

THE HEPPNER GAZETTE-TIMES

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER
PHONE 676-9228

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Dangers at the Underpass

Last week this paper printed pictures to show hazards that confront the motoring public at the interchange recently opened at the junction of the Bomb Range road, east of Boardman, with highway 30 (Interstate 80). As soon as it can be arranged, we expect to print sketches showing how local persons believe some of the dangers could be eliminated at moderate cost.

It is granted that those who recognize the hazards are not engineers and may not possess the technical knowledge to understand reasons for the manner in which the interchange was constructed. It is also acknowledged that the Interstate system has restrictions and standards that prevent the State Highway Commission from constructing such structures in a manner that might be best suited to local ideas.

However, it does not seem consistent with theories of modern and safe highway construction to build a structure that, to the local population, has all the appearances of a "death trap." In the month that the interchange has been open there has been at least six accidents, fortunately all of them one-vehicle variety. More are expected, and with the probability for accidents it is almost a certainty that they will be worse than those experienced to date.

It has been pointed out that the interchange is poorly marked. This causes confusion and uncertainty upon the part of drivers who have not traversed the area before. There is no indication, going either east or west on highway 30, how to turn off to go south. Only after one has guessed how to go and made it to the lower level does he find a small sign that points the way to Lexington.

Greatest objection to the structure comes from the fact that traffic entering the interchange in many instances has to proceed across lanes of opposing traffic, something that would normally be expected to be eliminated in an expensive modern structure.

Traffic coming from the east on highway 30 and turning off to the bomb range road (to the south) must cross an opposing lane of traffic twice in a short distance.

Another hazard is inherent in the structure because of the tight curves employed, making them difficult to negotiate and limiting visibility. Skid marks pictured last week show how some drivers, perhaps coming off the long straight stretch from Irrigon, were trapped by the tight curve that suddenly presented itself.

A school bus, grain truck, or any other large and slow vehicle that makes it stop at the end of the bomb range road, proceeding northward, is subject to traffic that may zip off the highway via the exit designated for Spokane and Umatilla. Although this is an area posted for a slower speed, in practice much of the traffic will not observe this marked speed after skimming along the straight stretches of highway 30. Visibility is limited to 400 feet.

At posted speed, it is figured that it only takes four to five seconds to reach the bomb range road junction after hitting the exit, going east, on highway 30. This does not leave much time for a bus, truck with trailer, cattle truck, or a truck loaded with grain or hay to get out of the way after making its required stop.

The Morrow county school board, through Supt. Robert Van Houte, consistently pointed out these dangers during and prior to construction. School people fear what might happen to a busload of school children there. Although no school buses currently use the bomb range road on regular runs, the road is used for trips to athletic contests and other events.

The Morrow County Grain Growers and other farm groups recognized the potential hazards and attempted to get something done about it. The Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce has watched the construction with critical eye, and the Morrow county court pointed out the hazards. But it was still built that way, and local residents can't understand why.

Maybe with enough united action something may yet be done about it.

In the meantime, for all who travel via this interchange, use caution. The possibility for accident is greater than normal there.

Is River Waterfront for the Birds?

Sometimes it seems that the American frame of mind is so dedicated to sports—particularly hunting and fishing—that everything else comes second.

There is a strong movement to close the Columbia River entirely to commercial fishing in order to preserve it for the sportsman. This would be a blow to the commercial fisheries and the canning industry. It would severely hurt one of the state's substantial payrolls. Sportsmen, however, come back with the thought that they would spend more money, buy more goods and stimulate the economy than the canneries and commercial fisheries do. This is a debatable point. But how about the non-fisherman who enjoys the privilege of buying canned, frozen or fresh fish in the stores? He does not want to pay the \$2 or \$3 per pound that the sportsman pays as he pursues his hobby.

Now comes the move to set up the wildlife refuge at Boardman on the Columbia River waterfront. The question seems to be whether this is more important as a sanctuary for ducks and geese than it is for industry. In view of the state's position and publicity on the potential of the Boardman area as an industrial site, it would seem apparent that there could be no question about the future here. This is heralded as the state's great new industrial frontier. Nevertheless it now appears that this acreage will be reserved for ducks and geese through the urging of the Fish and Wildlife Service and sportsmen's groups. They contend that there is sufficient room nearby for industry. Perhaps they are right, but again it appears again that we are giving sports interests precedence over man's need to make a living for himself.

To set up wildlife refuges is unquestionably a sound policy for the future. With the increase in population and the gradual elimination of sanctuaries and primitive areas, constructive steps must be taken to conserve and preserve wildlife and assure recreation for posterity. But the balance must be maintained so that industry and commerce is not impaired. It would seem that wildlife refuges, as Judge Peterson points out in a letter to Senator Neuberger, could be set up in places not suited for industrial development.

Recreation is important to our county, but even more important is the development of any potential industry that would make a substantial contribution to our prosperity and economy.

Daniel H. Janzen, acting commissioner of the Fish and Wildlife Service, is quoted as saying that the Service is "convinced that a program for the greatest benefits to the greatest number has resulted from the give-and-take approach followed in the development of the proposed plan."

His point is one which must be proved before it can be conceded that the refuge should be established. At the present there are many in Morrow county who disagree.

Sen. Neuberger Asked To Oppose Game Refuge

Morrow County Judge Oscar Peterson has appealed to Senator Maurine Neuberger to oppose the wildlife refuge that is proposed for north Morrow county on Columbia River frontage and states his position in a letter sent to the senator on December 7.

The judge points out that testimony given against the proposal was forwarded to Sen. Neuberger following the hearing in Boardman August 28. Since then, Daniel H. Janzen, acting commissioner of the Fish and Wildlife Service, submitted a letter to Sen. Neuberger pointing out reasons for the development of the refuge.

Judge Peterson said that he had seen a copy of Janzen's letter, but in his December 7 communication, said that many in Morrow county do not "go along with the line of thinking" of Janzen that "we (of the Fish and Wildlife Service) are convinced that a program for the greatest benefits to the greatest number has resulted from the give-and-take approach followed in development of the proposed plan."

The judge wrote Sen. Neuberger that "few of us here know little. If anything, about the refuge proposal until shortly before the August 28 hearing."

He added, "That, of course, is water under the bridge now, but certainly does not minimize the fact that the area in question, particularly that in Morrow county, has a tremendous potential for other than a bird and wildlife refuge."

Points that the judge gave to substantiate this position included the following:

"This area is Oregon's finest industrial area. It is the only area with water transportation and usable land in Eastern Oregon. It would give a site for a complex similar to Washington's Tri-City development 'which Eastern Oregon needs badly.'"

"Most of the lands along the Columbia are in deep canyons and do not provide any usable job sites with rail-water compatibility such as at Boardman. The only open area with large, level lands is here between the mouth of Willow Creek and Umatilla."

"The area has great potential for man hours of work: There are 15,000,000 boys in the United States and 150,000 in Oregon that we have never had before, due to the increased birth rate since the war. 'These boys are now in our schools and will need a job upon graduation,' the judge wrote.

"Oregon must diversify its employment factors—forestry and agriculture jobs are declining due to good practice, automation, allowable cuts and concentration of ownerships," he wrote. "Our three largest industries are agriculture, forestry and tourism. We must diversify. Missiles and rockets will be America's largest industry shortly and Oregon should get into this business. Oregon is far behind the neighboring states, California and Washington."

"We have two large missile and rocket companies interested in the site. Oregon should set up a site that is adequate to 'go all the way' in manufacturing, testing and shipping missiles and rockets or not do it at all."

"The Columbia River provides water-borne shipping for 70-foot diameters. It is to the 'best interest' of our national defense to have such a facility on the West Coast and Oregon people should work hard to create such a site."

The judge declared that the Boardman area is capable of providing many, many millions of man hours of employment in many industries in the future if dedicated to that purpose.

At the same time, he pointed out that there are many areas along the Columbia, which are not suitable for jobs and recreation for people, which could be managed for ducks and geese.

"In over 300 miles of the Columbia shore in Oregon, most industrial or work sites are being lost to inundation, freeways or the combination of rail and water facilities," he said.

He said that the North bank (in Washington state) of the Columbia near Boardman contains fine facilities for ducks and geese and is hilly and not adaptable to industry and should be used for wildlife. It has the factor of economical operation on one side of the river, he added.

In conclusion, Judge Peterson asserted, "It would be a mistake to place a wildlife refuge in this fine job site for people. If a large population of people congregates at Boardman, they will want to use the river for recreation and it should not be tied up for wildlife. Boardman can accommodate 100,000 people and is one of Oregon's finest climates."

"In all due respect to the Fish and Wildlife Service, and sportsmen generally, we feel that if the area is reserved for the wildlife refuge, it would have an adverse effect on the future economy of our area. We want you to line up with us to oppose this wildlife refuge, in toto, so far as Morrow county is concerned."

Copies of the letter were also sent to Senator Wayne Morse, Congressman Al Ullman and Walter Norblad, and others.

Lively Fives To Make Favors for Hospital

We met at Mrs. Elden Padberg's to reorganize our club. Theresa Munkers was elected our president; Glenda Kay Van Winkle, vice president; Jeanette Ledbetter, secretary; Joyce Peck, news reporter and Leora Van Winkle, special committee chairman.

It was decided to hold our meeting the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Our next meeting will be at Mrs. Robert Davidson's home with the Sewing Six club to make Christmas favors for patients at Pioneer Memorial hospital.

Joyce Peck, news reporter

Christmas Program At Valby on Sunday

The annual Valby Sunday School Christmas program will be given this Sunday, December 16, at 7:00 p. m. Children of the nursery through intermediate classes will enact the birth of the Christ child through song, verse, and the nativity scene. Many traditional carols will be sung by all.

Following the service a fellowship hour is planned over coffee and Christmas cookies. All are invited to join in the festivities.

This Sunday marks the annual congregational meeting at Hope Lutheran church. A review of the years work and plans for the coming year will be discussed. Following the meeting a congregational dinner will be held with a Christmas theme. Carols will be sung by the group.

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Chaff and Chatter

Wes Sherman

DICK RUHL's name will be written in football immortality at Oregon State University as a result of the exceptional season the Beavers have had this year and as a member of one of its three bowl teams to date. This brings not only honor to the Lexingtonian and ex-Heppner High gridders but gives a real surge in community pride here in having such a good representative on the team that plays in the Liberty Bowl.

The Beavers may never have another player that attains the heights that Terry Baker has achieved and it has been a fortunate circumstance for Dick that he has been working with him. What a thrill it must be!

Morrow county should pick up some recognition because one of its native sons is on the bowl team even though it may send some TV watchers scurrying for their maps should they hear the names of Lexington or Heppner mentioned on the upcoming telecasts.

Because Dick is from our part of the state it has made an exciting year for sports fans here, and one that will be long-remembered. His host of friends here wish him the very best in the coming game.

ARLINGTON is beginning to look like a town devastated by an atomic bomb down along Highway 30, although farther back up the valley in which it sits, construction is giving it an entirely new face. The Oregonian Wednesday had quite a story and a number of pictures on the project.

In passing by the other day, we noticed the service stations on the south side of the highway were leveled and the old landmark, the Vendome hotel was on its way out.

Sketches show that it will be quite a town when completed, and the construction underway is a massive thing.

THERE IS A program on television entitled, "Don't Call Me Charlie!"

If W. L. (Bill) Cox had a TV program it might be named, "Don't Call Me Billy!" We made that mistake in last week's paper, and heard second-handedly today that he is gunning for us spouting fire and brimstone.

W. L. (Bill) is son of H. C. (Claude), and Mr. and Mrs. W. L. have a son Bill, who also frowns on being called Billy. We haven't yet figured out how to call father Bill without mixing him with son Bill, or vice versa. Now, dad (or grandad) Claude gets away with calling No. 2 son "Billy" but maybe he doesn't do it to his face, we don't know about that.

We understand about this problem because we also have a Bill in our family who disdains the moniker, "Billy."

Apparently at one time in W. L.'s life someone confused his name with that of a girl's (which is usually spelled "Billie") and he is still sensitive about it.

Maybe we will have to refer

to the Coxes as Bill No. 1 (dad) and Bill No. 2 (son).

LAST FRIDAY was Pearl Harbor day, and it passed almost without mention, but it was quite different 21 years ago. When the reports of the Japanese bombing came over the radio December 7, 1941, it took quite a while for the significance to sink in, and probably few realized right away how disastrous the blow was.

There wasn't anything funny about it, but we noticed a joke in the Industrial News Review the other day that is appropriate for Pearl Harbor day:

During the war in the Pacific, a young Yank pilot landed his airplane on an aircraft carrier, dashed up to the bridge and, as he was pulling his life jacket off, recounted his day's work.

"What a day I had, skipper!" he exclaimed. "Sunk a Jap cruiser, shot down seven Jap planes and left a Jap battleship listing!"

As he finished pulling his jacket from over his eyes, he heard:

"Velly good, Yank, but you make one velly bad mistake."

TUESDAY NIGHT'S Farm-City banquet proved to be a lively affair with the good-sized crowd in festive mood and kept in stitches with Bill Barratt's witticisms as master of ceremonies.

The fact that Barratt was a fraternity brother of J. W. Southworth, principal speaker, was apparently only coincidental to the selection of Bill as emcee, but it opened up a good opportunity for some barbed repartee between them to the enjoyment of the crowd.

Bill read a glowing introduction of the speaker, who is assistant director of livestock industries, State Department of Agriculture, and then paraphrased it with his own introduction. In one place, where it said that Southworth grew cattle on lush range in Grant county as a result of his good management, Bill said out of the side of his mouth, "They didn't mention the 10 extra inches of rain they got down there."

But it proved that Southworth had his old crony pegged pretty well. He started out quietly as if he would absorb the witticisms without much comment, but he edged in a punch or two as he proceeded.

"I had notes," he said, "but

forgot them—left them in the car. But it was a good thing I didn't bring them for there wouldn't be room on the table here for them with all of Bill's."

Oh, they got off some dandies. Southworth had a very fine talk emphasizing the mutual interdependence of farmer and businessman with some new and down-to-earth angles.

Those who didn't attend really missed something.

Yes, the Gazette-Times can print the form you need for business or ranch use. Phone 676-9228.



Coming Events

LEGION MOVIES
Friday night, 8:00 p.m.
Legion Hall

This week "Susan Slept Here," starring Dick Powell, Debby Reynolds. In color. Plus one-half hour cartoons.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL
Heppner vs Pilot Rock.
Friday, 8:00 p.m. at Pilot Rock gym.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAMS
Grade School Band, Chorus, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., multi-purpose room.

High School Band, Chorus, Wednesday, 8:00 p.m., High school gym.

Lexington Grade Chorus, Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Lexington auditorium.

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