

~ 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 \$15 Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Dear Santa

"Dear Santa," she wrote, scooted up to her desk. "Now this ain't the first time I've made this request. You know I've been good, well... far as cowgirls go, But with all due respect, Sir, your response has been slow. Now, I'm guessin' the cowboy I ordered's a hot item And I've delt with these backorders, best not to fight 'em. I'm figurin' on makin' it easy on us both So, I'm changin' my order a bit...here goes. The part about bein' tall, dark, n' handsome (Not the part about money, 'cause I still prefer he have some) Well, nobody's perfect, an' what's a few extra pounds. Don't have to be "show quality," just long as he's sound.

Hair would be nice, but not a requirement. Wouldn't mind a guy with a real good retirement. Teeth need to be clean, but they can be store bought, Long as they work, and he don't take 'em out a lot. It would be great if he came with a horse... Boots, chaps, spurs...his own tack, of course. Won't be too fussy 'bout the horse he rides. If he can get on by himself, I'll be satisfied. Well, my stocking's hung up, there's room under the tree. I've left you some cookies, and some real good corn whiskey. Now, I know you're busy, but please rush if you could 'Cause I'm startin' to worry 'bout what's startin' to look good." Susie Crosby Prineville

Smith selected to serve on Joint Special Session Committee

SALEM, Ore.—Rep. Greg Smith (R-Heppner) was selected by the Oregon Speaker of the House to serve on the Joint Special Session Committee, Smith's office announced last week.

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) was recently announced insolvent, due in part to the harsh and costly wildfire season last summer. That, in turn, left the ODF unable to pay wages to Oregon's dedicated firefighters.

Oregon Governor Tina Kotek called on the legislature to meet on Dec. 12 to send \$218 million to state agencies still contending with the cost of the 2024 fire season.

"I am honored to be selected by the Speaker of the House for this role. I will use this position of leadership to ensure that every firefighter who protected Oregon homes, property and people will be fully compensated for their hard work last summer,"

said Smith. Smith was recently elected to serve his 13th term as a state representative, making him the longest-serving member in the Oregon Legislature, as well as the fourth-longest-serving state representative in Oregon history. He holds a gavel as the co-chair of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on General Government. Smith also serves as co-vice chair of the full Joint Ways and Means Committee. Additionally, he is the ranking member of the House Revenue Committee.

To reach out, visit Rep Smith's Facebook Page or send him an email at rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov.

Rep. Smith is a Republican who represents the entirety of Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman, Wheeler and Wasco counties, and portions of Clackamas, Jefferson, Marion and Umatilla Counties.

Heppner FFA wreath workshop



FFA students hard at work crafting festive wreaths in the wood shop at Heppner High School. — Contributed Photo

The Heppner FFA is in full swing with their annual wreath-making workshop!

Students are hard at work crafting beautiful wreaths for sale.

Bank of EO expands services in Pendleton



Jeff Bailey

Due to popular demand, the Bank of Eastern Oregon has expanded its services in Pendleton. The Heppner-based bank has opened a full-service branch at 800 SW Dorion Ave., the former Oregon Education Foundation building.

President and CEO Jeff Bailey said BEO customers had been asking for a full-service branch in Pendleton. "We are pleased we can

now offer our local customers personal and business banking services on site, as well as the agricultural and commercial loan services we've already offered in Pendleton," Bailey said.

BEO has operated a loan production office in Pendleton since 2012. Staff members Mike Short, Tracy Hamby and Jessica Mulvihill, all from the former loan office, have moved to the new branch. Pendleton native Bethany Olsen is the branch manager.

Bank Eastern Oregon has 16 branches in Eastern Oregon, one in Idaho and five in Washington, where it operates under the name Bank of Eastern Washington. In addition, it has loan production offices in Madras and Ontario. For more information, search www.beobank.com.

2025 Fair and Rodeo Queen Applications Open

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asked to make sure applications are complete with required documentation and delivered by this date.

Fair staff will contact all accepted applicants to schedule interviews in January.

For additional information, contact Gibbs at the fair office, 541-379-3998 or mcfair@morrowcounty.org; the Morrow County Rodeo Board, 541-571-6959; or Morrow County Assistant Administrator Vince Guerrero, 541-676-5664.

HHS outdoor club takes to the slopes



A group of 20 members of the Heppner High School Outdoor Club ventured to Anthony Lakes for an opening weekend ski and snowboard trip. It was a great first trip, with new snow over groomed trails. More trips are planned for January, February and March. Back: Ryan Gerry, K. C. Anderson, Ava Gerry, Zaleta Masterson, Zac Brown, Joseph Albitre, Christopher Humphreys, Landon McMahon, Lane Critchlow, Tylor Moore, Mason Orem, Marty Medina, Connor Wilson, Dave Fowler and Blaine Gibbs. Front: Olson Anderson, Jaime Cavan, Nick Wenberg, Kooper Miller and Darby Spivey. -Contributed photo

Sunstone Solar receives state approval

A massive solar farm planned for Morrow County received final approval from the state last month.

The Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council approved the site certificate for Sunstone Solar at it Nov. 14 meeting. The largest solar farm in the state, Sunstone will sit on approximately 10,000 acres about 15 miles northeast of Lexington.

Sunstone Solar is owned by Pine Gate Renewables. The company has three years to comply with site certificate conditions and begin construction, and up to three years beyond that to complete construction.

Once built, Sunstone will have nearly four million solar panels and will produce up to 1,200 megawatts of electricity—

enough power to provide electricity to about 800,000 homes for a year.

It is also approved for 7,200 megawatt hours of energy storage, an interconnection substation, six collector substations, four operations and maintenance buildings, 9.5 miles of 230-kilovolt (kV) overhead transmission lines and other miscellaneous structures.

A View from the Hill

By Doris Brosnan

A fun "full circle" situation at Willow Creek Terrace occurred when newest resident Bobbi Angell joined the Community on the Hill last month: Bobbi is a long-time resident of Heppner and was the first cook hired when the Terrace opened. In addition to that coincidence, Bobbi once lived on Chase Street as a neighbor to Rita (Hedman) Dezoete and Joyce Ward, and her apartment location now has her as a neighbor to these same two friends!

This is a busy month for residents and staff at the Terrace. The tree and the halls are now decorated, and today the residents are creating gingerbread houses; tomorrow they will be working on a Christmas craft that will enhance their rooms. Soon they will be having their cookie-decorating party; on the 17th they will be enjoying their "Christmas Sweater Day," and on the 18th they will gather around the piano for the singing of carols.

And the festive events don't stop there. On Christmas Eve, everyone is invited to enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, conversation, and carols. It will be while everyone is sleeping that Santa will visit and leave an individual gift under the tree for each resident. (Of course, they have all been nice, not naughty!) And the Christmas-Day dinner will offer ham and all the trimmings.

In charge of this meal and the breakfast and lunch menus is Chef Shawn Lifferth. Everyone agrees that good fortune smiled on the Terrace when Shawn joined the staff, for he brought with him the myriads of skills he accumulated in his many years as a trained chef in some exclusive restaurants.

Shawn encouraged his son Colby to also come to Heppner and apply for a resident-care-associate position at the Terrace, and Colby joined Julie Teeman as the newest staff members. Openings remain for an additional cook and another care provider; interested persons can contact the Terrace office or call 541-676-0004.

In addition to the hired staff at the Terrace, the volunteers who provide assistance with many activities are also indispensable to the smooth running of the facility, so interested persons are encouraged to check on these opportunities.

Among these several activities featured at the Terrace this month, two others stand out as particularly important: Butch Christian will celebrate his birthday on the 15th, and Ginger O'Brien will celebrate her birthday on the 20th. Both celebrants will be selecting their birthday lunches to share with friends and neighbors.

Viewed as one of the more positive months for celebration, December is definitely a good time to be on the Hill among familiar faces.



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For Sale



\$220,000

This cozy 1950s home, located in a peaceful community, offers a blend of classic charm and modern comforts. The 3-bed, 2-bath property features a finished basement with two bedrooms and a bonus room, perfect for extra space or an office. The well-maintained yard, complete with mature fruit trees, provides a relaxing outdoor space. Essential appliances, including a fridge, range, washer, and dryer, are included, making it move-in ready. Sold as-is or with conventional financing, this charming home is ready for you to make it your own! 285 W ARCADE ST Lexington MLS# 24676541

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We Wish All of You a

**Joyous Holiday Season
and a
Merry Christmas!**

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Plentiful Harvests and
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