



By Tom Franks

**Interview with a Fourth Grade Graduate in Cal's Cafe**

"What are you doing?" said she. "I'm writing an address to the graduating seniors." "No, you're not," said she. "What do you do?" "I eat," said she. "I had 12 cinnamon rolls today." "What did you have for lunch at school?" "I don't remember," said she. "Think, brain!" said she, pointing an index finger to the middle of her forehead. "What do you do besides eat?" "I play with my ring," said she, tapping her ring on the table top. "Do you put all that in the paper?" said she. "No, I write more than I put in." "You waste a lot of time," said she. "Are you married?" said she. "No," said I. "You're dumb," said she. "Marry Debbie," said she. "Debbie's involved. Besides, there is more than one Debbie in town." "You're weird!" said she. She takes her hamburger and goes to the counter. The back of her shirt reads—"Tankers Do It Better." She finishes her hamburger and comes back. "If you're not married, how do you have kids?" said she, referring to a previous conversation. "I'm divorced." "Oh," said she.



Sharla

I read my notes of our conversation thus far. "Did you write all that down?" said she. "Yes, but not in the same order." "You didn't," said she. "Don't put my name on it. Do you put anything you want in the paper?" "Yes," said I. "Within reason." "I qualify myself silently." "Is your name on it?" said she. "Yes," said I. "We could put both our names on it," said she. "Are you going to graduate?" "Graduate! I'm in the fourth grade!" "You're going to pass to the fifth, aren't you?" "Yes," said she. "Then you are a fourth grade graduate," said I. She laughed a lot. "What would you say to the graduating seniors?" "I don't know," said she. (Pause) "I'm dumb." (Pause) "I'd say, Hurry up and get free." "How shall we put your name in the paper?" said I. "By Sharla Gaustad—A Star!!!"

# Letters to the Editor

*For a more humanitarian world*

*Suggests coyote, dog association*

*Boe explains school's 'safety net'*

Dear Editor:

Well, I do declare—I find Rev. Mark Johnson's critical letter about me most interesting. "If God loves such astute murderers like Olds as much as people like my friend, Mary Lindsay," I dare say—is it any wonder that recent statistics show church attendances becoming lower in many cases?

With such teachings, why would anyone need to try to do good deeds if evil deeds such as Olds' rate the same compensation in God's family? For a minister to belittle my endless efforts to try to better conditions for God's animals is a pretty poor example to set for the public. I consider the insult pure unadulterated, galvanized gall. Why the necessity to make a choice between two alternatives of evil by comparing capital punishment to calf roping?

Man was created in God's image and given a brain to make decisions as to good and evil. Murdering helpless people in cold blood with no respect for any age or circumstance is certainly the most despicable, insidious, evil crime imaginable. While, on the other hand, the gentler animal creatures created by God such as calves have been given bodies of flesh, blood and nerves to feel pain just the same as man; but no choice that they would prefer to grow up strong and healthy in a pasture with their mothers and not be practiced on in roping sessions in rodeo arenas. Such continual treatment causes them to be just scrubs and nervous wrecks.

I am wondering how Rev. Johnson would like to be halted and upended on his back in the arena as so many calves are when they come to the end of a tough nylon rope that is anchored to a big strong quarter horse that slides to a violent halt by applying all four wheel brakes at once?

R.C.A. rules say, "If a calf is trip busted to the ground on purpose, a cowboy will be penalized on points," but has anyone ever seen this rule carried out anywhere, at any time? You know the less breath left in a kicking calf saves precious tying time to please the cheering thrill-seeking crowd.

Rev. Johnson, I fail to see your appalling attitude about me getting upset at calf roping. It causes me agony to know that such creatures have done man or beast no harm, and yet they must be trip yanked to a halt, thrown to the ground, choked and dragged through the dirt to entertain the human creatures. The year my daughter was Queen of the Heppner Rodeo, a little black calf had its neck broken in the trip bust. It was dragged out back, and the crowd was informed, "It will be OK and soon come around, and have the care of a vet."

And Rev. Johnson, since you were so generous and free to give me advice on pleading mercy for Mary Lindsay's murderer, I've got some advice for you. Has it ever occurred to you that God so loved the animals that He chose to have His only Son born among them? You should be teaching reverence and respect for all animals and not promoting rodeos. We all seem to be trying to go to the same place, but must be worshipping different gods. A true, loving Good Shepherd as God is would not condone the cruel \$\$\$ exploitation of His creatures, such as dog fights, cock fights, bull fights, steer busting, coon on a log, and cruel, lamentable trapping to rob creatures of their hides for human vanities' sake, etc.

May God bless the animals that were put here first and got along very well until man came along to upset nature's balance and added crime and violence.

Now, for capital punishment: I'm sure no one really wants it back, except we all value our own lives and since the prisons are all overcrowded and murderers must be let out to make room for more murderers, what other alternatives do you suggest? I'd much rather know a murderer was executed than to think he would get out and do me in as he did poor Mary Lindsay.

"When shall all men's good be each man's rule, and universal peace be like a shaft of light across the land?"

For a more Humanitarian World,  
Lois Winchester  
Heppner

Editor, Heppner Gazette-Times,

In answer to Mrs. Vandehey's letter and to more or less apologize for some of the mistakes made in my former letters on H.B. (2489), I predict that after Mrs. Vandehey has spent half as much time trying to make a living in this country, off the land, as I have, her romance with the coyote will have faded.

I think Mrs. Vandehey's idea of domesticating coyotes is a splendid one and perhaps I can even help her in a small way. There is a Mrs. Winchester in Heppner with similar ideas. You and Mrs. Winchester could form an association and cross-breed coyotes and dogs. She has an abundance of dogs and you, Mrs. Vandehey, would have to supply only the coyotes. You could call your project "The V. & W. Mad Coyote Cross Dog Breeders Association." Just an idea, but I feel you would have some extremely cross dogs.

You pointed out in your letter that all dogs were originally wild. I agree, but the same is true of all our domestic animals except, of course, the mule. As one old timer remarked, "A mule is not one of God's creations anyway, but one of man's damned inventions!" Sure hope your project doesn't turn out that way.

You stated I was very wrong in saying the majority in this area regard coyotes a nuisance. You are so right. I should have taken a poll on the subject before writing. But, you know, I'll always be a little puzzled why our Eastern Oregon counties hire a government trapper and pay bounties, some up to \$25.00, to try to hold down a valuable resource.

One of the other major mistakes in my letter was calling Kelpie's little sister a brother and I am sorry. To tell the truth, I still don't know, as I didn't examine the whelp closely enough to determine its sex. But if you did, Mrs. Vandehey, and are quite, quite positive, I'll sure take your word for it. As you can plainly see by my writing efforts, like my friend Charley Jones, I am far from a college man. My formal education terminated at about age ten due to the misunderstanding of one of my teachers. So, you see, Charley and I are severely handicapped in competition with you college girls.

Charley and I have gotten by so far without getting on the Welfare rolls. Probably due to not being able to fill out the forms. They tell me those forms are buggers.

District 16 should be congratulated in electing Representative Denzel Jones, with enough sense to table (H.B. 2489). Denzel is a good friend of mine. In fact, we attended the same school for a short time.

Denzel is not to be confused with Charley. No relation as far as I know.

You spoke of the merits of the Dingo. Well, we owned one for a time and the only thing the little blue potliker excelled in was catching biscuits thrown out the back door. Otherwise, he was about as useful as those little nubbins on a side of bacon.

I am not mad at you for calling me a liar. Have been called worse, much worse, over the years.

A Neighbor,  
Ray Gates  
Spray, Oregon

Dear Editor:

Judging by some of the recent letters-to-the editor published in your paper, there seems to be a great deal of confusion over Ballot Measure 1, the Safety Net for Schools Financing Plan. I would like to take this opportunity to correct any misunderstandings that may exist in the minds of your readers.

First, Ballot Measure 1 does not take away the people's right to vote on school levies. Ballot Measure 1 maintains your right to vote by requiring yearly school levy elections. It limits costly school budget elections to no more than two a year. The voters can request additional elections through petition, however. Only those school districts that cannot pass their levies on two tries are allowed to fall into the "Safety Net" under Ballot Measure 1.

Second, there is no automatic tax increase in Ballot Measure 1. In fact, Ballot Measure 1 can help curb skyrocketing property taxes. Following two consecutive levy defeats, a school district is allowed to fall back on last year's levy, plus a limited, optional increase for inflation of up to six per cent. This increase is not mandatory. It must be authorized through formal, public action by the locally elected officials who serve on the school board. And the increase must always be less than the smallest levy defeated by the voters.

Even a full six per cent increase is far less than most school districts receive under the present system. Statewide property taxes for schools have increased at an average rate of 11 per cent a year since 1970. That's almost twice as much as the maximum safety net increase allowed under Ballot Measure 1.

Third, Ballot Measure 1 does not threaten local control. The final decision on the amount of the "Safety Net" levy is not made by the Legislature or the Department of Education in Salem, but by the locally elected school board members. This enhances local control, since school board members are ultimately responsible to the voters of their district.

Fourth, Ballot Measure 1 will prevent a repeat of last year's tragic school closures. Over 12,000 Oregon school children were locked out of their schools last year because of repeated levy failures in North Bend, Eagle Point, Cottage Grove and La Grande. Many of these children will never be able to regain the educational opportunities they lost. Ballot Measure 1 will insure that Oregon's children receive the education they are entitled to under the Constitution.

In closing, I want to assure your readers that the 1977 Legislature is firmly committed to achieving state-wide property tax relief. The Legislature has already voted to raise the level to 34 per cent for the coming school year. And the Legislature is giving very serious consideration to raising Basic School Support to the 40 per cent level for the 1978-79 school year, with the provision that the increase be used as a direct offset against property taxes.

I urge Oregonians to take the first step to school finance reform, and vote YES on Ballot Measure 1 on May 17th.

Very truly yours,  
Jason Boe  
President  
Oregon State Senate

## Letter to the Editor

### on school levy

To the Editor:

Since the defeat of the Morrow County School District Budget, I have had a number of people ask me why the District can't live within the 6 per cent limitation rather than seek approval of a tax levy outside the 6 per cent.

This question has been raised so often that I believe it deserves some discussion. The 6 per cent limitation refers to the fact that if a district has an established tax base, they may levy that base plus 6 per cent each year for the support of schools without a vote of the people.

This has not been a satisfactory solution for school finance for at least two reasons. First, many school districts have never been able to get the votes to approve a tax base and secondly, those districts who do have tax bases had them established many years ago and the bases do not reflect either inflation or growth since they were established. They simply have not kept pace.

Currently, Morrow County School District has a tax base of \$466,157.00; an increase of 6 per cent would mean that the district could levy \$494,126.00 this year for the support of schools. This is \$25,939.00 less than the amount budgeted in 1960 for the operation of a newly formed school district. It is obvious from this that the increase of 6 per cent would not be realistic even if the budget was reduced to the 1960 figure.

Matthew P. Doherty  
Superintendent  
Morrow County School District

## Thanks to Wil

To the Editor:

The coaching staff at Heppner High School would like to thank Wil Phinney for his fine coverage of our sports' programs this year. His coverage, articles and editorials were of the highest quality and we deeply appreciate his time and effort.

Chris Borgen  
Dale Conklin  
Dale Holland  
John Sporseen  
Rebecca Randall  
Chuck Lutsch  
George Koeffler  
Michelle Portman

## M.C. CBer's set break

The Morrow County CBers break will be held, beginning at 7:15 p.m. Monday, May 16, at the West of Willow Restaurant in Heppner, according to club officials.

## Blue Mt. Community College

Board of Directors and Administrators will meet in Heppner for a

### Public Forum

Tuesday, May 17 at 8 p.m.

West of Willow Meeting Room

Refreshments will be served

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BMCC welcomes all comments and suggestions as to future services the college can provide Morrow County residents.

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## THE GAZETTE-TIMES

### DEADLINES

WHAT	WHEN DUE
EVENTS THAT HAPPEN BEFORE FRIDAY	FRIDAY, 5 p.m.
FRIDAY, SATURDAY & SUNDAY EVENTS	MONDAY, 5 p.m.
MONDAY & TUESDAY MORNING EVENTS	TUESDAY NOON
CLASSIFIED ADS	TUESDAY NOON
DISPLAY ADVERTISING	MONDAY 5 p.m.