

~ 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.

MCHD Concerns Continue

To the Editor,
Once again a front-page article in the Gazette-Times covering the Morrow County Health District's board meeting has made for interesting reading. We already know that the board doesn't have to entertain public comments. However, in November, board members stated that they wanted to continue to hear them, but said there doesn't have to be a record of them. This sounds contrary to me to how the ORS reads, but OK. That said, after a statement by their attorney concerning publishing documents created by the public, they have recently removed the website links to two positive comments that were made at the September board meeting, while there was no record of the nine concerning comments brought forth.

Last week's article reports that the board stated that there have been many public meetings where public comments were derogative and demoralizing toward the staff and board. To my knowledge, the general MCHD staff has never been demoralized or targeted. That said, as we all know, public boards and executive staff are often scrutinized by the public when they have concerns. We see it all the time. Not many of us want to attend a public meeting and reiterate problems that have been previously brought to the board, and I know that a number of us had met with and or notified board members privately of concerns before taking them to a board meeting. However, when the public doesn't feel they are taken seriously and problems don't improve, they show up at meetings.

The concerns that continue to be voiced include: a lack of doctors, not just providers, but doctors at the clinic in Heppner, while doctors and medical personnel who live in Heppner are working out of town; patient care concerns at Pioneer Memorial Hospital (it seems privacy violation litigation would be unlikely in these instances); and a revolving door of doctors, other providers and staff—never mind the turnover rate, let's see the hard number of employees who have left in the last almost three years. It's not just the small group of local residents who have been showing up at meetings who are alarmed. While not everyone attends a board meeting, many have just quietly transferred their medical care out of town.

Part of the board wants to limit comments to items on the agenda and choose who is allowed to address them at meetings. Two board members feel it's important to hear from the public. Thank you. Whether the board members allow concerns at meetings or not is yet to be determined, but I think as long as the public feels action is needed, I'm sure they will state their concerns one way or another.

Sincerely,
Patti Allstott
Heppner, OR

Port committed to local control

The Port of Morrow Commissioners have expressed opposition to Representative Smith's House Bill 2797, which proposes granting the governor the authority to appoint two commissioners to our board. After careful consideration, the commissioners have collectively decided not to support this bill.

While I understand and acknowledge the representative's intentions, and recognize that there may be valid arguments in favor of his proposal, I firmly believe that this bill undermines democratic principles and the critical right of local control.

The Port of Morrow remains unwavering in its commitment to preserving the autonomy of local governance, ensuring that decisions which impact our community are made by those who are directly accountable to, and directly affected by, those decisions.

I am pleased to report that Representative Smith has reconsidered his position and has decided to withdraw the bill. We sincerely thank him for his willingness to engage in constructive conversations, and we look forward to continuing our work in prioritizing local control and community-based decision-making.

*Rick Stokoe
Boardman, OR
Port of Morrow Commissioner*

Fight, Fight!

I tried to watch the confirmation hearings. I really did. I think my maximum watch time per nominee was seven minutes. And it took restraint to watch that long. I felt like I was watching "Mean Girls Go to Washington."

I wonder how you prepare for that kind of onslaught. Is there a Mean Girl Defense Course these days? I think President Trump would be a good coach. He's been dealing with it for a while now.

I'd really love to resurrect Ronald Reagan. He had some great defensive one-liners...like, "The trouble with our Liberal friends is not that they're ignorant; it's just that they know so much that isn't so."

And another good one... "Too often character assassination has replaced debate in principle here in Washington. Destroy someone's reputation, and you don't have to talk about what he stands for" (ok, it's two lines, but it works).

It appears that the point of that profound statement was missed by many of our confirmation hearing interrogators and was instead perceived as great advice. Truth and accuracy be danged...just come up with some damaging accusations and you're on your way to sure destruction of your opponent. I'm a little surprised nobody came up with the, "Are you still beating your wife? Yes or no question." But the night is still young, so to speak.

Maybe a more mature and productive approach might be to ask questions about the nominee's plans and ideas on how to handle the situations he or she may

face...while leaving your evil agenda out of it. And didn't your Mama teach you not to interrupt? Maybe even stop bloviating and let them speak.

But I do have to say, kudos to Trump's picks. They displayed incredible patience and restraint. I know this might come from watching a little too much Gunsmoke, but I thought for sure I was gonna witness a bar fight or two. Kristi Noem vs Elizabeth Warren, or Hegseth vs Schiff? I'd have watched more than seven minutes of that. Is that wrong?

Well, it's probably a good thing that never occurred, but one can't help but ponder it a bit. And It's a good thing I'm not a nominee.

I could hear it now... Senator Snarky: "We have evidence of an event in the State of California that resulted in your being issued a citation for driving over the speed limit. Will your obvious propensity for reckless behavior and disregard for the law be a problem in the job for which you've been nominated? Yes or no please."

Me: "Senator, I was 16."

Senator Snarky: "This is a yes or no question. I will not accept that answer."

Me: "Well, we're even then because I will not accept your stupid question."

It actually might be kinda fun, but I doubt I'd walk away with any Dem votes. And I doubt I'm any match for Warren or Schiff. I bet I could take Pelosi though... just have to catch her after a night cap or two.

In all seriousness, Trump made great choices...no Rhinos in the bunch...which probably scares the dickens out of the Left.

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial be-

cause, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12).

*Susie Crosby
Prineville, OR*

Not So 'Good News Only'

I have been meaning to write this letter for quite some time, wanting to express me and my wife, Diane's, appreciation to the Heppner Gazette-Times and Doris Brosnan for the weekly article, "Good News Only."

We spent our childhood years in Heppner, graduating with the HHS class of 1962. Some years later, we took out a subscription to the Gazette-Times and have continued it now for over 50 years. We have continued to view Heppner as our hometown, with friends and family members still living there which we visit on a regular basis, as well as make our annual Memorial Day visit to decorate family graves in the Heppner Cemetery.

The "Good News Only" weekly article was a wonderful source for us to hear about old friends and community members' visits and life events, not only for those living in Heppner, but also for those living elsewhere. We recently learned that the article will no longer be published, which we were very sorry to hear, but understand due to the time and effort it must take to produce. We will miss very much not seeing it in the future but greatly appreciate reading about familiar names and happenings for the past few years.

*Bruce Moyer
Lolo, MT*

A View from the Hill

By Doris Brosnan

The Community at the Terrace views the kindnesses of John Gould and Jason Patterson with awe: John, who manages Les Schwab, was instrumental in getting tires for the Terrace van at a truly minimal cost. Jason donated a servicing of the van and parts that may have been needed. Such huge, critical gifts!

Speaking of "gifts," two residents will be celebrating their birthdays this month: Rita Bowman will be 97 years young on the eighth, and Alex Camarillo will top that when he turns 100 on the 11th! Happy birthday to both celebrants, who will surely be sharing their favorite lunches with guests.

Those lunches will surely be delicious, as are Chef Shawn's lunches every day. "Amazing meals" is one description often repeated. (An additional position for a cook continues to be posted and more information is available by visiting or calling.) Praise also goes out to Cynthia and AnnaGrace Wenberg for their desserts, especially for their great pies.

In time for these eating pleasures and the in-house activities, Pat Prock moved into the Terrace two weeks ago, happy to be back in Heppner. Pat was a long-time Heppner resident until she moved several years ago to a small condo in Pendleton. And now she has returned, welcomed by several friends of many years.

Another newer face at the Terrace is that of Taryn Dominguez, who has joined the staff as a trainee. Taryn brings 16 years of experience to the position.

Some residents are gearing up for Super Bowl Sunday, and some will select the lucky, winning numbers on the board as the game progresses. Some residents are working on a Valentine's Day craft for their doors and will enjoy the Valentine's Day lunch that will feature decorated cupcakes for dessert. Another craft they will soon be learning is how to make "cake pops." This craft, though, does not make a decoration. Instead, it results in a yummy cake treat on a stick!

These activities, as well as Bingo and morning exercises, can be enjoyed by everyone who is avoiding the flu- and cold-season "bugs" that have isolated some unfortunate residents in their rooms for recovery. Their neighbors miss seeing them while they fight off those contagious viruses, but everyone views the steps taken to protect others with great appreciation, and they know they will see those neighbors again soon.

CREZ Disbursements

-Continued from PAGE ONE

Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) received \$504,004. The City of Ione received \$143,761 and the Town of Lexington came in at \$102,566.

Another large chunk of the disbursement went to community infrastructure for the county's five communities. Each received an equal share of the \$2.6 million at \$539,484.

Nearly a million dollars went to public safety disbursements. Boardman Fire Rescue District, Boardman Police Department and Morrow County Ambulance each received \$240,975, while Morrow County Health District, Irrigon Fire and Morrow County Sheriff's Office each received \$80,325.

The remaining \$571,500 went to the Morrow Education Foundation.

Upcoming Events

- Feb 7th, Feb 21st Mar 7th Music by Joe & Andrew Lindsay w/Western Dance Lessons. Dinner is off the menu. Dinner hours 5 to 8 Music at 7:30.
- Feb 9th Super Bowl Party. Bring your favorite finger food or snack. Lodge opens at 2pm.
- Feb 15th Elks Annual. Ladies Tea 2pm, Lodge 4pm, Prime Rib Dinner 6pm.
- March 6th Old Timers Night
- March 15th St. Patrick's Day. Cornbeef and Cabbage Dinner 5pm

Lodge Hours:

- Wed 4pm to close with dinner at 6pm
- Thurs 4 pm to close (Lodge at 8pm)
- Fri & Sat 4pm to close with dinner from 5pm to 8pm



HEPPNER ELKS 358

676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 North Main

Members and their Guest

Seniors Matter February Menu

Feb 4 - Pork and Hashbrown Casserole
Buttered Carrots
Dessert

Feb 11 - Mini Pizzas
Garden Salads
Dessert

Feb 18 - Beef Stroganoff over Mashed Potatoes
Green Beans
Dessert

Feb 25 - Tacos on a Plate
Dessert

Feb 12 - Vets Meal
Chicken Pot Pie, Peach Cobbler

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