

The time is now to act on

Willow Creek Dam

Again this week the Willow Creek Dam project heads this column's priority list.

As more information on Heppner's flood plain is compiled and made public, coupled with a tight schedule in

EDITORIAL

which a decision on the dam must be made by local officials, we feel the issue of whether or not the dam is constructed is a top priority subject for the entire community.

The implications of allowing the flood plain to remain where it is (please see page 11) in Heppner are drastic and depressing.

The bottom line is a Flood Damage Protection Ordinance that will virtually stop any further construction of business or residential structures in the flood plain which encompasses a major portion of Heppner.

Secondly, Senator Mark Hatfield has made an offer to residents of Heppner they can hardly afford to refuse.

The Senator has said that he will make every effort to secure funding for Willow Creek Dam under authorization established by congress in 1965. The same authorization supported by the majority of people living here at that time. We don't think the Senator would have made the offer if he didn't think the chances were pretty good for obtaining the funds...political figures don't go around looking for an Albatross to hang around their neck.

Looking back over the years, numerous individuals have worked hard to secure the dam. Then, time and time again the project became the victim of politics and funding was never secured.

Unfortunately, many of those people who know the value of the dam are simply battle weary and probably a little skeptical.

No one can assure appropriation of funds at this time but all indications are that the Willow Creek Dam stands a pretty fair chance in this year's congress.

Why the rush after all these years? Because to be included for funding Senator Hatfield must know by mid-March the wishes of the people of Heppner, and with the pending flood ordinance Heppner can't afford to wait.

The necessary meetings must be held in the next 30 days and city and county officials should make their decisions based on the input of the citizenry concerned enough to attend those meetings.

Picture Credit

About 10 Heppner volunteer firemen rushed with three fire engines to Dick Wilkenson's ranch on Willow Creek last Thursday evening only to prove helpless against a large haystack fire. The approximately 100 tons of hay was nothing but a smoldering mound by the next morning.

Letters Policy

ALL LETTERS of general interest are welcomed, providing they are in good taste and not libelous. 250 WORDS IS about the maximum length we can accept, however, if you need more space, please use it.

ALL LETTERS MUST be signed to be considered. If you wish to have your name withheld—for good cause—we will do so after contacting you for an explanation.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS should be included. The number will only be used by the Gazette-Times to confirm it was you who wrote the letter.

THE GAZETTE-TIMES reserves the right to refuse any letter it deems unfit for publication.

LETTERS SHOULD BE addressed to Editor, Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Ore., 97836.

THE GAZETTE-TIMES

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Letters to the Editor

Too much invested to give up canal

Editor:

The giving up of the Panama Canal would be about the next worst thing to giving up our guns as it also would create a dangerous threat to the security of America.

The Panama Canal belongs totally to the United States both by treaty agreement and by outright purchase. It's popular name is "The Panama Canal" but in reality it is "The American Canal" at the Isthmus of Panama. It was built and paid for by the people of the United States at a cost approaching seven billion dollars.

At his moment an alliance of Communists, Leftists, American Big Businessmen and Liberals out of touch with reality are working to transfer the control of the Canal to the regime of the Pro-Castro dictator of Panama, General Omar Torrijos. There can be no question that General Omar Torrijos is a strong-arm dictator who maintains close ties with Castro and the Soviet Union and yet there are those in high places of our government who are continuing the drive to hand over the Canal to Torrijos.

We must not be misled by those who say our loss of the Canal would not affect prices, taxes, and our National Defense. We must understand that the things we buy will rise if the use of the Panama Canal were denied us by the Communist regime which wants us to let them take over the Canal. Those extra thousands of miles around the cape will

add billions to the cost of food and materials now shipped through the shorter, faster Panama Canal.

As for our defense, our military would be forced to build an expensive two-ocean Navy immediately! We could not risk having our entire Navy trapped in the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean.

America was caught sleeping before World War II at a cost of billions of dollars and hundred of thousands of American lives. We were able to survive, but next time around, we may not. It was a steep price we paid for unpreparedness. Now, America may be sleeping again; certainly we are being misled, lulled to sleep and lied to. It is not true that the Canal is out of date or unable to handle big ships.

What is needed now, is for Americans of all political parties—Democrat, Republican, Independent and others, to make their feelings known to President Carter, their two U.S. Senators and their Congressmen.

The American Canal at the Isthmus of Panama, is vital to our economy and essential to our national defense. It is U.S. property and we must let Washington know, in no uncertain terms, that we intend to keep it. Don't let President Carter give it away!

Carl M. Marquardt
Lexington, OR 97839

OBITUARIES

Omar Rietmann

Lifelong area resident Omar Rietmann of Ione died Saturday, Feb. 11, 1978, at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner. He was 84.

The son of Morrow County pioneers Paul Rietmann and Margaret Glock Rietman, he was born in Ione on Aug. 9, 1893.

Mr. Rietmann was a member of the Ione United Church of Christ, Ione Lodge No. 120 AF&AM, Heppner I.O.O.F. Lodge No. 66, and Willows Grange.

He was owner and operator of Rietmann's Hardware in Ione for many years.

Survivors include a son, Gene Rietmann, Ione; two brothers, David Rietmann of Ione and Robert Rietmann of La Habra, Cal.; two sisters Anna Stith and Alice Peterson, both of The Dalles; and three grandchildren.

His wife, Elaine, preceded him in death in 1969.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 2 p.m. at the Ione United Church of Christ, with Rev. William Graham officiating. The con-

gregation sang sacred selections, accompanied by organist Rikka Tews.

Active casket bearers were Harold Rietmann, Wayne Rietmann, David Rietmann, Bob Rietmann, Bill Rietmann and Zan Rietmann.

Paul Pettyjohn, Kenneth Smouse, Leo Crabtree, Verl Akers, Charles O'Connor and Oscar Peterson served as honorary bearers.

Concluding services and interment were at High View Cemetery in Ione with Sweeney Mortuary handling the arrangements.

Contributions may be made to the Ione Church of Christ Memorial Fund.

Richard MacKinnon

Richard Daniel MacKinnon, 62, died in Heppner Feb. 8.

He was born Oct. 26, 1915, at Holbroke, Ore. Mr. MacKinnon was a construction line-

man for many years and a member of I.B.E.W. No. 125, Portland. He was also a member of the Eagles Lodge, The Dalles, and at the time of his death was manager of the Heppner Elks Club.

He was married to Delores (Dee) Kosse at Stevenson, Wash., on Feb. 11, 1960.

Mr. MacKinnon is survived by his wife, Dee, Condon; two sons, Richard, MacKinnon, Rohnert Park, Cal.; Terry MacKinnon, Milpitas, Cal.; three brothers, Oren MacKinnon, Portland, Roger MacKinnon, Wenatchee, Wash.; and Jack MacKinnon, Yacolt, Wash.; four sisters, Grace Easley, Cottage Grove; Frances Clifford, Marge Philips, and Dorothy Langford, all of Portland; and six grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Monday, Feb. 13, at 2 p.m. at the Rigdon-Ransom Colonial Chapel in Salem, with the Rev. Edwin Smelser of the Westgate Assembly of God Church officiating, Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner was in charge of local arrangements.

Funeral services were held Monday, Feb. 13, at 2 p.m. at the Spray Assembly of God Church at 1 p.m., with the Rev. Steve Emerson officiating.

Carolyn Britt and Patsy Keimig sang a duet, while Sid Britt was soloist. Carolyn Britt accompanied on the organ.

Active casket bearers were Charles Nelson, Jr., Robert Nelson, Ray Britt, Johnny Nelson, Marvin Britt and Roy Britt.

Honorary bearers included Claude Britt, Clyde Britt, Edgar Cress, Jack Sitton, Elvin Britt and Ed Tilly.

Concluding services and interment were at the Spray Cemetery with Sweeney Mor-

tuary in charge of arrangements.

and Lewis McDonal preceded her in death.

Sifting through the TIMES

Heppner merchants were getting primed for a big Washington's birthday promotion, ten years ago this week. A front page story reported they were offering a powerful incentive to local shoppers—1,000 small cherry pies were to be given away with purchases during the sale days.

Sheila Luciani, 17, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Luciani, was selected as princess on the 1968 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo Court, representing the Lexington Grange. Sheila planned to ride her favorite quarter horse "Honey" for official appearances.

Many recommendations made by six committees at an important Morrow County Town and Country Conference, 20 years ago this week, chaired by Kenneth Peck of Lexington, were destined to have a long-range effect on the county:

"The studies and recommendations covered every phase of county life from crop and livestock problems, conservation and land use, government, taxes, schools, roads to industrial development and problems arising from foreseeable increases in population in the next 10 years.

"Highlighting the well over 250 recommendations...2343 suggestions that the formation of a Morrow county port commission be investigated...discussion brought out...that if this area is to get its share of industrial development along the banks of the river, a port commission could be useful.

"...it was also felt it would be wise to establish a county planning commission which might carry out many of the recommendations made at the conference.

"...The six main committees and their chairmen...were conservation and land use, Alvin Bunch; home and community living, Mrs. Norman Nelson; public education, Gene Cutsforth; livestock, Gerald Swaggart; farm crops, Tad Miller who gave the report for Frank Anderson, chairman; and youth activities, Mrs. E.M. Baker..."

Another front page story this week in 1958 reported that an 'anonymous donor' had offered to put up sufficient money for the construction of a Morrow County museum building, provided it be located in Heppner. Today, 20 years later, county residents have that 'anonymous donor' to thank for a museum to be very proud of.

The lone library also rated front page space in that issue of the Times: "The lone library, through its librarian Mrs. Echo Palmateer received congratulations for an excellent operation from officials of the Oregon State Library."

Much space in the Gazette-Times published this week in 1938 was given to an account of a well-attended meeting on soil erosion with several officials from Oregon's Soil Conservation Service giving detailed information on the causes of erosion and possible preventative measures. The lead paragraph was unusually lively for an article of the kind: "To the casual passer-by the grange hall probably took on the aspect of a smoker as some 150 farmers gathered to wrestle with the age-old problem of soil erosion and fertility. County Agent Joe Belanger was umpire, the audience passed judgement, and after the dust settled, a close decision was given to water erosion..."

Buried on an inside page of the Times 40 years ago was this account of an accident we don't see too often anymore: "Alvin Pettyjohn was treated at a local doctor's office this morning for injuries received when a team ran away with him on the Krebs brothers ranch at Cecil earlier this morning. A bad gash below the left eye, and cuts across the left temple and behind the ear required surgical treatment. He was brought to town by John Krebs."

How many readers are aware of the 1918 Boardman gold strike? This small item was printed in the Times 60 years ago this week: "Gold has been discovered in Boardman, Morrow County's new thriving town on the Columbia River, and Ferdinand Emberger, who made the discovery came to Heppner the last of the week to file a mining claim. According to Mr. Emberger, considerable dust has been found in the sand along the river and he has been making good wages in placer mines. Mr. Emberger is the blacksmith at Boardman and has charge of the town pumping plant."

Albert Bowker, local agent for the Heppner Garage, announced his new 1918 Buick models in the Times: "The New Buick Line—for nineteen-eighteen is complete from every standpoint of finish refinement, comfort and service and provides a car for every demand."

Ethel Bleakman

Ethel Bleakman, 74, Hermiston, died Friday, Feb. 10, in Hermiston.

She was born April 23, 1903, in Saskatchewan, Canada, the daughter of John and Sadie Rogers McDonald, who had lived in the Hardman area prior to moving to Canada. In 1905 the family returned to Hardman.

She was married to Kenneth Bleakman in Heppner in 1924. They lived for many years in the Hardman-Heppner area. In 1948 they moved to Hermiston.

Graveside services were held at the Heppner Masonic Cemetery Wednesday, Feb. 15, with Burns Mortuary, Hermiston, in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Bleakman is survived by her husband, Kenneth, Hermiston; a daughter, Neta Rae Sweeney, Chelan, Wash.; a brother, Hubert McDonald, Federal Way, Wash.; two sisters, Eva Robinson, Heppner and Hazel Saling, Echo; and four grandchildren. Three brothers, Clifford, Raymond

Sarah Rhodes

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Feb. 8, at Folsom-Bishop Funeral Chapel, Pendleton, for Sarah Mae Rhodes, (nee Burnside), Pendleton.

She was born in Portland April 27, 1943. She came to Heppner as a small child, grew up here, and attended the Heppner schools. She had lived in Pendleton for the past thirteen years.

She was married to Earnest F. Rhodes, in Reno, Nevada, Aug. 31, 1974.

Mrs. Rhodes was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary 28, Pendleton.

She is survived by her husband, Earnest; two sons, Norman and Randy; and two daughters, Tina and Tammie, all of Pendleton; parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kirk, Hermiston; two sisters, Beverly Sherman, Heppner; and Loretta Nelson, Pendleton; three nieces and two nephews.

Contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society.