



the HEPPNER GAZETTE TIMES

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50 Years of Greatness: The story of the 1974 Heppner High School 4x100 relay team

By Chris Sykes

In the early 1970s, Heppner High School witnessed an extraordinary achievement that would become a legacy. The 4x100 relay team of 1974 not only brought home a state championship but set a school record that remains unbroken after 50 years. The team's journey to victory was not only about their athletic prowess but also about the coaches, the community, and the humble beginnings of a dirt track that served as their training ground. Their story, combined and shared by Susan Healy Hisler, recounts their journey and the legacy that still endures.

Building the Foundation: Heppner's Dirt Track

Before the relay team could shine, Heppner High School needed a proper place to train. In the 1960s, track practices and meets were held at the Heppner Rodeo Grounds. Seeing the need for a dedicated track, the Lions Club, along with community members like Dave Harrison, John Edmundson, and Jim Wishart, spearheaded the construction of a five-lane dirt track at the high school. This project brought together farmers, ranchers, and local businesses, transforming a vision into reality. The new track became a source of pride for the town and a training ground for future champions.

Forming the Relay Team: The Role of Coaches

The formation of the 4x100 relay team in 1974 was skillfully guided by Heppner High School's dedicated track coaching team, including Head



This picture was taken in the '90s, showing all four members of the 4x100 relay team together. Karl Harrison, Matt Greenup, John Boyer and Mike Bergstrom.



This picture was taken in October 2024. (L-R) John Boyer, Matt Greenup and Mike Bergstrom, Karl Harrison is not pictured. - Photo by Annalynn Black

Coach Chuck Starr and assistant coaches Dale Conklin and Dean Naffziger. As Heppner's head football coach, Starr already knew the capabilities of these athletes—several of whom he coached in football, including four standout players. Recognizing their unique po-

tential, Starr encouraged two of these multi-sport athletes, John Boyer and Karl Harrison, to balance both baseball and track, allowing them to contribute to the relay team without sacrificing their baseball commitments. This collaboration—supported by athletic director and track coach Dean Naffziger,

along with baseball coach Dale Holland—was both rare and essential, providing the flexibility needed for the relay team to come together.

Beyond traditional coaching, Chuck Starr took a deeply personal approach to support his

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Nov. 5th ballot measures that may affect you

On November 5, 2024, Morrow County, Oregon voters will consider several notable measures, with implications ranging from statewide election reform to local health initiatives. Here's a breakdown of the issues on the ballot, including key arguments on both sides:

Measure 117 (Statewide) - Ranked-Choice Voting

This proposed measure would bring ranked-choice voting to Oregon's major state and federal elections, enabling voters to rank candidates by preference. The ranked-choice process proceeds through rounds until one candidate secures a majority, a system aimed at fostering greater voter choice and reducing vote-splitting. If approved, the new voting method would be implemented in 2028, and local jurisdictions could adopt the system as well.

Pros:

Ensures the winning candidate has broad support by requiring a majority, potentially reducing political polarization.

Allows voters to rank

candidates, preventing "wasted" votes on less popular options.

Encourages more representative outcomes and may boost voter satisfaction with election results.

Cons:

Requires a significant voter education effort, potentially raising state expenses and causing voter confusion.

Increases the complexity of ballot counting, potentially delaying election results.

The transition and technological updates necessary for implementation could cost millions, affecting state and county budgets.

Measure 118 (Statewide) - Corporate Tax Increase for Annual Rebates

Measure 118 proposes a corporate minimum tax hike on high-revenue businesses to fund annual rebates for state residents. Proponents suggest the measure would provide much-needed financial relief for Oregon residents, while critics worry about the potential for increased consumer costs and strains on state budgets.

Pros:

Offers direct financial relief to residents, potentially addressing poverty and stimulating local economies.

Taxes large corporations based on revenue, possibly holding high-revenue companies more accountable to Oregon communities.

Seen by supporters as a way to alleviate inflation impacts on residents without affecting individual income taxes.

Cons:

Critics argue it may lead to higher consumer prices if corporations pass tax costs to consumers.

Potential for state revenue disruption, which could affect funding for services like education.

Rebates are not income-based, meaning funds may go to residents regardless of financial need.

Measure 119 (Statewide) - Labor Neutrality in the Cannabis Industry

Under Measure 119, cannabis-related businesses would be required to remain neutral regarding employee unionization ef-

orts, with specific penalties for interference. This measure is designed to support employees' rights to unionize without employer opposition, promoting fair labor practices within Oregon's growing cannabis industry.

Pros:

Protects workers' rights to organize, fostering improved working conditions in the cannabis sector.

Supports fair labor practices in a rapidly grow-

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Heppner's football field is named after coach Greg Grant



Greg Grant with his daughter Sophie, son Kellen, and wife Virginia at the, newly named, Greg Grant Stadium. -Photo contributed.

Ken Grieb- There was a special ceremony following the home football game on Friday, October 25th. Coach Greg Grant was honored and had the facility that the Heppner Mustang football team plays in named Greg Grant Stadium.

Coach Grant has been the football coach in Heppner for the past 35 years.

In that time, his teams have never had a losing season. They have won countless conference titles and state playoff games. His teams have won three state championships and had several runner-up finishes. They have made numerous state

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Apparent progress made amid continued tension on CDA board

By Andrea Di Salvo

Tensions still run high in the Columbia Development Authority, with accusations of staff misconduct and lawsuits muddying the waters. However, recent board decisions could indicate a clearing of the storm—or at least steps toward better communication.

The CDA board is made up of representatives from the Port of Morrow, the Morrow County Board of Commissioners, Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, Port of Umatilla and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR).

Two sources of contention have been disrupting CDA meetings in recent months. The first is a lawsuit brought against Morrow County and the ports of Morrow and Umatilla by the other two parties in the CDA, Umatilla County and CTUIR. The lawsuit challenges the legality of a vote that gave the two ports a greater share of power in running the industrial portion of the former Army depot land.

The second is allegations against CDA Administrator Greg Smith regarding a pay raise he received as part of an Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) grant request submitted on behalf of the Columbia Development Authority board. The board said they never approved the pay increases and ended up rescinding Smith's raise at the Sept. 20

meeting. Discussion at the Sept. 20 meeting became so heated, the Port of Morrow replaced its CDA representative, Kelly Doherty, alleging her behavior reflected poorly on the Port.

Even with the controversial removal of Doherty, there was plenty of tension to go around at the Oct. 22 meeting in Boardman. Even consent agenda items were subject to dispute. CTUIR representative J.D. Tovey said he did not want to approve the minutes from the July 23 meeting because he didn't want to "inadvertently acquiesce" to concerns over the grant approval and the salary increase.

Despite his concerns, the Sept. 20 consent agenda, including the July 23 minutes, was approved 3-2.

As a result of the allegations against Smith, the CDA board had been discussing the need for a formal staff evaluation process. Joe Taylor, who replaced Doherty on the CDA board, pointed out that the board still hadn't addressed the evaluation form for the executive director.

"I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel too much," said Taylor.

"It wasn't broken before," added Port of Umatilla representative and board chair Kim Puzey.

However, Taylor said he saw that, while evaluations might have been purely verbal before, he could see the need for more documentation.

"We're looking to be

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