

Taking it all in stride at the County bus shop

It took something like 350,000 miles, 63,000 gallons of gas, \$6,000 in tires and batteries and uncounted drivers' headaches, but the county school bus brigade has succeeded in carting its students to and from another year of classes, athletic events and field trips.

So now that summer is here and the buses are back in the corral, School District Bus Maintenance Supervisor Jerry Daggett can just sit back and wait for next fall to roll around, right? No way.

Despite the school year problems involved in keeping a full slate of buses and drivers matched and on the road, each of the district's 21 route buses, seven spares and assorted panel, pickup and utility vehicles will be completely inspected inside and out, repaired where necessary, cleaned and primed for another year of use and abuse.

And according to Daggett, after nine months of carrying 775 bus-riding students, the buses are sorely in need of the added attention.

The things are expensive to begin with, and adding the wear and tear dished out by the riders and the ever increasing safety modifications imposed by state and federal government, the operation of the buses becomes an expensive proposition.

"Most people just put their kids on the bus and never stop to think about the costs involved," Daggett said. "But, I'll tell you, they really add up fast."

Last year's district budget, in addition to the \$8,000 for equipment replacement, included \$7,000 for outside repair work and \$8,400 for in-shop repairs. This year, Daggett spent about \$4,200 and a month's work installing a new federally required eight-light safety system on each bus.

New legislation now calls for fully padded seats, added supports in the roof, impact guards for the front seats and a high impact fuel tank guard, which will add about 200

pounds of weight to the bus. The total cost for these added features? About \$2,000 per vehicle.

Daggett only shakes his head when he mentions another bill pending in the legislature which would require 20 hours of training for each of his drivers before next fall.

"As if I don't have enough to do without teaching driving to someone who's been driving a bus for 10 years," he said.

Daggett said Oregon has some of the toughest state

requirements in the nation and federal standards are "getting stiffer every year."

Some Morrow County requirements are not even considered in other parts of the state. He pointed to the larger heaters needed for this climate and the larger engines needed for the hilly terrain. Eight buses are equipped with automatic transmissions for the hills.

Also, because of the canyons in the area, many buses are forced to run dead end routes—backtracking through

the canyon instead of completing a more efficient circular route. Four of the routes are in excess of 110 miles per day.

All these factors combine for a district operating expense of about 70 cents per mile this year, including the purchase of replacement vehicles. But, said Daggett, that figure could be worse.

"We are probably one of the least expensive per mile districts in the state," he said. "Most districts this large operate on a contract basis and the minimum a contractor would accept would be 85 cents per mile, due to the profit margin needed."

Some go as high as \$1.10 per mile, he said.

Daggett uses a few tactics to help keep the cost as low as possible: When replacements are needed, money is saved by bidding separately on the chassis and body. Buses are rotated on different routes to maintain a fairly consistent mileage rate on each vehicle.

Also, on overlapping routes in the Boardman and Irrigon areas, drivers switch buses so they aren't paid for a full day away from their home base.

These ploys help, but they can be quickly nullified by bad breaks—such as two unexpected engine blowups this year which will require dipping into district contingency funds for the repairs.

It's an uphill battle all the way, but somehow the buses come through. You can thank Jerry Daggett and his crew for that.



In the corral, for now.

Giants grab first half lead

Standings as of May 30.
Giants 4-2
Dodgers 4-4
Braves 3-4
Indians 3-4

(First half Little League Play Championship is based on 9 games of play.)

The Giants have taken a solid hold on first place as a result of their 10-4 win over the Braves last Thursday. The "first half" championship seems to belong to the Giants.

Archie Lucas was the winning pitcher in relief of Bruce Way in their victory over the Braves. Bruce had 5 RBIs and

Mark Way had 2 hits to lead the Giants. The Giants had excellent "outfield catches" to pull them through.

The Braves only gave up 5 hits in the loss as Parker, Marlin, and Brannon all pitched in the losing effort.

The Dodgers' hex on the Indians continued Monday as they beat the Indians 21-12 at Ione Monday, May 30. Jay Hayes was the winning pitcher. Rod Cole and Greg Connor also pitched. The heavy hitting Dodgers were led by Cole with four hits while Connor

and Hayes each had five hits. Howard Leavitt was the losing pitcher. Roger Morter pitched in relief. Casey Fargher had two hits to lead the Indians at bat and Roger Morter scored three runs for the Indians.

Last Wednesday, the Dodgers won a thriller over the Indians 4-3 as Steve Crewse and Connor pitched for the Dodgers. Casey Fargher pitched a fine game for the Indians. Hayes and Rod Cole led the Dodgers with two hits each. Morter had two hits for the Indians.

New Merrill arrives

Robin and Frank Merrill, of Purcell, Okla., announce the birth of a daughter, McKenzie Scott Merrill, on May 10, 1977. Evonne Severinson is the proud grandmother and Ora Evans the great-grandmother.

All are former residents of Heppner.

Paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Merrill, and great-grandmother, Mrs. Dan Gerber, are from Fremont, Mich.

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Acreage reports requested

Since future farm legislation could affect all producers of wheat and feed grain, it is important that every farm file a report of 1977 seeded acreage with the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

The agriculture committees of the Senate and House have reported out farm bills which provide that if a set-aside is implemented for the 1978 crops, the acreage required to be set-aside as a condition of

eligibility for program benefits may be based on a percentage of the acreage planted for harvest in 1977. Although this would not be the only alternative available, in order to provide the Secretary with

a full range of options in the event a 1978 set-aside is deemed necessary, 1977 acreages of wheat, corn, sorghum, and barley planted will be obtained.

Under either current or proposed legislation, the 1977 reported acreage will not be used for purposes of establishing allotments.

Morrow County farmers will report their acreages of these crops in the ASCS office prior to harvest but not later than July 15, 1977.

Those who fail to report planted acreage will be considered to have no planted acreage.

ASCS will spot check farms to assure accuracy of reported acreage.

Burglaries, vandals reported by Police

Heppner City Police report two separate burglaries of local businesses, both of which were reported on Memorial Day.

Several unlisted items were reported missing from the Union 76 service station on Main Street. Entry was gained by breaking a window in the building.

A second burglary occurred at the Heppner Depot, where entry was gained through an unlocked window and again unlisted items were taken. Both incidents are still under investigation by city police.

Also, three cases of criminal mischief occurred Sunday and Monday involving broken windows at Main Street establishments. Glass was broken in the front doors of both the Elks' Club and Hedman's

Furniture Store. The front plate glass of the Wagon Wheel Cafe was also broken.

auction....

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trunk, 3-legged iron pots, bedstead, old embossed whiskey bottles.

Serving of the pit barbecued beef dinner accompanied by a variety of salads, baked beans and garlic bread will begin at 12:30 in the dining room. Again this year, the first two places in the line will be auctioned off just before dinner.

Child care will be available from 9:30-4:30 at a cost of 75 cents per hour. This will be sponsored by the members of the board for the Heppner Child Development Center for the benefit of the center. Parents are asked to provide their child's lunch.

HHS taps officers, cheerleaders

Elections were held May 10 for the 1977-78 student body officers at Heppner High School and a swearing-in ceremony followed on May 18.

New officers include: Diane Holland, president; Jeff Fortenberry, vice-president; Cathy Palmer, secretary; Lynn Gochauer, treasurer; Julie Grieb, assistant treasurer; and Linda Bier, business manager.

Also announced were the 1977-78 varsity and junior varsity cheerleading members. Marie Yocum will lead the varsity group of Rosanna Marlatt, Laurie Harrison, Tammy Lucas and Joycelyn Thorpe.

Janice Huddleston, Janice Sherman and Jackie Gentry will act as junior varsity cheerleaders for the coming year.

Both groups will cheer for both the girls' and boys' athletic teams.

library....

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thousand," Struthers said. "Whether it can come about or not, I don't know," he added.

Struthers said the board had discussed other options for funding, but they generally agreed the formation of the district was the most viable alternative.

Because the library is geared to provide services for residents in all economic ranges, Struthers said requiring a user fee of \$10-15 per family would "defeat the whole purpose of a public library."

"The small amount per family that would be required to fund a district would be much more equitable than the user fee or volunteer systems," he said.

Vacation Church school set

Vacation Church School, this year using the theme of "Reach out," will be held from Monday, June 13, through Friday, June 17. This school will be a combined effort of the Episcopal, Lutheran and Methodist churches in the area and the school

The cost will be \$2.50 per child or \$5 per family. For those unable to pay the fee, scholarships are available and may be acquired at any of the three churches.

Registration will be from 8:30 to 9 a.m. at the Episcopal Church on Monday, June 13.

will be held at All Saints' Episcopal and Heppner United Methodist churches, as has been the arrangement for the past six years.

The school will be for ages four years through eighth grade and will be held from 8:45 a.m. to noon each day.

Rail contract awarded for Boardman coal plant

Portland General Electric Company has awarded a contract to Transco-Pacific Company, Seattle, to install railroad track at the utility's Boardman Coal Plant in North Central Oregon. The value of the contract is approximately \$800,000.

materials delivery into the power block area.

Transco-Pacific will begin work in June. The main portion of work is expected to be completed in late 1977 with some work items continuing into 1978.

Although the 530,000 kilowatt Boardman project will not go into operation until July 1980, the first coal delivery will be made in Jan. 1979 so a stockpile can be built. Coal will be shipped some 1,200 miles from a mine near Gillette, Wyo.

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