



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

50¢



VOL. 144 NO. 25 8 Pages Wednesday, June 26, 2024 Morrow County, Heppner, Oregon

Family-Friendly Fourth of July in Ione



- Contributed image.

IONE, OR – Get ready for a day of festive fun as Ione gears up for its annual Fourth of July celebration. This small-town event promises a jam-packed schedule filled with activities for all ages, starting bright and early.

The festivities kick off at 7 a.m. with a Fun Run/Walk 5K. Whether you're an avid runner or just looking for a brisk morning stroll, this event is the perfect way to start your Independence Day. Following the run, from 7:00-10:00 a.m., enjoy a hearty Fireman's Breakfast that is sure to satisfy your appetite.

At 1 p.m., the streets of Ione will come alive with a lively parade, featuring local floats, marching bands, and plenty of patriotic spirit. The fun doesn't stop

there. Throughout the day, visitors can enjoy a variety of activities including Bingo, a classic car show, a fishpond, and a talent show at 4:30 p.m. for those looking to showcase their skills.

One of the most exciting additions to this year's celebration is the return of games from Knockerball Tri-Cities. These activities are free and include laser tag, putt-putt golf, a soccer dart board, Connect Four, and axe throwing, ensuring endless entertainment for all. For a touch of creativity, free face painting and glitter tattoos will be available in the park courtesy of artist Laurie Ellis.

No celebration is complete without delicious food, and this event is no exception. A variety of food vendors will be on hand



Image of people playing knockerball. - Contributed

to keep everyone fueled throughout the day. The musical lineup kicks off at 2 p.m. with the upbeat blues of Luke Basil. At 3:30 p.m., ZG3 - the Zac Grooms Trio - will bring their down-to-earth country tunes to the stage. Later, at 6:30 p.m., the Frog Hollow Band, known for opening for national acts like Sarah Evans and Dan+Shay, will deliver a performance not to be missed.

The highlight of the 2024 celebration will be the headlining act, River Divide. This band is set to bring high-energy hits from today along with classic country, pop, and rock tracks from yesterday. Thanks to a generous grant from the Morrow County Unified Recreation District, this concert is free. Just re-

member to bring your lawn chair or blanket, as seating is not provided.

As the day of family fun winds down, get ready for a spectacular fireworks display. The fireworks will be launched from the hill overlooking the town, providing a breathtaking view from the city park. It's the perfect way to end a day filled with fun and celebration.

This event welcomes visitors of all ages, but please note that dogs are not allowed in the park. For more details and updates, visit the event's Facebook page at facebook.com/Ione4thofJuly. Come join the fun for a day of community, celebration, and unforgettable memories in Ione this Fourth of July!

Heppner's Jaylee Schlaich shines in debut on The Cowboy Channel



Jaylee Schlaich makes her debut on the Cowboy Channel alongside her mom, Amber Schlaich at the Crooked River Roundup. -Photo contributed

Jaylee Schlaich, a 9-year-old from Heppner, Oregon, made an exciting debut on The Cowboy Channel and Cowgirl Channel! Her parents, Jim and Amber Schlaich, along with her 6-year-old sister Kinsley, are incredibly proud of her.

Jaylee and her 12-year-old horse, Siss, have been participating in the Central Oregon Pee Wee Rodeo Association (COPWRA). They qualified for the Young Guns competition through the Crooked River Roundup. This event showcases talented young rodeo competitors aged 6-18, and it's a fan favorite.

Jaylee competes in a tough bracket with girls up to 18 years old. Her mom, Amber, said Jaylee had a blast, even though the competition was fierce. Amber, who also grew up competing in rodeo events, is thrilled to see Jaylee

share her passion.

Currently, Jaylee is leading by three points as they head into the final week of the rodeo season. If she becomes the year-end champion, there will be an award ceremony in Prineville, Oregon. Earlier this year, Jaylee won barrels at the Pendleton Mustangs and placed in the figure 8 poles and steer pushing.

Jaylee trains hard, riding her horse almost every night and competing almost every weekend since April. Even in winter, she's out feeding and caring for her horses with her mom. Jaylee started riding before she could walk and dreams of becoming a professional barrel racer and horse trainer.

At the event, Jaylee met some of her rodeo heroes, including National Finals Rodeo (NFR) qualifying

-Continued to PAGE THREE

MC BOC discuss new SunStone Solar project

By Annalynn Black

In the June 18th Morrow County Board of Commissioners meeting Sheriff Bowles recounted the harrowing incident of a missing two-year-old boy who had wandered over a mile away. He shared the challenges they faced during the search, stating, "we had to wear many different hats." The Sheriff expressed gratitude for the volunteers and first responders who assisted in the operation. When questioned about the terrain, Drago inquired if there was water nearby, to which Bowles replied with relief that the boy was not found near the reservoir. Furthermore, Drago inquired about the availability of infrared gear, and the Sheriff stated that they had included it in their budget and hoped for its approval.

Moving on to another matter, the commission discussed SunStone Solar and Pinegate Renewables' application for a Site Certificate presented by Tamra Mabbott. Notably, Commissioner Wenzholz excluded himself from deciding on this matter. The proposed solar project was billed as the largest in the country, spanning over a vast 10,000-acre site boundary. Mabbott detailed the project, mentioning the 900 acres of solar panels, the construction of 55 miles of access roads, and the employment of 473 workers per phase. When Commissioner Dave sought clarification on what the public could expect, Mabbott mentioned that there would be

semis hauling materials and possible temporary housing for workers, RV spots for example. She emphasized that temporary housing could provide a significant source of revenue. In response to a question about notifying landowners about temporary housing, Mabbott assured that there was a list landowners could join to apply for temporary housing on their property. The motion to approve the project was passed.

Another topic of discussion was the Oregon State University Extension Intergovernmental Agreement, which was due to expire at the end of June. Commissioner Dave expressed his support for the program, particularly its positive impact on the community. The motion to approve the agreement was passed unanimously for another 10-year contract.

During the meeting, Tamra Mabbott, in her capacity as Planning Director, provided updates on various activities conducted by the Planning Department in May. She revealed that the Planning Commission held a work session to review code updates focused on ensuring clarity and consistency in the development approval process. Mabbott expressed her hope to submit a draft to the State Department of Land Conservation & Development (DLCD) by June 21st, with the first legislative hearing scheduled for July 30th. Additionally, she reported that several proposals had been received from con-

sultants for updating the Morrow County Heritage Trail Master Plan, and interviews were conducted with three firms.

Water and planning activities were also discussed at the meeting. The Water Advisory Committee convened on June 3rd, receiving reports from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The committee engaged in preliminary discussions about policies and projects, addressing concerns about declining water levels raised by various landowners. Meetings with these landowners are in progress to address their concerns.

Furthermore, the LUB-GWMA Committee's evaluation by state agencies was presented in a brief update. Subcommittee meetings have been paused pending recommendations from the Oregon DEQ and other state agencies. It was also highlighted that Dr. Salini Sadishiran, an OSU professor, and Madison Anzarut, an OSU graduate student, conducted well testing as part of a research project to understand water quality and its possible connection to septic systems. Planning and Public Health staff facilitated introductions between the researchers and interested landowners.

Regarding natural hazards, a draft Mitigation Plan (NHMP) Update was expected to be finalized soon. Discussions on the next natural hazard planning efforts, an update to

the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), were also initiated.

In other updates, Planning Director Tamra Mabbott and Principal Planner Daisy Goebel attended the Eastern Oregon Planners Network Meeting, engaging in training, presentations, and networking opportunities.

During the meeting, County Administrator Jensen raised concerns about the renewal documents for their insurance and general liability policies. As the current policy was set to expire on the 30th of the month, the commission agreed to allow Jensen to review and sign off on those documents.

Lastly, Jensen informed the commission about ongoing efforts to improve the recording and presentation capabilities in the Bartholomew Building by installing new monitors and cameras.

Country artist Caitlyn Ochsner to perform at MC Rodeo



Country music artist Caitlyn Ochsner. -Photo contributes

Mark your calendars for an unforgettable performance as Caitlyn Ochsner, a talented singer-songwriter hailing from the ranches of Kersey, Colorado, takes the stage at the MC Rodeo.

Growing up on a ranch along the South Platte River, Caitlyn Ochsner had dreams of making it big in the music industry. While tending to her daily chores and responsibilities, Ochsner would often be caught belting out country hits by her favorite artists, day-

dreaming of one day being the one in the spotlight instead of mucking stalls.

Fueling her passion for music, Ochsner spent her high school years participating in honor choir, taking voice lessons, and competing in talent contests, all while excelling in 4-H and FFA contests with her cattle. Her hard work paid off when she had the opportunity to sing the National Anthem in front of 20,000 rodeo fans at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Nevada, in 2014.

In 2016, Ochsner made the move to Nashville to study music at Belmont University and pursue her musical ambitions. Over the past few years, she has honed her skills as a singer-songwriter and recently released her debut EP titled "Home." Combining her rich, powerful voice

-Continued to PAGE TWO

START THE YEAR OFF ROAD SALES EVENT

\$2,000 OFF UP TO SELECT POLARIS XPEDITION MODELS OR FINANCING AS LOW AS 0.99% APR FOR 36 MOS

POLARIS

Morrow County Grain Growers...

CALL
541-989-8221
ext 204
for more information

WARNING: Polaris' off-road vehicles can be hazardous to operate and are not intended for on-road use. Driver must be at least 16 years old with a valid driver's license to operate. Passengers, if permitted, must be at least 12 years old. All riders should always wear helmets, eye protection, and protective clothing. Always use seat belts and cab nets or doors (as equipped). Never engage in stunt driving, and avoid excessive speeds and sharp turns. Riding and alcohol/drugs don't mix. All riders should take a safety training course. Call 800-542-3761 for additional information. Check local laws before riding on trails. ©2022 Polaris Inc.

POLARIS | OFF ROAD