

Heppner Gazette-Times

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER
PHONE 6-9228

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Reapportionment and Our Place in the Sun

Initiative petitions are now in circulation calling for a vote on a constitutional amendment for legislative reapportionment in Oregon. Mrs. Verner Troedson is in charge of the circulation in Morrow county with Al Lamb as co-chairman, and Orville Cutsforth is getting the petitions around in Heppner.

The measure sought has no affiliation with politics but is a non-partisan matter that almost every Eastern Oregon voter may well feel inclined to support as this section of the state seeks its rightful "place in the sun."

Briefly, it would create 30 permanent representative districts, permit enlargement of the senate to 35, and permit enlargement of the house to 65.

Of particular interest to Morrow county, and neighboring counties, is the fact that under this plan we would have a representative to be shared by only three counties—Morrow, Gilliam and Sherman—whereas under the plan presently in operation our representative is shared by five counties—Umatilla, Wheeler, Morrow, Gilliam and Sherman. It is to be remembered, too, that population of Umatilla outnumbers the combined total of the other four by more than 3 to 1.

It has been pointed out that signatures of virtually all registered voters in Eastern Oregon are needed to assure that this measure gets on the ballot for the general election in November. These petitions are now in a number of different business houses in Heppner and throughout the county. Workers will be out in the rural areas. One petition is at the Gazette-Times and signers are welcome to come here.

The measure, although it may be viewed with disdain by some sections of the more heavily populated areas, stands to benefit other parts of the state besides eastern Oregon. Thus, it rightly is called an "all-Oregon plan."

Representation is restored in Eastern Oregon to the same percentage that was included in the 1952 amendment. In addition, Curry county gets a representative for the first time, Coos county will elect two representatives, Washington county will elect two senators, Benton and Yamhill counties will each elect one senator. Senate representation is assured to Polk county (which this year loses its lone senator in a return to the old Polk-Benton district) by establishing a Polk-Marion senatorial district, and another senator (total of nine) is added to Multnomah county.

Whether the measure stands much chance of passage when it gets on the ballot is hard to determine. It is a certainty that it will meet stiff opposition. One strike against it is the difficulty for the voter to understand the formula presented. By contrast, the federal plan (one house based on population and the other on area) is much easier to understand but would stand even less chance of passing because Eastern and Southern Oregon could outvote the rest of the state in the house based on area. Multnomah county would never stand for that!

It is high time that the component parts of our vast Eastern Oregon county unite and get coordinated to fight for their place in this state. Oregon should be a state united, and the time has come when the eastern section isn't continuously forced to take a back seat.

At various times, Eastern Oregon is badgered, bullied and belittled by the counties with heavy population.

We were ridiculed by a Multnomah county senator (Vernon Cook of the infamous "Jack rabbit and sagebrush" statement) and belittled by the Capital Journal in a recent editorial which pointed out that eastern Oregon had been "weeping and wailing" about lack of representation, yet had attracted only enough interest for two contests for representative in this election year.

In our district, though, we do have a race on the Democratic ticket, incumbent Frank Weatherford vs. Jack Smith, and will have one in the general election when the winner meets Republican Gaylord Madison, the only GOP candidate.

But how many candidates would the Capital Journal expect us to muster when one individual has to cover such a vast territory as Morrow, Umatilla, Wheeler, Sherman and Gilliam counties? The CJ editor himself would probably not welcome the job if he resided here.

The Oregonian in a recent editorial, "We Love You, E. O.," brought soothing words in attempting to point out the importance of the region east of the Cascades. But we suspect that a good many Western Oregonians could never become true believers until they got over here and knew the country well enough for it to penetrate under their skin. Maybe some tours could be arranged by the new Eastern Oregon Association of Chambers of Commerce to bring leaders over from the west so that the visitors could see for themselves.

But it is important for Eastern Oregonians to become aroused and to insist on fair representation and a rightful place with other sections of the state.

Your signature on the reapportionment petitions is the first step.

Congratulations to a Fine Paper!

Word comes this week that the Heppner High School Hehisch, student newspaper, has received First Class Honor Rating in the National Scholastic Press association competition. Throughout the United States, there were only four mimeographed papers in the nation that ranked higher than the Hehisch and only five others that achieved equal first class rating.

Honors are nothing new to the Hehisch. It has been a top student newspaper for a number of years. Just recently it was awarded a first place rating by Columbia Scholastic Press association.

Being in the journalism field, we are particularly proud that the high school paper in Heppner is doing such a fine job. We have looked forward to every issue through the school year and find it neat, newsy and well-organized with a fine coverage. Particularly noticeable is the advertising, which truly seeks to advertise for the merchant and is not just a "name label" for each business—often a weakness in high school papers.

We extend heartiest congratulations to Co-Editors Bob Irby and Don Hughes for the good record they are making, together with their entire staff. Mrs. Margaret Kirk, advisor, deserves a special word of commendation for her sustaining interest and know-how.

The school paper and the county paper have much in common. Having a competent journalism teacher on the high school staff is a real boon to the Gazette-Times, and the Hehisch is making a fine contribution to the community.

Student Body Play Cast is Announced

A cast has been selected for the all-school student body play, "The Little Dog Laughed," and practices are held each evening under the direction of drama instructor, Mrs. Maurice Groves.

Taking parts in the comedy are Karen McCurdy as Laurie; Don Clark as Sid; Marie Pettyjohn as Martha; Dick Clark as Wally; Beverly Davidson as Gus; Ginny Lou Turner as Jean; Nat Webb as Ted; Christine Spencer as Lillian; Bill Sherman as Mark; Rodney Ayers as Horatio; Kathy Ray as Amelia; Kitty O'Hara as Caroline; Marlene Fetsch as Grace; Marcia Bands as Walola and Nancy Cleveland as Therese.

The play is centered around an entertaining home situation where a pretty sophomore, maj-

oring in psychology in college comes home and in no time at all is in the midst of "psycho-analyzing a taxidermist-orthologist." She insists that her family seek their "energy peaks" by taking their temperatures every hour, thereby throwing the entire neighborhood into a complete turmoil with her Zombrowski Ink Blot test.

The play is planned for staging in May.

The Phil Mahoneys returned home this week after a two-week vacation in the Hawaiian Islands.

Mr. and Mrs. M. N. Kirk of Hermiston left on a jet mailer April 2 from Portland for a vacation of two weeks or more in Hawaii. The Kirks are owners of the Kirk and Robinson ranch in Sand Hollow, operated by their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Robinson.

TO THE EDITOR.

Dear Editor: Maybe this letter should be to the parents of the children whose lives have been endangered by riding on Morrow county school bus No. 4. A school employee had attempted to solder the brake line where the exhaust pipe had worn a hole in it. The worn brake line has now been replaced with the properly connected brake line. The exhaust pipe can no longer wear against this hydraulic brake line even when the tail pipe is loose.

I believe it fortunate that the school employee who did the soldering could not get the line to hold long enough for the bus to get a load of children and leave on its regular Hardman run last Wednesday evening. I arrived at the local garage about 4:20 Wednesday evening to see the bus on a hoist and the mechanic when he started to check to see why the brakes would not operate.

In front of the rear axle and behind the muffler the tail pipe was resting against the brake line. Further investigation revealed that a hole had been worn in the brake line and that an employee of the school had attempted to solder the hole with common solder. The exhaust pipe was still in contact with the soldered hydraulic brake line. A bolt was missing out of the rear tail pipe bracket causing the exhaust pipe to move to one side enough to wear on the brake line. Apparently this bolt had been missing a long time as further checking revealed that a short piece had been taken out of the original brake line and a new piece connected into the hydraulic brake line at an earlier time. This new pipe had been connected into the brake line using ferrel type couplings, a type of coupling most mechanics will tell you is not intended for the high pressure found in brake systems.

This earlier work was done at a garage by a mechanic who is no longer employed as a mechanic. I do not hold the school employee directly responsible for this mechanic's work except that this employee is the link between the school and the garages and certainly should be able to judge if the repair is acceptable. The drivers report their bus needs to him. He has been responsible to see that the buses are taken to the garage and repaired if he cannot make the repairs himself.

I do not hold the school employee responsible for his attempt to solder the hydraulic brake line on bus No. 4. I feel that he used very poor judgement, when you take into consideration that the time I looked at the bus in the garage the exhaust pipe was still not fixed, also he had attempted to do his soldering on a piece of hydraulic tubing that someone else had done an unsatisfactory job of installing. Two steel pipes had worn through. How could solder be expected to hold?

While further looking under the bus I discovered a wire three or four feet long connected to the battery terminal of the voltage regulator. The wire made one turn down around the exhaust pipe, and the other end with insulation removed back about an inch was laying beside the motor. Needless to say, any time the wire touched the bus frame it made a bright spark. In fact it made a lot of bright sparks as there was no fuse in the wire. The exhaust pipe had melted the insulation on the wire in two places.

Between the muffler and the frame one other wire was hanging down and had the insulation broken in two places. On one rear dual wheel, one lug bolt was so loose it was easily removed with my fingers. On the other side of the bus one of the tire recaps had started to come loose.

There was fresh grease on the king bolts on the bus but no other fresh grease that I could see. The stop lights did not work. Maybe it was as well the stop lights didn't work, the brakes were sort of unpredictable. I have good reason to believe that bus No. 4 is typical of those operating out of Heppner, rather than the exception.

As a member of the Heppner Advisory Board I have been trying to get some changes and checks on the buses in order to keep them in what I consider a safe operating condition. I have taken this up with the Advisory Board and with the School Board with little success. Now I think it is time for you parents to decide if you want your children riding in a bus with a soldered brake line, a hot wire connected to the voltage regulator, bare wires underneath a loose exhaust pipe that was left unrepaired so long it wore through the original brake line, and the poorly installed replacement brake line, loose wheel lug bolts, loose tire recaps and without brake lights.

Sincerely,
Andy Van Schoiack

Chaff and Chatter

Wes Sherman

WHEN HONORS are passed out in Heppner for the most avid gardeners, one certainly should go to Dr. Wallace Wolff.

He was digging in his garden one day recently and contacted a stubborn "root." He poked at it and whacked away, but it wouldn't give. So the doctor went to the house, grabbed an ax and hit it a lick, neatly severing the "root."

But to his chagrin he discovered he had neatly severed the TV cable and put a small section in the area out of service, including the Claude Grammas.

Then the man with the green thumb had the audacity to call Graham and ask him how his television set was working!

HERE'S A WORD to all hands: The Gazette-Times needs to get its submitted items earlier. Today has been a real rat race with every conceivable type of article coming in late. We realize that circumstances sometimes are such that the article must be late, and we try to do our

best to handle such matter. But please remember that we like to have material as early as possible, and it helps us do a better job of putting out the paper.

When we are submerged with late matter, we have only one alternative—leave a good portion of it out. Wednesday is ordinarily too late for routine news, and we will no longer make any guarantees for no-time-element articles that should have been submitted earlier.

It just has to be that way. There are just a few of us here and a lot of public to serve.

NOTICE WHERE Dale Martin of Long Creek, the IFYE representative who made several recent appearances here, has joined the Peace Corps and left Sunday for Puerto Rico. He will spend 3½ months there studying Spanish and then will be assigned to duty in the Dominican Republic.

THE COMMITTEE handling circulation of reapportionment petitions hands a big bouquet to Charlie O'Connor of Ione. They gave him a petition for obtaining signatures, and in less than one full day Charlie delivered it back with every space filled—40 names in all. That type of cooperation is the spirit that Eastern Oregon needs.

HEPPNER'S UNIT-A school has a nice writeup in the April issue of Northwest Ruralite, magazine published by consumer-owned public utilities. The article tells of the heat pumps used at the school, and it shows a picture of Nonda Clark and Stan Rauch, pupils at the school, along with a photo of the school.

"Readin' and writin' in comfort..." is the title of the article. In it, the heat pumps are described as "versatile" and doing a good job of maintaining absolute uniform temperature at the school.

IT'S A NECK-and-neck race between the coming of direct distance dialing and the old phone books at the Gazette-Times office. We have two here from Pacific Northwest Bell, and both are so tattered and torn that

our calling is restricted. The only way we can find the number of Creswick Mortuary, for instance, is to look it up in the professional directory of the Gazette-Times.

We could surely use a new directory even though a new one is scheduled out in a couple of months. If we should get one from Dale Slusher's Pendleton office in the mail, we'll know that the old clipping bureau is right on the job!

IT'S A SMALL World Dept.: Mrs. Herman Parker of Pasco, while on a visit here the other day

dropped in to say that she, too, had taught at Elkton—this is response to the item last week about the book, "Only When I Laugh," that was centered around the Elkton-Scottsburg area of the Umpqua River. Mrs. Parker, formerly of Heppner, we find taught at Elkton just a year or two prior to our teaching there. She was there in 1936-37. The writer, fresh from college, started there in 1938. It was good to visit about mutual friends in that pleasant little community.

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