

Facing the Facts

The facts should be quite clear to Morrow county voters Monday when they cast ballots on the 1968-69 county school budget. Supt. Ron Daniels, the district directors and the budget committee have frankly pointed out that the budget will be considerably greater for the coming year.

An analysis of the reasons, however, shows that virtually all the increase is due to factors beyond the control of the school administration and the budget committee.

Thus, when the election comes Monday, voters must decide whether they want to maintain a good school program even though they, as taxpayers, may have to make some sacrifice to do so.

Here are some of the facts to be considered:

Fact No. 1—The amount of the tax levy estimated for the ensuing year is \$1,181,189, as compared with \$1,016,401 for the current year. Thus, taxpayers will be asked to pay approximately 16% more for school purposes for the coming year, although the total budget is increased only about 8%.

Fact No. 2—Receipts, other than taxes, are down sharply. This accounts for most of the difference between the increase of only 8% on the total budget and the 16% on the expected tax levy. Receipts for the current year fell far short of expectations. Those budgeted for the 1968-69 year—other than taxes—are considerably reduced and placed on a more realistic basis.

Receipts from some Federal programs, such as Public Law 874 (which partially reimburses the district for educating students of Federally-employed parents—in this case the ordinance depot) dropped sharply below the budgeted figures for 1967-68 and will be down for the coming year.

Receipts from state basic school support also will be down somewhat. Receipts expected to come in from some district programs, such as \$3500 for aid to handicapped children, never were received at all, and these have been cut out.

Failure of the receipts to measure up to the budget means that a deficit will face the district at the end of the current year. While it is difficult at this time to tell how much this will be, the budget lists an expected deficit of \$15,385. In years past, receipts have held up so that ordinarily the district started with a substantial cash carryover.

In all, receipts other than taxes show a decrease of \$52,888 in the coming budget, and this includes the \$15,385 expected deficit.

Fact No. 3—Cost of instruction is up primarily because of the increases allowed on the teacher salary schedule. Starting teachers with a bachelor degree and no experience will receive \$6000 per year. This is an increase of \$200 over the present schedule, but is less than the \$6200 asked for by the professional negotiating committee. A check of other districts of similar size schools and enrollments shows that the \$6000 is comparable with the approved scales in other areas.

In arriving at a decision on the salary schedule, the board, however conservative its inclinations may be, has to consider what it must pay to attract and hold teachers who will provide the type of education that parents and school patrons desire.

This is an extremely difficult decision because they are squarely in the middle. Most of the board members are ranchers and they full well know the tax situation. But they also know the keen competition for good teachers and the importance of maintaining a good school program.

The increase in instructional costs for 1968-69 would have been perhaps twice as great but for the fact that adjustments in teaching loads have been made throughout the district so that several teaching positions have been eliminated. However, the salaries for instruction will be up about \$28,000.

It should be noted that the instructional budget, including salaries and teaching supplies, accounts for 61% of the districts total expected general fund expenditures. Thus, if it is conceded that the district must provide a salary schedule to hold good teachers and provide them with a reasonable amount of supplies to do the job, that leaves only 29% of the budget that could be considered for change, including transportation, fixed charges, operation and maintenance of plant, administration and the rest. But again, the district has no control over some of these. For instance, take a look at—

Fact No. 4—Fixed charges are increased by a sharp \$27,825, and there isn't a thing that the district nor budget committee can do about it! Increases in Social Security costs, set by the Congress, will mean \$6,500 more that the district must pay in 1968-69 as it matches the payments made by its employees. The district will pay \$37,500 in Social Security as compared with \$31,000 for the current year.

What hurts even worse is the almost staggering jump in payments to the Public Employees Retirement System, going to \$41,800 as compared with \$22,000 for the current year, an increase of \$29,800. These are things that the budget committee is powerless to change and must accept.

Fact No. 5—Operation and maintenance of plant sections in the budget are up. Part of this is due to nominal increases in salaries for non-certified employees and part is due to work that must be done to maintain standard school plants.

School patrons will recall that a state report during the year listed Heppner Elementary and Lone Elementary schools as sub-standard and required certain work to be done to make them "conditionally" standard. Failure to comply could mean reduction of basic school support funds from the state.

In view of these items, the maintenance and operation of plant portions of the budget are up by a total of \$31,227.

Fact No. 6—Some sections of the budget have been decreased. That for transportation has been cut by nearly \$4000 as the directors made adjustments on contract bus runs. The amount for health services is down very slightly.

Now, in watching the directors and the budget committee at work, it is evident that they have made every effort to keep costs at a minimum. Substantial cuts have been made in the area of supplies and equipment. But the sad truth is that the major items mentioned above still control the budget and are responsible for the hikes expected.

Patrons should consider the fact, too, that the coming year's budget is an honest and realistic one. This should reflect in a sounder administration in future years because receipts have not been overstated and deficits should be eliminated.

Every effort has been made to hold costs down. Supt. Daniels has told administrators that no more orders for this school year are to be placed unless they are of an emergency nature.

On the budget committee with its lay members and school directors are some of the soundest thinkers in the county. As one watches them work, he gets the feeling that they are faced with the inevitable—the budget, because of the factors mentioned above, has to be increased despite their best efforts to keep it down. If any of the rest of us served on the committee, we would have to come to the same conclusions, assuming that we are genuinely interested in good schools.

Despite the increase in the budget, Morrow county will not face as stiff a jolt as many. The total budget will cost taxpayers here approximately \$13.50 per each \$1000 true cash value of their property. This includes the levy both inside and outside the 6% limitation and that not subject to the 6% limitation.

At Echo, for example, the budget calls for \$15.70 per \$1000 true cash value on the amount outside the 6% limitation alone. At Hermiston it is \$21 for the amount outside the 6% limitation!

The present school administration has taken a forthright approach on this budget. It has laid down the facts, planned for a realistic budget, and dedicated itself to continuing a fine school program.

There is every indication to believe that the school system now is the best it has been since the formation of the administrative district. Great progress has been made in instruction, in physical plants, in facilities, in curriculum and in administration.

Your vote for the budget Monday will be a vote for more taxes, there is no doubt of that. But those who realize the value of a sound school system and what it means to our children will gird for the blow and vote yes on the budget.

THE HEPPNER GAZETTE-TIMES

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Chaff and Chatter Wes Sherman

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG to get a response on how Eightmile and Gooseberry got their names after the query we printed from Giles French in last week's paper.

Mrs. Eugenia Huston of Heppner who was reared in the Gooseberry area (located near the Gilliam county line almost due west from Heppner) came in Monday to report that Gooseberry Springs was a campground in the early days between Arlington and the interior. It got its name from a wild gooseberry bush that grew at the spring.

"When the postoffice was established, they adopted the name from the spring," Mrs. Huston said, "and the community was known as Gooseberry."

AT THE SAME TIME, she brought in a clipping of a column written by D. H. Talmadge from the Oregonian of a good many years ago. It concerns this community of Gooseberry, and we will reprint portions of it because of its historical interest.

"Not long ago I was looking, half idly over a map of Oregon," Talmadge wrote. "The name 'Gooseberry,' a dot in Morrow county, caught my eye. It seemed to me an odd name. I searched for it in the list of Oregon postoffices and failed to find it. Nor was it to be found in the census list of Oregon cities and towns.

"A paragraph, intended to be interrogative, was then printed in this column with a view to satisfying my curiosity in the matter. Perhaps it was of no great importance, but I wanted to know the why and wherefore of 'Gooseberry.'"

"Among the results of that paragraph is a letter from Mrs. Ruth Adkins of Coquille, a letter at once interesting and informative."

The column then quoted Mrs. Adkins' letter, as follows: "When the pioneers came to that country they found rolling hills, covered with sagebrush and bunch grass, peopled with coyotes, jack rabbits, ground squirrels and rattlesnakes. Not prepossessing, you may say. Yet I can imagine them stopping and gazing for miles across the hills, gashed here and there with canyons, occasionally a creek deep between the hills, and far, far to the north a flash of blue from the mighty Columbia.

"As they gazed, don't you suppose they had a vision of these hills covered with golden wheat fields, as they are today, with here and there a white farmhouse down in the canyon, out of the wind, and flocks and herds in place of the wild things?"

"Now in a few places in these hills, nature, thinking perhaps she had been too harsh, gave the country a spring of clear, cold water. Wild things came there to quench their thirst, and willows and flowers and grass grew abundantly.

"Such a place was the original Gooseberry springs."

CONTINUING, "This was a stopping place in the old days for freighters on their long trip to The Dalles for supplies. Then came Jacob Young from Missouri, and built his home just below the springs. The water then was used to irrigate the trees and the fruit and gooseberry bushes which he and his young wife, Mattie, planted and tended so carefully. Roads were built, and the sections of country northwest of the springs became known as Gooseberry.

"Now when these pioneers came they brought with them shrubs, plants, trees and seeds from their old home, and it was found that the gooseberry alone would thrive without irrigation in this new country. Imagine, D. H., a land without wild fruit of any kind!

"The gooseberry to them was not a sour, green berry on a prickly bush, but a delectable fruit for sauce and pies and to be canned for use during the winter. Every ranch there has its gooseberry bushes, and the housewives gather and can the fruit as did their mothers and grandmothers, even though now, with quick transportation, other fruit is available in season.

"If the name of Gooseberry intrigues you, here are some more land marks in that country: Dry Fork, Democrat gulch, Hall ridge, Six Dollar, Butter creek, Jack Rabbit canyon, Porcupine canyon, Sweet Milk canyon, Buttermilk canyon, Black Horse, Sunflower flat, Dutch Billy creek, and many others.

"That part of the country north of Black Horse was named 'The Banana Belt' by S. E. Notson when he was county school superintendent. Mr. Notson is father of Robert Notson of The Oregonian, and at present district attorney and Republican state committeeman."

BACK TO THE PRESENT: The G-T editor is glad that he recognizes some of the names in the letter of Mrs. Adkins, but a few of them don't ring a bell, such as Six Dollar, Sweet Milk canyon, Buttermilk canyon and Dutch Billy creek. But we've only been here seven years and haven't had time to search out all those places!

We can't tell from the clipping just when that article was printed, but some advertising on the back gives the clue that it was a good many years ago. An automobile battery, 6 volts, 13 plates, is listed for \$3.95, an electric alarm clock \$1, and 3-piece bedroom set for \$33.

Bob Notson is still with the Oregonian, having recently been named publisher as most everyone here knows.

OLA MAE GROSHENS also came to our rescue on the names. She used a copy of Lewis A. McArthur's 'Oregon Geographic Names,' published in 1944, to get the information.

As explained in the book, 'The post office at Eightmile takes its name from Eightmile Canyon, which was so named because its mouth was about eight miles up Willow Creek

The Rhyming Philosopher

FRUSTRATION

WHENEVER I MENTION SOME SYMPTOM OR SIGN OF ILLNESS ATTACKING MY VIGOR, THERE'S ALWAYS SOME BOOR LIKE A NEIGHBOR OF MINE WHO CLAIMS THAT'S WHAT HE'S GOT, BUT BIGGER. THE DOCTORS REPORT SOMETHING WRONG WITH MY GEARS. PRESCRIBING A RARE COSTLY TONIC; BUT THE JOKER NEXT DOOR HAS HAD IT FOR YEARS WITH COMPLEXES NEAR ASTRONOMIC. EACH SPRING I PLANT RADISHES, CABBAGE AND CORN AND FERTILIZE FAR, WIDE AND HANDSOME; THEN OFF TO GO FISHING FOR SALMON AT DAWN, WITH HOPES TO GET LUCKY AND LAND SOME. REGARDLESS WHAT WHOPPERS MY PUMPKINS WILL SCORE. SOME NEIGHBOR BOASTS HIS ARE TITANIC; AND OTHER FOLKS' FISH WILL WEIGH TWICE MINE OR MORE. COMPETING BRINGS NOTHING BUT PANIC. BUT NOW I'VE DECIDED THAT SOMETHING MUST GIVE: FRUSTRATION—P.L.L. MANAGE WITHOUT IT. MY VENTURES IN FUTURE AS LONG AS I LIVE I'LL TRY, BUT TELL NO ONE ABOUT IT.

HARRY W. FLETCHER

from the Columbia River. The name was first used by pioneer stockmen.

As to Gooseberry, the book corroborates the information given by Mrs. Huston: "Gooseberry is a locality west of Heppner near the west edge of the county. The place was known as Gooseberry Springs at least as early as 1872 and was well known to cattlemen. It was named for a large wild gooseberry bush just above the spring. Gooseberry post office is shown on the 1887 post office list, but it has been out of service for a good many years. There are many places in eastern Oregon named for wild gooseberry bushes."

We had the good fortune to meet the late Lewis (Tarn) McArthur in 1947. He was then president of the Oregon Historical Society, and came to Dallas for a visit after we had edited a 100-page historical booklet on Polk county history in connection with the county's centennial.

He told us that he had read through the booklet and found it to be complete and accurate except for one thing. We had said something about the "bewhiskered pioneers." Tam McArthur maintained that the original pioneers to Oregon were clean shaven, and the growing of beards didn't become fashionable until later on.

WHAT A GREAT contribution McArthur made in recording Oregon history! His valuable book is just one part of it. —And thanks, ladies, for your help on the local names.

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TO THE EDITOR

Proud of Larry

To the Editor:

In the article about Larry Cook in last week's issue, the line stating that nine awards were made gives the erroneous impression that nine of these awards were given at the same time. This impression definitely dims the luster of the honor given Mr. Cook, because the fact is that he was the only one in the State of Oregon to receive that honor this year. Probably nine awards have been made, but only one each year.

For this reason it is easy to see how Royal Arch Masonry, and, for that matter, Heppner as a whole, can be proud of this member of our community.

Harold L. Becket,
Deputy of the Grand High Priest, Royal Arch Masons of Oregon

COMMUNITY BILLBOARD

Coming Events

TRAVELING PIE SALE
Friday, May 3, from 3 p.m. By Jaycee Wives
Call Mrs. Jerry Samples or Mrs. Tom Wilson for orders for pies, delivered

OES SOCIAL CLUB
Saturday, May 4, 1:45 p.m. Heppner Masonic Hall
Members urged to attend

GOLDEN AGE CLUB
Tuesday, May 7, 7 p.m. All Saints' Episcopal Hall
Potluck dinner, followed by entertainment
Guests welcome

MERCHANDISE SHOOT
Sunday, May 5, 10 a.m. Morrow County Gun Club
Amateurs welcome

ART SHOWING
Sunday, May 12, Ione American Legion Hall, 12:30-5:30 p.m.
Paintings of art students in area of Dr. McDevitt on display
Public welcome

TEENAGE ROAD-E-O
Local competition, Sunday, May 18, fairgrounds, 1 p.m. Sponsored by Morrow County Jaycees
Enter now at School, Jack's Chevron, Ford Garage or with Jerry Hollomon

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