

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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Published weekly by Sykes Publishing and entered as periodical matter at the Post Office at Heppner, Oregon under the Act of March 3, 1879. Periodical postage paid at Heppner, Oregon. Office at 188 W. Willow Street. Telephone (541) 676-9228. Fax (541) 676-9211. E-mail: editor@rapidsolve.net or david@rapidsolve.net. Web site: www.heppner.net. Postmaster send address changes to the Heppner Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Oregon 97836. Subscriptions: In Morrow County \$35/year. Outside Morrow County \$40/year. In County Senior Rate (65 years or older) \$30/year. 9 month Student student subscriptions \$35/year.

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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.

BMCC releases summer term honor roll

Blue Mountain Community College summer term 2023-2024 honor roll recognition went to the following full-time students:

President's List: 3.75

4.0 GPA: Roselyn Caldera, Chad Doherty, Audrey Guenther, Jasper Hardy, Luke Meyers, Mayra Wightman

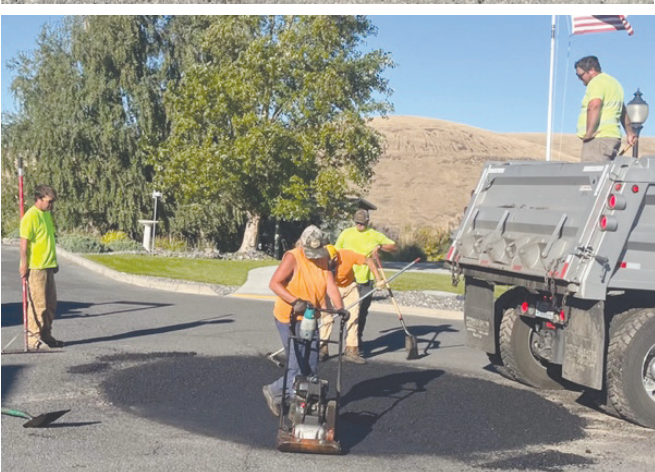
Vice President's List: 3.5 to 3.74: Liam Early, Dexter Martinez

Correction

Correction in last-week's paper. Gina Wilson was sworn in as MCSO Parole and Probation Lieu-

tenant, not as a deputy. Wilson is taking over for Dan Robbins, who recently retired.

WC Terrace sees improvements



Silver Creek fills in hole with asphalt.
-Photo by Leann Lankford

Willow Creek Terrace reached out to Mike Duncan of Silver Creek Construction to see if he could help with filling the "dirt hole circle" as you drive up to WCT. "The asphalt void has been an eyesore for years, and a muddy mess," said a spokesperson. "Mike made some calls on our behalf and said he would get back to Leann (Lankford)." He gave Tyrel Burns information from Nelson Construction, as to where they were currently working on the sidewalk project

in Heppner. Lankford had Steve Burns, Tyrel/Nelson Construction and they were more than willing to help fill in the circle with asphalt, and donate all labor, materials, and equipment to complete the job at no cost (100 percent donation) to WCT," she said. "Foreman Kraig Willman and crew came up to do the job at the facility after putting in a full day downtown on the sidewalks," she added.

New Circuit Court Building

-Continued from PAGE ONE

Over the course of several updates, the committee narrowed down the potential locations for the new courthouse. Out of the initial nine sites provided by the Heppner City Council, four underwent a final review. Factors such as location within the city limits, impact on surrounding areas, cost of securing and preparing the site, construction expenses, and floodplain considerations were taken into account during the selection process.

The county administrator, however, refrained from disclosing all the site locations reviewed, citing the need to protect the county's interests during negotiations for potential property acquisitions. Revealing these locations prematurely could potentially lead to someone purchasing the properties ahead of the approval process, thereby holding the county hostage. Nevertheless, the fairground location, owned by Morrow County, was disclosed as the number one choice due to its favorable attributes. The 2.2-acre site, zoned as R2 residential, offers an ideal south-facing slope for solar and daylight utilization, while the north parcel provides a more level area. The site is also situated outside the flood zone and does not require the demolition of any existing structures. Access to the northwest corner of the site will be negotiated to ensure convenient street access, and efforts will be made to buffer the proximity to residences through strategic landscaping.

There will also be direct access off the state highway

While the new courthouse is being planned, the current historic courthouse will continue to house county offices. Renovations will be incorporated into the overall plan, and a new name for the building will be determined. The public will have an opportunity to provide input during the county's application for a conditional use permit with the City of Heppner.

The construction process is expected to commence in the first quarter of 2025, following the completion of necessary permits and design work. The project manager will oversee the construction, with the architect set to be awarded in November 2023. Stakeholder meetings, scheduled from now until January 2024, will provide an opportunity for the county to address concerns raised by the fair and rodeo and residents. County Administrator Jensen emphasized that while alternative sites were considered, the fairground location remains the priority, and substantial issues would need to arise to warrant a change in plans.

During the town hall meeting, residents raised various questions regarding the selection process, the proximity of the new courthouse to the school, and the potential impact on traffic. In response to a question from Heppner resident Janet Greenup about the necessity of the circuit court being located within the city limits, Jensen explained that state law designates the city as the required jurisdiction for circuit courts.

Tim Collins expressed concerns about the impact on local streets and traffic flow. He highlighted the



County Administrator Matt Jensen (left) Commissioner David Sykes (right) - Contributed Photo

narrowness of Elder Street and the potential strain on neighboring roads. Collins also questioned how the increased traffic would affect the drop-off of children at the nearby school. Jensen acknowledged the validity of these concerns and assured the community that they would be addressed during the stakeholder meeting. Finding a solution that accommodates the needs of all parties involved is a priority for the county.

Another resident, Mollie Rhea, expressed concerns about the security of the court and its proximity to the school, particularly in relation to handling sex offenders. Jensen assured the attendees that individuals who have not been convicted would enter through the front doors, while those under serious consideration would be directed through the back doors, ensuring the safety and security of the community. Jensen also addressed the issue of releasing individuals after their court appearances. In Heppner, it is uncommon for people to be released locally, even if they are cleared of any charges. Instead, they are typically sent back to their place of origin. This practice aligns with the principle of "innocent until proven guilty" that our country upholds.

The issue of stakeholder involvement was also raised during the meeting. A community member inquired about the format of the meeting and whether residents would have a say and a vote. Jensen clarified that the meeting would be a discussion, allowing community members to voice their opinions and concerns. He emphasized that the county would take into consideration any points that make the proposed location unfeasible. Jensen acknowledged that no matter where the courthouse is placed, there will always be individuals who oppose the decision. The goal of the stakeholder meeting is to find a solution that benefits the community as a whole.

Ken Bailey proposed an alternative solution, suggesting the use of existing buildings or the retrofitting of the Bartholomew building to save money. Jensen explained that the county currently lacks sufficient space, and while the feasibility study did consider repurposing the Bart building, retrofitting the Bartholomew building was not part of the study. Jensen emphasized the need for a comprehensive solution that meets the county's needs.

One concerned citizen, Cody High, raised a valid question about the timeline for breaking ground on the new courthouse in 2026. High emphasized the importance of planning ahead,



especially considering the fair and its associated activities. Administrator Jensen acknowledged the need for collaboration and assured the community that the county would work closely with them to find a suitable solution. While he did not provide specific details about the options being considered, Jensen expressed the county's commitment to preserving and supporting the rodeo.

Colby Golden, representing the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo, sought reassurance from Commissioner Sykes regarding the future of the fair in Heppner. Sykes responded with a firm commitment, stating that he would fight just as hard to keep the fair and rodeo in the town as he did to retain the courthouse facility.

As the discussions continued, it seems that the community's concerns are being heard and taken into consideration. The stakeholders meeting will provide an opportunity for residents to actively participate in shaping the future of the courthouse project.

Obituaries

Jean Adams



Jean Adams was born in Rapid City, South Dakota, in 1935 to parents,

Mark and Camilla Samples.

She was raised in Kinzua, OR, and married O.L. Adams in 1954. She had two brothers, Ralph and Jerry.

Survivors include her two sons, Brian and Tim, and eight grandchildren. Jean lived at Blake Ranch for 48 years. "She was a very proud Catholic," said a spokesperson.

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Donnie & April Wilson

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Hopeful Saints Ministries

Will be hosting a Safe Halloween event October 31st from 5:30-8pm at the Hopeful Saints Ministry Church on the corner of Gale and Church Street thanks to funding from the Morrow County Unified Recreation District. This is a free community event for area residents. Inside the building there will be a junk food walk, movie playing, and free food and drink available. Trunk or Treat will be set up outside in the parking lot. We have 15 spots available if any businesses or individuals would like to participate in the trunk or treat. Please contact George Nairns at 541-571-6519 or Cody High at 541-256-0847 to reserve a trunk or treat spot. Treats will be provided for trunk or treaters to hand out if needed.