

THE HEPPNER GAZETTE-TIMES

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER

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Tolerance in the Land of the Free

Next week the nation once more will observe Independence Day, in the 187th year since the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

"... We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and pursuit of happiness..."

Not so many years ago, Independence Day was the time of great celebration, as it must have been in Heppner. Entire families gathered to form crowds in most communities across the land. The day included picnics, old-time games and eloquent speeches on freedom, all of which were capped with displays of fireworks.

As we have moved on into more complex living with more diversions and digressions, however, these Independence Day celebrations have tended to fade away or have dissipated into displays of fireworks in some communities, rodeos, log rolling contests and similar entertainment. The eloquent speeches on freedom are gone, and this is to be noted with some sadness.

It is important to pause occasionally and take stock—to think of the simple virtues of freedom which were so vital in the minds of the signers of the Declaration of Independence on that unequalled day of July 4, 1776. The document has been a guide to this nation's principles through its history, the assurance of equality for all, embracing cherished rights that are the foundation for America's way of life.

The liberty and freedom declared in this document were not easy to attain and have not been easy to hold. The War of Independence was fought at its inception, and hundreds of thousands of Americans have died in ensuing wars to maintain the sanctity of our democracy and freedom.

As time goes on, the challenge of the Declaration of Independence becomes increasingly difficult, and there is ever-present danger of our losing what our forefathers achieved for us.

One evidence of this is the racial strife in the South, a national disgrace and a shameful blight on our nation throughout the world. Thousands died in the war between the states a century ago to free the slaves, but the negroes today are perhaps in greater turmoil than they were at the time of the Civil War.

To those living in the North, there has been satisfaction in thinking that we are in an area manifestly free of the bitterness that has beset the South. At the same time, the fact that we are removed from the problem should occasion no smugness here. For, as Americans, it is our problem, too, and it behooves all in this nation to be keenly concerned.

Recent severe racial eruptions in the south threaten to spread into areas which previously have not been involved in the controversy of segregation vs. integration. Minor incidents have flared in the state of Washington and in Portland.

Of all places in this Land of the Free, however, it would seem that eastern Oregon is among the most free. It is here that we have the wide open spaces; we have no slums, no tenement districts; we have no smog; we have room to breathe; we have golden seas of growing grain; we have cool forests interspersed with tinkling creeks. Drive our highways at dusk and you will see an occasional deer, or a porcupine lumbering along the highway shoulder. Cattle graze peacefully on the hillsides, and ponies frisk about.

This has been an area where neighbor thinks of neighbor; a person in trouble finds ready sympathy and help. It has always been so, and was dramatically accentuated at the time of the flood 60 years ago. There has been little prejudice here. One person accepts another for what he is and for his merits rather than on the color of his skin or on his beliefs.

Last week, however, an incident occurred that was out of character.

Two anonymous telephone calls were received by a young woman of Spanish-Filipino nationality who is working as a domestic on a ranch near Heppner. She is a young lady of excellent background and was hired because she is competent to do the work. The calls suggested that there is no room for her here.

Anonymous calls, like anonymous letters, are mean, cruel and smack of cowardice. Although the feeling expressed by the caller is in no way an indication of the thinking and character of our people, the incident is cause for shame and indignation.

In the past, Heppner and Morrow county have welcomed



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Chaff and Chatter

Wes Sherman

MORROW COUNTY'S new school board rather uncertainly felt its way into a mass of accumulated business at its first meeting Tuesday night without a superintendent to rely on and with only two directors having any previous experience. One of them, Ed Dick, was attending his last meeting. His term expires July 1.

The new board, however, plunged into its work without hesitation and right away earned its spurs in the lengthy session. The directors toiled through four hours of deliberation, going until after midnight, and then went into an executive session on consideration of a new superintendent. How long this went on we don't know because we retired as of midnight.

Any hopes that the new board might mean shorter meetings went fleeting, however, and it looks as if the "midnight oil" will be burning for some meetings to come.

ONE OF THE highlights of a very interesting convention of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers association in Florence clear Thursday through Saturday was a trip to the sand dunes via "Dunes Scooters" with their big airplane tires. On this jaunt, publishers were guests of Pacific Power and Light Co.

We learned something of the national park proposals for the dunes, and heard arguments on both sides of the controversy.

Senator Maurine Neuberger's bill would encompass an area that extends from Florence clear to Coos Bay, while another bill by Rep. Robert Duncan would cut off the lower 10 miles of the area.

Opposition to Sen. Neuberger's bill comes from residents of Coos Bay and private interests who feel that it will encroach on the industrial area being developed there.

The lower 10 miles includes a remarkable development that was brought about by seven years of research by Pacific Power Company. Oddly, the problem of obtaining water for industrial use has been a big handicap for development, this in spite of the fact that one sees millions of gallons of water in the bay and in the ocean all around. Because of the fact that the water is salt, it cannot be used for industry.

But PP & L researchers discovered that the dunes lap up millions of gallons of rain water. It saturates them and extends down to depths of anyway 100 feet. Estimates are that 30,000,000 gallons of fresh water could be pumped from the dunes every day, and wells now in production provide 1,500,000 gallons daily. This took a good bit of doing for the water-saturated sand is like thick soup. Special screens had to be developed to keep the sand out, but with co-operation of a number of agencies, PP & L got the job done.

In the process of its research the power company brought Cornelis Biemond of Holland to help. He heads the Amsterdam

water system which uses dunes along the North Sea as a fresh water reservoir.

Biemond dug into the sand a few feet from the surf of the Pacific ocean and surprisingly enough found the water in the sand sweet and potable. Pressure from the fresh rain water in the dunes, seeping towards the sea, kept the salt water out.

As a result of this research and development of wells, the first major industry in the dunes area came along. It is the big Menacha paper mill that makes the inside core of corrugated paperboard used in shipping containers.

The mill is a remarkable development in itself. It was built on shifting sand that was impacted by vibration.

Should the national park be approved, it is feared that this industrial area would be lost or limited, and, of course, would bring grave concern.

Folks around Coos Bay would much rather see the southern 10 miles omitted from the dunes park if it is established. But even in the north there is strenuous opposition. Dave Holman, Florence newspaper publisher whose town is just above the proposed dunes area, is solidly against it, saying that it will "kill" the area, but others are not quite so strenuously opposed.

It is a little difficult to see what can be done with the dunes to make them more of a recreational area than is now being done. It takes a "dunes buggy" to get into them. The kids can romp in them, but they don't need miles of dunes for that. A guy can get a powerful sunburn in them, and they are mighty scenic to look at, but from our point of ignorance, we do not yet understand just what changes a national park would make to bring about greater public use, enjoyment or welfare. Should the park absorb the industrial area, it would seem to us to do more harm than good.

WE'VE BEEN to Coos Bay a number of times, but this time was the first time that we really saw it, since we had competent guides who gave us more information and showed us more about it. Coos Bay, it was pointed out, is the biggest lumber shipping port in the world, sending out some 700,000,000 board feet annually. Yes, sir, it's quite a place.

Dear Mr. Sherman:

We wish to express our appreciation for all the work which you did in giving publicity to our barbecue and auction on June 8. The fine newspaper articles were indicative of your cooperation in this project. We extend our sincere thanks for all your efforts in our behalf.

Sincerely yours,
The United Church of Christ
Ione Community Church
By Mrs. Markham Baker
Clerk

citizens of oriental descent and dark skin. Such a one was Ed Chin, who died recently, but who during his years' of residence here was highly respected and regarded.

It is well to go on record that we respect fellow citizens for their worth, and not for their color, and we are sure that the large majority of our fellow residents feel this way.

The calls were unlawful. An attempt is being made to determine the identity of the callers, after which they should be proceeded against as provided by law.

This is the land of the free that provides equality and liberty for all, and if it is to be preserved, we must be careful to guard against incidents such as this. At the same time we can be grateful and proud that the majority of our people are tolerant of one another regardless of differing creeds, religions and nationalities.

There is no "United States nationality." We are all made up of varying backgrounds, and although each may be proud of his nationality—hodgepodge though it may be—he has no right to criticize that—or those—of another.

It is expressed in the famous poem on a tablet of the Statue of Liberty by Emma Lazarus, "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" That takes in all of us.

As Independence Day approaches, and especially this year with the strife in the south, let's think on these things.

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TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor: I wish to say, as Art Crawford said, "Thanks for the nice manner in which you treated by 'flood' story..." I thought Mr. Crawford wrote a very nice story of his boyhood trip out to see his uncle, John Spencer, on Rhea Creek. All the Crawfords I ever knew were good writers.

My recollection of Arthur at the time of the flood and before was of a small chubby juvenile, one of a number of very fine children of Vaughter and Cora Crawford, whom I knew very well. I also knew the first Crawford arriving in Heppner, although I did not know him at the time. He was the fine old preacher of the Christian Church of Heppner. Then the next ones coming to our town (maybe I can't remember the exact order in which they came, but they were all friends of mine) was Vaughter, Neil, Garfield and Otheo. Then there is Gertrude Parker, sister of the others, also a good friend.

Knowing Arthur's father as well as I did, I do not think he allowed his young son of 10 years to roam the streets of our famous little city (village, Stewart Holbrook called it), and I am sure that Arthur missed many things that happened before and after the flood during those tragic days. He said, "As to the 'fictional' ban on the Chinese—that's a new one on me..." If that Chinese story is not true, or fictitious, as Arthur called it, then Heppner itself, must be a figment of my imagination. I was there when it happened, and the story of the money found on the table at the jail when the body of the Chinaman was found hanging from a light fixture was carried in the local Heppner papers, with the comments by the county officers as to why the money was there. The last person to see the hung Chinaman was the Chinaman who visited him in his jail cell a few hours before he was discovered by the jailer. The comments made then in the papers and on the street was that the visiting Chinese man had paid the half-witted one the money to hang himself. That's all I know about the deal, but any

real old-timer ought to recall this incident. Glad Arthur had a good laugh, and long may he live to have many more. I always say that criticism is good for the soul, and after all I am only human and subject to making mistakes.

Sincerely,
O. M. YEAGER

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