

The Coquille Valley Sentinel

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\$1.50 THE YEAR.

COUNTY UNIT PLAN

Many Reasons Given for Its Adoption By the Legislature.

A bill will be introduced in the Oregon legislature this session to provide for the County Unit Plan of supporting and administering the common school system of the state. In order to be able to judge the merits of the proposed system intelligently a brief discussion of its advantages in comparison with those of the present district system, may be in order.

The district system as we now have it in most of the United States is found only in this country. The schools of Europe and of civilized nations in other parts of the world are supported and controlled either nationally or by some unit closely corresponding to our counties or states.

The district system sprang from the pioneer conditions of the colonial days of New England, and was carried thence to other sections as the tide of migration rolled westward. It was the only possible plan for isolated pioneer settlements, which were often made in territory where no county or state government had been organized. Later, the difficulty of welding these individual and sometimes conflicting units into a harmonious whole prevented the growth of county or state control so that in more than half of the states we still have this inherited system, regardless of whether it is adapted to the educational needs of modern times or not.

One of the greatest arguments used in favor of the district system is that it is democratic, and allows the people of each community to build up and maintain just the kind of school they wish. This might be true if each district had its proportionate share of wealth with which to endow its school, and equally competent boards to administer them. In reality this boasted democracy consists of only one thing, democracy of control. If true democracy means anything worth while it means equality of opportunity, and this the district system not only fails to give but absolutely prevents.

A few illustrations may be given to show the weakness of the district system. The Bridge School, No. 77, Coos County, Oregon, levies from fifteen to twenty mills special tax each year, hires three expert teachers for about sixty pupils, and gives not only the common school but three years of high school work. It educates about seventy per cent of the children of educable age in the district. The Big Creek School levies from one to three mills, hires one teacher, and has from thirty-seven to seventy per cent of the children of school age as shown by the census, in actual attendance. Two other adjacent districts that might be contrasted are North Bend, with its sixteen mill levy, eighteen teachers, full high school courses, and nearly seventy per cent of its census enumeration enrolled in school; and Kentuck Inlet, No. 17, with its three mill levy, one teacher, less than sixty per cent of the children in school, and a district feud that has become known through the kindness of the newspapers from one end of Oregon to the other.

The two main features of the proposed County Unit Plan are, first, the support of the common school system by a blanket tax levied on the entire county. Second, the administration of the entire school system by a board of five members elected at the time of the annual school meeting, from five zones into which the county is divided. This board appoints the County Superintendent as its executive officer, and would probably be assisted by a local representative for each school in the county.

As the assessed valuation of all the school districts in the county for the present year are not yet available in convenient form, the valuations and levies for last year have been taken as an illustration of the way the system would work in Coos county.

The total valuation for the county for last year was \$21,109,670. The County court levied a general fund tax of \$54,960. The six districts having standard high schools levied special taxes amounting to \$100,008.75, of which \$33,716.90 was for the support of high schools. The other districts of the county, all except the six maintaining high schools, levied

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Danger of Bad Fire.

We hear rather alarming reports of the extraordinary fire risk on the south side of Front street caused by the recklessness of the members of the young men's club which occupies the old Woodman Hall in the Golden building. Cigarette stumps are reported to be scattered everywhere while still burning; and one of these times one of them is almost certain to fall in some combustible collection and make another historic blaze. If our present city ordinances make no provision for such a risk a new one should be enacted to cover this case. Insurance risks in that quarter are almost prohibitive now.

That new railroad time table which delays our mails fourteen hours and causes travellers going or coming the loss of the same amount of time may be due to the ignorance and thoughtlessness of those responsible for it. If so the matter is one which our Commercial Club did well to take up at once.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

County Agricultural Agent J. L. Smith returned from his two weeks' trip to Corvallis last Saturday evening. He says the attendance at Farmers' Week there this year was the largest yet, over 1700 being present. Also the program was the best in the three years he has been attending these meetings and the interest shown by the visiting farmers was very encouraging.

The thirty farmers from Coos county, who were there received the surprise of their lives by finding every hour and every moment occupied with discussions and demonstrations in which they were vitally interested. They were kept on the go all the time trying to attend those meetings which were of most importance to them. One man remarked, "I have got my money's worth already," at the end of the first day.

Next week Mr. Smith expects to have an interesting article prepared giving the views of those attending from Coos. These replies are now being received by Mr. Smith and will be well worth reading.

The second week of his absence Mr. Smith was attending the County Agents' Conference, which was attended by all county agents in the state. At this time the various projects to be urged by the extension service for 1917 were planned and discussed. Among these are the cow testing associations, drainage, potato raising and seed selection.

Mr. Smith says that he hardly had time to sleep the last week, there being banquets and receptions every evening, and the days being fully occupied with extension service matters.

He anticipates that the reports of the thirty who attended this year will result in a greatly increased attendance from this section during Farmers' Week next year.

This Winter the Best.

Councilman Mansell says the draying business here this winter has been better than ever before and that since he got his new auto truck into commission he has had all the work it could do besides enough to keep his wagons and teams all busy. This certainly looks like an improvement in general business conditions here. And so far as the Sentinel is concerned general business since the first of the year has been much better than for months previous. Everything still indicates that 1917 is going to be a year of prosperity for the Coquille valley—the best it has ever seen.

To Discuss Roads.

The Myrtle Point Commercial Club is going to hold a meeting this evening at 7:30 p. m. to consider what should be done on the Myrtle Point-Roseburg road and also what action to take looking towards a more satisfactory mail and passenger service than the S. P. intends to give us beginning Sunday. All members of the Coquille Commercial Club are invited to attend.

The prominent bachelors, we mentioned last week, inform us that they are making arrangements to entertain the young ladies of the Thimble Club at dinner at an early date.

The government saved a \$400,000 submarine at Eureka, even if it did cost a \$4,000,000 cruiser to do it. Nothing like economy in small things.

RAW DEAL FOR US COURT AT THE BAY

Southern Pacific Wipes Coquille Valley off of the Railroad Map.

A new time table is to go into effect Sunday, Jan. 21 on the S. P. line through here which will disconnect the service in this valley from the rest of the line as completely as if the sale of the line from Overland to Myrtle Point which we forecast last week had already gone into effect.

The Coos Bay Limited which has been running over here and to Myrtle Point and bringing in our outside mail, and going out early in the morning, is to stop at Marshfield, and we will have only the service of the two trains, one passenger and the other mixed, which ran over the Coos Bay, Roseburg & Eastern before we got connection with the rest of the railroad world.

It is about as raw a deal for the Coquille valley as could well be imagined. The train from the outside will get into Marshfield, as it has been doing, about six o'clock in the evening—and there our mail and express and the passengers coming over here will have to wait about fourteen hours until they have an opportunity to get a train for Coquille. Won't that make a picnic for the jitneys as soon as the highway is in shape to travel!

In the morning it will be the same thing again. Our mail will go out at 3:27 in the afternoon (closing about 3) and passengers from here will leave at the same time. Getting over to Marshfield a little before five there will be nothing to do but visit the movies and pay for a night's lodging in the hotels until after breakfast at seven some time the next morning they can make a start for Portland, to reach there 27 hours after leaving Coquille.

We often used to make better time than that when there was no railroad connection at all and it looks as if the S. P. people had deliberately framed their schedule to render it as inconvenient as possible for people in this valley to go out by rail.

Apparently it wouldn't have cost the S. P. any more to have one of the two trains shutting between Powers and Marshfield, wait at the Bay until the "Limited" mail train arrives from Portland, and then come right over here, returning in time to take mail and passengers out so they would arrive at Portland the same day. Of course the train crews would have to work earlier and later but they would be required to put in no more hours.

As it is now, that train will leave Marshfield at 1:30 p. m. and take almost exactly two hours to traverse the 17 miles to Coquille, reaching here at 3:27, Myrtle Point nine miles farther on at 4:27—exactly another hour and Powers at 5:30, four hours from Marshfield.

Coming back in the morning this train will leave Powers at 6:30, reaching Myrtle Point at 7:55, Coquille at 9 and Marshfield at 10:30—again four hours for the 44 miles.

The other train will leave Marshfield at 8 a. m. and reach Coquille at 9 about the same as heretofore. It will be due at Myrtle Point at 9:33 and at Powers at 10:30. Returning it will leave Powers at 2:00 p. m., Myrtle Point at 2:55 and Coquille at 3:27, getting over to the Bay at 4:30.

East and west trains will thus meet here at 9 a. m. and again at 3:27 p. m. Evidently the S. P. wants to discourage travel from this section as much as possible.

Reorganizing Associations.

County Agent J. L. Smith is now actively engaged in the reorganization of the cow testing associations of Coos county for 1917. Contracts and circular letters, are being mailed out to the dairymen, which will be supplemented by personal visits if necessary. The "star boarder" cows are fast being eliminated from the association herds, and there is no question that the dairymen appreciate what these cow testing associations do for them, and will continue the organizations this year.

J. D. Goss will be before the County court here next Tuesday to appear for the C. A. Smith Timber company in the matter of the transfer to them of the rights heretofore granted the McDonald, Vaughn Logging Company to build a logging road along and across a county highway at Sumner.

COURT AT THE BAY

Judge Watson Takes up Probate and Juvenile Cases There.

Judge James Watson was over at the Bay Wednesday and Thursday attending to Probate and Juvenile court matters.

The first case before him was that of Bruce L. Piggott, to be examined as to his sanity. Dr. Mingus assisting the Judge. Piggott is a hobo and an I. W. W. but for a long time he talked rationally enough and there was apparently nothing wrong with him until the subject of capital and labor was broached. Then the lid was off and he went right up in the air. He was ordered committed to the asylum at Salem.

On Thursday a session of the juvenile court was held at North Bend and the case of the half dozen children of John Thomas, who is nearly a full blood Indian, was taken up. Thomas from all the testimony had done his best to bring up his family well since the death of his wife when the youngest was an infant and he was commended by the court, but advised to send the oldest girls to the Chemawa Indian school. It was directed that the children should be further looked after by Mrs. Lena Thomas, their aunt, who is a graduate of that school and highly recommended by all who know her. Mr. Thomas owns a ranch worth \$4,000 and is watching to see if any symptoms of tuberculosis develop in his children; and if there do, he proposes to sell out at once and remove to a dryer climate.

The next case was that of a little girl six years old, whose parents, Geo. W. and Louise Granger are "no good," an adopted brother by the name of Huddle, who was in jail here last summer for stealing green corn, being one of the family. The court thought the parents were unfit to care for the little girl, but made an order of probation, placing the child under the superintendence of Father McDavitt, of the Catholic church, who will report to the court regularly as to conditions in the family.

Better Than Anticipated.

The subscription agency through which we secure the 4-magazine combination that we are offering with the Sentinel at the wonderfully low price of 25 cents for a year for the entire lot, inform us that this offer is going to be an even better one than was anticipated. One of these magazines is Today's, and it has been consolidated with "The Housewife," another monthly, and will hence forth be known as Today's Housewife. The price of this magazine alone to single subscribers is expected to be 75 cents or \$1 a year after April 1. Still you can get it and the three other magazines for only two bits a year in connection with the Sentinel. It is just like picking up money in the road to get \$2 worth of literature for 25 cents.

Fell Twenty Feet.

Mark Shelley got a serious fall out at Lee about 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon. He was working on the R. H. Mast barn there and had what he says was the heaviest bundle of shingles he ever lifted. After getting up on the scaffold, about 20 feet from the ground, it gave way and most of the load fell on him. He was badly bruised all over, although no bones were broken. The injury to his shoulder blade, Dr. Richmond says, is worse than a break. He was unconscious for 15 or 20 minutes.

Sentenced and Paroled.

Fred Newmann, of Powers, was brought down here the first of the week to serve a sentence of 20 days in jail for stealing, imposed by the Justice's court there.

The justice who sentenced young Newman having recommended that he be paroled in charge of his father who lives at Bandon, he was released at noon to-day, so that he might take the afternoon boat for home.

The steamer Bandon, which at one time last fall was expected to be a total wreck at Port Orford, but which was finally floated and towed to San Francisco for repairs, is again on her old route between San Francisco and the Coquille river. She arrived at Bandon on Friday.

Sunday School Convention.

The county Sunday School convention held at the M. E. Church South in this city last Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday were well attended and programs very interesting, especially the addresses by Dr. C. A. Phipps on Saturday and Sunday.

For the coming year the following officers were elected:

President—Miss M. Watkins, of Myrtle Point.

Vice president—John L. Gary, of Coquille.

Secretary—Fred Barker, of Johnson's Mill.

Protest New Schedule.

This morning, President Norton, of our Commercial Club, sent out telegrams to J. M. Scott, General Passenger Agent of the Southern Pacific at Portland, the State Public Service Commission at Salem and S. P. Division Superintendent L. R. Burkhalter at Portland, protesting against the new S. P. railroad schedule that makes our travelling and mail service as dilatory as when we had to depend upon wagons over the hills.

CLUB WELL ATTENDED

Nearly every chair in the city hall was occupied at the Commercial Club meeting Wednesday evening when A. J. Sherwood explained the details of the Federal Farm Loan Act. He said several farmers had asked him about the meeting, one wanted to know if the Commercial Club charged admission. His reply was that a premium was usually given to those in attendance. There were a number of farmers living near Coquille present.

Mr. Sherwood went into the details of the new act quite thoroughly and made clear the operations by which the loans are secured by farmers. It is a larger subject than we have space for this week, an article on the same subject covering several pages of the Saturday Evening Post last year.

The matter is to be discussed at Commercial Club meetings until a National Farm Loan Association is organized in this section. It will require applications for \$20,000 of loans to effect this organization.

Following Mr. Sherwood, County Superintendent Baker made a talk in favor of the county unit plan of conducting the public schools. His remarks are elsewhere published under that head.

C. A. Howard moved the adoption of the following resolution which is to be sent to the Coos county members of the state legislature:

"Resolved, That it is the sense of the Coquille Commercial Club that a County Unit system of school taxation should be adopted by the state legislature for Oregon."

The club voted in favor of the resolution and will urge the enactment of a law along this line.

Looks Like "Moonshine."

The C. A. Smith Timber Co. makes two principal objections to the terms of the franchise for a railroad along the Coquille-Marshfield road as granted by the County court, December 30. The first is that the amount at which it is to furnish gravel for the county roads along its line is not put at as high a figure as it offered. On this point Judge Watson says that the rates asked by the company are higher than the county can pay and that at the rate of one half of four cents a hundred pounds the company proposes to make for hauling, the county can use none of the gravel. This seems to verify the Sentinel's position when it called the offer "moonshine."

The other objection is to the 30 days given the Timber Co in which to accept the franchise. They want to make it 90 days, so as to make a preliminary survey before deciding. And it may be that in the meantime they will do more dickering with the S. P. people on the lease proposition.

Interesting Talk by Smith.

One of the most interesting stories about benefits of cow testing associations, was told by J. L. Smith, county agent of Coos county. He told of a farmer in an association in his county who found after two years of testing that his cows were only paying a yearly profit of about \$1.50 each. The farmer had been dairying on that basis for years, but is now sending his scrub cows to the butcher as fast as possible.—Farmers' Week News, O. A. C., Corvallis.

WATER SERVICE

Council Discussed That and Many Other Subjects Monday Night.

The longest session of the council held in many months was that Monday evening when every member of the board was present. It was after 10:30 when adjournment was taken.

The city's water business, which has occasioned more discussion the past few months than any other matter, was introduced by C. M. Upton's requesting action on the petition presented some weeks ago for an extension of the water line in the north part of town. It developed that action there had been deferred pending an arrangement for right of way to build a line down to the warehouse and creamery, in order that the pipe for both jobs might be ordered at the same time.

It appearing that nothing had been done toward securing that right of way it was decided to put it up to the directors of the creamery at their next meeting, with the assurance that the city would build a line as soon as the right of way had been secured.

On motion by Sanford the water rent for the creamery was fixed at \$10 per month from the date they started in business last September until the first of February. At that time the water superintendent is to be instructed to install a meter on their line. It was the sense of the council that all out of town water consumers should be required to pay for city water at meter rates, and also that all out of town customers should purchase the meter which the city installs. Mr. Epperson was instructed to place a meter on the line running to the Watson ranch north of town.

The rate of \$15 per month paid by the Coquille Laundry and Ice Co. is thought by several councilmen excessive, and there was talk of reducing it to \$12 but no action was taken. It was also agreed that the meter rates should be readjusted as no large consumer can afford to pay the present rate.

In order to get at one delinquent user of city water across the river the recorder was instructed to notify the last three users on the line that they must provide a water line to connect with the existing line on the county highway, unless all delinquencies are paid at once. This will enable the city to disconnect service where the line now crosses private property. One customer over there has expressed the fear that they are paying for more water than they use owing to a possible leak where the pipe line crosses the river, the meter for the line being on this side.

A request from Logan Kay was read asking for a two years' lease on a tract of water front property, 50x100 feet, just east of Ferry street. As this would extend from the river to the railroad and tie up all access to the rest of the city water front there, the request was laid on the table.

Mayor Johnson said, regarding this property, that a Southern Pacific engineer had approached him to know what the city's attitude would be toward leasing or selling it to the railroad company, which they would use by erecting a loading pen for stock. Mr. Johnson told him that he thought the city would want at least interest on the investment. As the purchase price was \$6,000, 6 per cent interest on this would be \$360 a year, or a dollar a day.

Everyone was agreed that the erection of a loading pen there is desirable and would be a good thing for Coquille, so it was decided to let consideration of a proposal to the S. P. rest until the next meeting.

Recorder Lawrence reported that all rents due the city were considerably in arrears, so the marshal was instructed to take possession of the old city hall at once. Also the lease on the land occupied by the Fox myrtle wood factory is to be declared forfeited unless the back rent is promptly paid.

Recent troubles at the dock, in which one steamboat which has not paid the city's wharfage charges for some time was a principal, were given mention and the need of more rigid regulations for handling matters there was urged. City Attorney Stanley

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