundson, were also at the gathering, which recognized their 66th wedding anniversary on Dec. 29.

On Dec. 28, Ashley Lindsay was so pleased with the birthday card from her children as she turned 41, she said she was thinking of hanging it up on the wall. On Dec. 30, Marty Brannon celebrated his 55th birthday, noting that he shares that birth date with at least three other people in town. On Dec. 29, to celebrate Sandra Jones Blake's and Marlene Gray's 80th birthdays (on the 23rd and 29th), they were joined for lunch and conversation at Bucknum's by classmates Sharon Harrison, Judy Stevens and Doris Brosnan, all of whom made certain that Blake and Gray acknowledged being "older" than they (by months) at 79.

On Friday, Dec. 30, Dexter and Corinne Miles celebrated their 60th anniversary. A small family gathering was attended by their three surviving children and spouses, as well as 10 out of 20 grandchildren. Sadly missing were daughters Carla and Michele, both deceased. Children Craig Miles and Andrea Di Salvo came from just a hop away in the Lexington area, but oldest son Darrell Miles traveled with his family from Eltopia, WA. They reminisced far into the evening about their early days farming in Montana and Oregon. Their dogs and cats also worked to insert themselves for pets at every opportunity.

On Dec. 31, Father Joseph Thankachan was congratulated by his St. Patrick's congregation on the 20th anniversary of his ordination. He shared that "I hope I can be a spark in someone's life."

The last day of the year holds special meaning for these anniversary couples: Alan and Nancy Anderson celebrated 17 years together, and Buzz and Jeanette Logan celebrated their 49th year together.

The holiday season again held some heartwarming stories that tended to temporarily ease the impact of the common daily news. The Good News is that, unlike seasons limited in time and attached to particular activities, there is no limited season on kindness, caring and courtesy. Instead, maybe we can declare all of 2023 "Open Season" for these and other actions mindful of our fellow humans' well-being.

Start the 2023 with a smile to share with the readers by sending your tidbit to dbrosnan123@gmail.com or by calling 541-223-1490.

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

Boardman, Irrigon losing urban status

-Continued from PAGE ONE

It's a change that has many throughout the county confused, especially in light of the recent building boom in the Boardman area and the chronic housing shortage in South Morrow.

Boardman City Manager Karen Pettigrew told the Boardman City Council Dec. 6 that the numbers were "really discouraging... when all of us who live here know that is not the case" (See "Boardman finances, projects on track," PAGE ONE).

At the same time, the minimum population required for an area to be considered urban has doubled. Under the Census Bureau's old criteria, an urban cluster was defined as having at least 2,500 people. That definition had been in place since 1910. After the 2020 census, the bureau doubled that to a population of 5,000 people or a minimum housing unit threshold of 2,000.

While the bureau adjusts its definitions every decade after a census, this is the largest change to urban definitions in several decades.

According to information on the Census Bureau's website, the criteria changed because of complaints that the threshold was too low. The bureau originally proposed minimum qualification thresholds of 4,000 housing units or 10,000 people but pulled back from that number due to public comment.

"Lowering the threshold to 2,000 housing units or 5,000 persons represents

a compromise between those concerned about loss of data and those who have expressed concerns that our urban area threshold was too low and out of alignment with thresholds used by other agencies," stated the site.

In addition to the change, the Census Bureau said it will also no longer distinguish between urbanized areas of 50,000 or more people and urban clusters of less than 50,000.

The federal government as a whole has no standard definitions for urban versus rural, but many agencies use the definitions set down by the Census Bureau.

The bureau says the changes are made for statistical reasons and that it has no control over how other government agencies use the information to distribute funding. For leaders at the local level, though, this change brings up concerns about funds now available for housing, health care, education and transportation.

Meanwhile, PSU is not budging on its numbers, meaning that, for now, Boardman may have to be satisfied with a more rural point of view.

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

Spiritually Speaking

Father Thankachan Joseph
St. Patrick Catholic Church Heppner



How do we manifest the Lord?

This Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany of Christ, a feast originated in the Eastern Church in AD 361, the oldest feast after Easter and Pentecost, which began with the commemoration of Christ's birth. The word "epiphany" simply meant the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi.

Who exactly were these "wise men from the East"? Some think they were a group of priests from Persia, others believe they were astrologers from Babylon. How many were there? Scripture does not give any actual number, perhaps because the emphasis is upon what they did: "We have come to worship Him" (Mt 2:2,11). We know from scripture that they presented three types of gifts (Mt 2:11), but this does not necessarily imply the quantity of givers! What is important is that "Jesus," "Immanuel" (which means "God with us"), is worthy of worship, truly God.

The Prophet Isaiah (60:1-6) describes faith as light as he shows Jerusalem bathed in a bright light that attracted people from all nations. As these people reached Jerusalem, they, too, were bathed in light as Yahweh accepted the gifts they had brought. A similar thing took place in us when we approached Christ to be saved by Him. We were covered in the darkness of sin, but as we came closer to Christ and accepted Him in faith, light was made within our hearts. That is why Paul writes to the Ephesians, "You were darkness once, but now you are light in the world" (Ephesians 5:8). And Paul also exhorts us to, "Be like children of light... in complete goodness, and right living, and truth" (Ephesians 5:9). Peter says about God's Word: "It is like a lamp for lighting our way through the dark, until the dawn comes and the morning star rises in your minds" (2 Peter 1:19).

So, faith in Christ helps us to walk through the darkness of this world until He, like the morning star, will come at our death to introduce us into the day of eternity. For a Christian, death is like dawn, the beginning of a bright day which will never end.

Matthew (2:1-12), the evangelist, also describes the visit of the Magi from the East. The wise men were the first gentiles to publicly recognize the divinity of Jesus, by their offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold symbolizes the Kingship of Christ. Frankincense symbolizes the Godhead of Christ. Myrrh is a prophecy of the death and burial of the earthly body of Christ.

Matthew tells us that "the sight of the star filled the Magi with great delight" (Matthew 2:11). If the mere sight of the star filled them with joy, how much more joyful they would be when they found in the manger the Child Jesus, whom they believed to be the Savior! This is what happens to us when we really accept Christ as our Savior. We experience a sense of deep joy, the joy of the spirit, which fills our hearts. What happens to that first joy? Has it increased as we came to know Christ better and love Him more, or has it vanished from our hearts?

If we do not feel the same joy at the thought of being Christians, it might be because we allowed darkness to cover our hearts again. When the Spirit is cast away from a soul by sin, light and joy depart. Faith in Christ must continue growing within us. That is why Paul tells the Ephesians: "May God give you the power through His Spirit, for your hidden self (faith within you) to grow strong, so that Christ may live in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:16-17). Faith in Christ kept on growing in the wise men, in the apostles, in Mary because they abandoned themselves to God's love plans for them.

The best way to make faith in Christ grow is to share it. The wise men must have made it their aim to make Christ known to as many people as they came in touch with. Similarly, the shepherds proclaimed loudly what they had been told (Luke 2:17). This must be the case with us also. We ought to be a star, a sign, leading people to Christ. We ought to become manifestations of Christ to our world by our genuine Christian life. We ought to lead people to Christ, not only as individuals, but also as a community of believers.

4-Corners Snowmobile Club Annual Holiday Playday

The 4-Corners Snowmobile Club will hold the Annual Holiday Playday on Saturday, January 7, 2023, at Kelly Prairie. There will be a bonfire and hot dogs, chili and hot chocolate will be provided. There will be a Poker Run for everyone to enjoy. For information about the club or this event, please contact Mike Gorman, 541-980-3396 or Cliff Dougherty, 541-561-7118

WEEKLY SHOPPER

CALL US TODAY TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT (541) 676-5667

JAN 6TH
CANCELED
BUS WILL BE AT BOARDMAN FOOD TRUCK AREA VACCINE CLINIC 11 AM TO 3 PM

JAN 13TH
GROCERY OUTLET ALIVE & WELL SAFEWAY PLAZA SHARI'S