

THE GAZETTE-TIMES

MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER
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A Legal Penalty on Public Service

In the Gazette-Times of October 11, 1962, was an editorial, "Unfair Law to Public Servants," which had as its premise that the state law prohibiting public officials from having any pecuniary interest in that body they serve is an unjust law.

At the time that editorial was written, it was illegal for a city councilman, a school board member, or any other public official to sell goods or services to the agency which he served. The 1963 legislature amended this law, and as we understand it, a public officer may have a pecuniary interest in the agency he represents up to a maximum of \$500 per fiscal year. This is a step in the right direction, but it is still unrealistic in the case of small towns and works an injustice.

In Heppner last week, Councilman Earl Ayres submitted a bid on the city's new fire truck on behalf of the firm he owns, Heppner Auto Sales. The bidding was open and competitive. The bids were opened at a time when Ayres was not present, by his own choice. His bid was low bid. It met the specifications set up for the truck. But the contract has not been awarded because under the law, he apparently is not legally qualified to bid. He is a councilman. City Attorney Bob Abrams is still seeking an official ruling, which is slow in coming, but this certainly appears to be the situation.

As was pointed out in the 1962 editorial, such cases certainly are discouragements for businessmen in a small town to offer themselves for voluntary public service. It amounts to a legal penalty for the person who is willing to take his time and devote the effort to work on behalf of his fellows.

This is a law that has almost necessarily been violated many, many times, not only in Heppner but across the state in most small towns. What businessman has there been who has served on the council who at some time has not sold something to the city? For example, newspaper editors have served on the council here. They have printed budgets for the city, have done job printing.

In some instances, if the city did not use the business services of its own officers, it would be required to go out of the county for them, and this would not be in the public interest, for sure.

The new \$500 maximum law is discriminatory, it seems to us. It opens the door for a businessman whose goods or merchandise are composed of small items, but it shuts the door in the face of the merchant who traffics in larger goods. An owner of a variety store, for instance, could sell quite a few items to the city while serving on the council and be legal. A man like Ayres, whose merchandise is over \$500, is penalized. It is his business to sell cars and trucks.

It is quite clear, of course, that the statute was set up to safeguard governmental agencies from being victimized by those who would use their positions for ill-gotten gains. This would seem to be more of a possibility in larger towns or agencies where public dealings are not quite so close to the people as they are in small towns. In larger places, thousands of residents would have no contact at all with their public officers, but this is not true of small towns. Virtually everyone in the small community knows his public representatives and all about them.

It would not be necessary to eliminate the statute to correct the situation. It could be amended again so that in cities, say, less than 5000 population an officer might have a pecuniary interest in the city's business of over \$500 per fiscal year provided that he wins the business on open and competitive bid. It could be stipulated in the law that the particular officer could not participate in the awarding of the contract, either as a councilman or a member of a committee. Also, if there would be a thought that fellow councilmen might award a contract to this fellow servant out of loyalty to him, it could be stipulated that such an officer could not receive a contract unless his bid was the low bid.

Alternative to a change in this law is rather unpleasant to contemplate, unless it is winked at and violations occur without challenge.

The time will come when every local businessman in a small town will be unable to be so generous as to serve on a public body without any remuneration except the ironic criticisms of his fellow citizens. This will narrow the reservoir of potential candidates to such an extent that good municipal government in small towns will be seriously impaired. A small town needs the wisdom and experience of its good business heads, although it could certainly stand to have representation from other walks of life besides businessmen.

For the good of the small governmental agencies, and in fairness to those willing to serve as officers, this unduly restricting law needs another amendment. It is hard to see how an officer could commit any skulduggery under a competitive bidding system with the qualifications indicated above. On the contrary, this would be a safeguard and in the best interests of good and democratic government.

With seven city officers in Heppner to be elected in November this is a very pertinent matter at the present time.

Fishback to Speak On Mission Work With South Africans

Rev. Len B. Fishback will speak on "Experiences in South Africa," during the worship hour at the First Christian church Sunday morning, September 20. Rev. and Mrs. Fishback and two older children spent two years in Benoni, South Africa, which is 20 miles from Johannesburg. He will show many curios and artifacts in connection with his talk. The public is invited to come and hear him speak on the emotions, the problems and real life of the South Africans.

Due to conflicts on Thursday, September 17, youth fellowship and visitation evangelism programs have been postponed until the following Thursday, according to the pastor. A meeting of the church board has been called for after the morning service Sunday, relative to future plans for the church. Youth Fellowship will meet at 7 p. m. to practice the "BoGi" program.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Jones returned Saturday from a week's vacation spent visiting the Gary Jones in Hood River, enjoying the State Fair in Salem, visiting the John Blakes in Kent, Wn., and also a successful deep sea fishing excursion off the coast near Westport, bringing home five salmon.

Too Much Ado About Rattlers

Two little incidents this week indicate that Morrow county has been getting too much publicity about rattlesnakes. Grover T. O'Dell, who has been here as pro tem station agent for Union Pacific while Elmer Schmidt was on vacation, was so dubious about walking through tall grass by the U. P. tracks, due to the possibility of encountering rattlesnakes, that he notified the company that it would have to have the maintenance crew cut the grass before he would work in that location.

A letter came to the Chamber of Commerce from a Portland woman who planned to come to this area with a party on a deer hunt. She said they had previously hunted in the Potato Hill area, but because of the talk of rattlesnakes in this area, she wanted to know if she shouldn't come prepared for the worst.

When the letter was read at the Monday Chamber of Commerce meeting, one of the good clan of hunting members facetiously remarked that perhaps more snakes should be planted in the woods. But we can't believe that our ardent hunters would really be that inquisitive! (At least not the local rancher who had his wallet, containing some \$3400, returned by a Portland hunter last year.)

We don't claim to be an authority, but the editor is as skittish about rattlesnakes as anyone could be, and we've tromped woods and rangelands considerably in lowcut oxfords—hardly the popular footwear for the area. To this time, we've suffered "nary a bite and have seen "nary a rattler."

Allen Nistad of Kinross Corporation, who heard all this talk on rattlers and should know what the woods is like, declares Potato Hill is too high an altitude for any snakes.

We'd just about be willing to affirm to the Portland woman, bless her trembling bones, that there ain't no rattlers on Potato Hill.

Now, when it comes to Rock Creek, that's a different matter. This Rock Creek country is for the strong and sturdy to gambol and frolic. There is some who seem to enjoy the buzzing of a rattler as cheerful companionship, just as others enjoy the howling of coyotes at night to lull them to sleep. These are the ones who will enjoy an outing down Rock Creek.

No, we don't say there aren't any rattlesnakes in Morrow county. After all, Dr. C. M. Wagner admits that he has treated two cases of rattlesnake bites (or suspected) in the 10-odd years he has been here. —And maybe by now County Agent Nels Anderson has seen his first rattler, although he said a year or two ago that he had yet to see one in the county despite his widespread ramblings.

But Morrow is a big county, and the rattlers confine themselves pretty well to certain areas, with an occasional straying. The only time we've seen one was when someone brought a dead one in with the kind thought that we might like to display it in the office. (Perish the thought!)

Now in Gilliam or Grant county, it might be different. Nistad reported that his son went out hunting chukars the other day and did better on rattlers, killing five, than he did on the taunting raucous chukars. But they weren't in Morrow county.

When you come right down to it, Mrs. Portland Hunter, rattlesnakes are getting pretty well dispersed across the state. When we lived in Douglas county, they used to get up parties to go rattlesnake hunting and they'd clean out dens of 700 or 800 along the Umpqua River, which gave the area quite some publicity, too. (When they came to ask us to join them, we'd be comfortably hidden under the bed.)

Even over in the beautiful Santiam country in Marion county, between Stayton and Mehama is Rattlesnake hill, and the residents there have a keen respect for its reputation. It probably would be hard to find any county in the state that could claim it is rattlesnake-free.

So maybe, if a hunter wanted to be real prepared, he might bring a snake bite kit along as a matter of precaution. It is our understanding that quite a few hunters go into the woods well stocked with snake bite remedy, but we doubt if it is the kind that would really provide first aid if one of the buzztails actually struck them.

TO THE EDITOR...

Concerning your editorial on Mr. Tom McCall of August 27, I would simply like to make two points. First, the programs which Mr. McCall has been talking about in his campaign, such as mental health, economic development, correctional institutions, juvenile delinquency, and vocational training are all directly influenced by federal programs and presidential philosophy. Millions of federal dollars have been spent in these programs and millions more will be spent under the present Congress and President Johnson.

For example, the simple fact is that there are \$32.5 million available to the state of Oregon as a direct result of the Johnson tax cut. State Senator Alfred H. Corbett has never implied that the people of Oregon should rely strictly on federal programs. But he is acutely aware that these programs are vital to the development of our state's resources and the care and protection of our individual citizens. No one has said, including Senator Corbett, that getting "embroidered in federal programs is easy." But to suggest ignoring these programs is near-sighted and isolationistic.

Secondly, may we point out that Senator Corbett, as well as being an active humanitarian and civic leader, has one of the finest legislative records ever accumulated in Oregon state government. Just to mention a few bills Senator Corbett has worked on in the area of Youth and education: Chief legislative sponsor of the Metropolitan Youth Commission, 1959; co-sponsor of summer work camp program for boys, 1959; sponsor of bill to test all infants for PKU, 1963; co-sponsor of four-year college status for Portland State College, 1963; co-sponsor of bond issue for classrooms for higher education and for community colleges, 1963.

In the area of human rights: co-sponsor, equal rights to use of public accommodations, 1953; co-sponsored bills to eliminate discrimination in employment and in housing, 1967; co-sponsored bills to provide assistance to persons displaced by highways, 1959; co-sponsored bills to strengthen civil rights, 1961.

In the areas of correctional institutions, mental health institutions, he instituted or proposed bills dealing with: construction of Dammasch Hospital, 1953; construction of correctional intermediate institution, 1953; stricter sentencing of sex-offenders, 1955; gifted children program, 1959; youth work camp, 1959; Metropolitan Youth Commission, 1959; Mental Health Division, 1961; Women's Prison Building, 1961; Sheltered Workshop for mentally retarded, 1963; Pilot school program for men-

tally retarded, 1963. From this list, you will notice that Senator Corbett sponsored the legislation establishing the Metropolitan Youth Commission, for which McCall later worked. In 1953, he proposed a bill for an intermediate correctional institution, which McCall now offers as a "new idea."

Senator Corbett has always said that the best program in government is the solution of problems at the community level, and in acting on that principle, he has attended over 2,000 committee meetings in this state seeking community solutions for community problems. He is simply not willing to ignore the fact that Oregon is part of the United States, of the United States' federal programs and therefore directly influenced by Presidential and party philosophy.

It is inconceivable that Mr. McCall should want to be an office manager as Secretary of State instead of a legislator and humanitarian willing to use all resources to solve the problems of his state and to preserve human values. As you say, he has promise of distinguished public service. This letter is to point out that Senator Alfred Corbett offers not just a promise, but a record of distinguished public service over twelve years in elective office.

G. C. LANSING
Campaign Director

Buchanan Plans Active Campaign

The Martin Buchanan for Representative Committee met at a dinner in Pendleton September 5 to discuss his campaign for representative for the 28th district which is comprised of Umatilla, Morrow, Gilliam, Wheeler and Sherman counties.

Chaff and Chatter Wes Sherman

THE SOBROTIMISTS did it again. Their beautiful float won first prize in Pendleton's dressup parade for civic organizations, and the Heppner club thereby wins another trophy. The float and the Morrow county Fair and Rodeo court gave us good representation in the parade, comparing favorably with other communities all over this part of the state and southeastern Washington.

Thus, the work of the Sobropts did a fine thing for the entire community.

IT LOOKS TO US as if the club women will have to grant honorary membership to Bob Hager, particularly, and to Simon Winter and Tom Laird. Bob worked like a beaver on that Sobroptist float, and the other two did a lot of work, too. It isn't an easy thing to haul such a trilly piece of merchandise so far and then get it in shape to make a good showing in a parade. There was considerable wiring to do, for instance, to spotlight the girls on the parade. A big battery had to be obtained and wiring run to it from the lights.

Before the float returned to Heppner, it had to be dismantled and the thousands of pieces of facial tissue were disposed of. We understand that Bob had a flat tire on the float trailer hauling it home and had to leave it parked at Orville Cutsforth's place.

The entire Hager family worked long and hard on this float, and the community owes them a special vote of thanks, along with the thanks to the club in general.

WE MET SOME old friends going into the Round-Up stands for the parade review and sat with Ellie (Bud) Neal, Pendleton school superintendent, a friend in Dallas, City Manager Mel Gardner came in, a friend of Forest Grove days, and seated just a little distance away was Bob McCurdy, Pendleton branch manager of First National, a friend when we lived in Nyssa years ago. We hadn't seen Bob and Peg for more than 20 years, and thus, this visit to Pendleton, incidentally turned out to be quite a reunion.

When the flag bearers came in at the head of the parade, everyone patriotically stood at attention. But about every few hundred feet in the line of march would come another American flag carried by some group, and the result was the crowd was popping up and down all the time.

Bud and Mel agreed that proper respect to the flag required standing only at the entrance of the official flag bearers for the parade, and this ruling on protocol was sufficient for us. So we remained seated at future flag passings, even at the risk that some in the audience might think there were unpatriotic citizens among them.

Dale Slusher, manager of the telephone company in Pendleton, on the other hand, stood at attention every time and doffed his cowboy hat. Later we accused him of wearing off all his hair by taking it off and on so many times. (Dale has a crop of hair like a billiard ball.)

But it was a very fine event—this parade and program—and it struck us that the Round-Up is, although on a much bigger scale, quite like the Morrow rodeo. The work is all from volunteers who are community-minded, and it retains a hometown flavor with a lot of neighboring towns taking part.

GROVER O'DELL, who has been acting as station agent for U.P. here while friend Elmer Schmidt is vacationing, has really been stirring things up. In fact, we wouldn't be surprised to see the depot blossom out with a new coat of paint. He came in and got three clippings of our recent comments about the depot, particularly that it needs painting, and has been sending them in to the proper officials to get some action.

We promised him that we would run a picture of the newly-painted depot on the front page when the work is done, and will make good on that.

Only thing, though, probably a lot of the old-timers will think they are coming in to the wrong town if this landmark takes on a bright new appearance.

THE BILL BARRATTS have moved to Spokane and by now it is hard to find any representatives of the Barratt family here—a name that was once considered as much a part of Heppner as the county courthouse. Supt. and Mrs. David Potter and family are in the ranch house on the Barratt place, and Bill, Bonnie and family have found a Shangri-la six miles out of Spokane, Rt. 3, Box 520.

Bill said last week he wouldn't have realized that such a primeval scene could be found so close to the city of Spokane. They have about 60 acres there with some timberland, lots of water, and they are going to build some small lakes.

On one of their first nights there, Bonnie declared to Bill that all they needed was the howl of a coyote to make them feel that they were clear out in the wilds. No sooner had she spoken than a coyote howled outside and kept it up most of the night.

The Barratts plan on building a new home there but currently are living in a small place and finding themselves with about three times too much furniture. They invite friends to come anytime and point out that there is plenty of space for trailers and campers. All they ask is that visitors bring bed rolls and working clothes!

THIS FOOTBALL year looms as a great one for Dick Ruhl, ex-Heppner High star, at Oregon State University. Noticed a write-up in the Oregon Journal the other day that referred to Ruhl and Jack O'Billovich as "Mad Dogs" on defense. They apparently were quite sensational in some squad scrimmages and loom as standouts for North-western there in his first game Saturday, and we'll bet that Dick will give a good accounting of himself.

OUR MAN FRIDAY, Jim Morris, writes of goings-on with the National Guard at Fort Ord: "It has been seven weeks since I've seen civilization and I am beginning to wonder what real people look like when they're not dressed in green uniforms! One consolation for us is the fact that they are letting us get by without having our heads shaved each week. I was beginning to think I was going to be permanently bald but I guess not because now I have a nice crop of fuzz on the old noggin."

It's too bad Dale Slusher couldn't have gotten what Jim lost.

Forest Service Wants To Buy Ripe Cones

The Heppner Ranger District has announced that it will be in the market to buy cones this year from public collectors and will pay the following prices: Ponderosa pine, \$2.50 bu.; Douglas fir, \$5.00, and Western larch, \$6.00.

The cones are required to have a specific number of good seeds exposed on each face of the cone when sliced lengthwise. Pine must show eight live seeds; Douglas fir, six live seeds, and larch, four live seeds.

Collectors are asked to check the cones before collecting to make sure they meet these requirements. Cones are ripe when the opened seed is firm and the seed coat is hardened and brown. Cones are wanted from elevations of 3500 feet and up.

The Forest Service office in Heppner will check the cones and make payment on Mondays beginning September 21.

Siewert Elected To Banking Post

William F. (Bill) Siewert of the Heppner branch, Bank of Eastern Oregon, was elected secretary-treasurer of the Mid-Columbia Bankers at their meeting in The Dalles on Thursday, September 10.

M. J. Wilhite, Hood River, First National Bank, was elected president and Wm. S. Brunt of The Dalles branch, The Oregon Bank, was chosen vice president.

C. A. Penners of The Dalles branch, United States National Bank, presided at the meeting, which was attended by 57.

Principal speaker was Stetson B. Harman, vice president and senior trust officer, First National Bank of Oregon, Portland, who spoke on "Special Schools for Banking Education." Others speaking were Guy C. Rea, president of the Oregon Bankers Association, and Lester E. Thayer, executive secretary of the association.



Coming Events

MORROW COUNTY ROLLER RINK
County Fair pavilion
Friday, Saturday, 7-10 p.m.
Sunday, 2-5 p.m.
Admission 50c, rentals 25c

HEPPNER HIGH FOOTBALL
Second home game, Friday, Sept. 18, Rodeo field.
Heppner vs. Condon, 8 p.m.
Support the Mustangs!
Season tickets on sale.

PUBLIC CARD PARTY
American Legion Hall, Monday, Sept. 21, 8 p.m.
Bridge—Pinochle—Prizes—Refreshments.

PTA TEACHERS' RECEPTION
Wednesday, Sept. 23, 8 p.m.
High school multi-purpose room.
Good program. All parents and teachers welcome.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRAWING
Monday, Sept. 28, 3-6 p.m.
Elks' Lodge hall.
Quota 90 pints

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