

The Heppner  
**GAZETTE-TIMES**  
**VIEWPOINT**



**MEMORIAL DAY '78**

**'Lest We Forget'**

by Katherine Rozelle Farrar  
In Flanders Field those red poppies still grow,  
Among the crosses, row on row.  
There many of our lads lie,  
Called to fight the war ending all wars,  
So the "knowing" ones said,  
Our boys went with brave hearts; heads held high,  
All to fight: Many to die,  
In Flanders Field they lie,  
That war went on.  
Wars have come and gone, again, again and again.  
Our lads were called to fight; too many to die  
In other Flanders Fields they lie.  
Lest we forget  
We honor them today,  
Each in our own way.  
Then fervently for Peace we pray.  
Peace forevermore,  
Never another war, Never our lads to fight and die  
Never in another Flanders Field lie.

(Editor's Note: The Gazette-Times' resident poet, Katherine Rozelle Farrar submitted this poem for Memorial Day. Flanders Field is a region in France where World War I are buried, their graves marked by crosses, row on row. Our poet remembers Memorial Day 1919 very well, the day her late husband, Lester Lewis Farrar, came home from the war.)



Trout angling season opened last Saturday, and Morrow County fishermen invaded the woods to test their luck. Most anglers reported limit catches from the well-stocked streams. Bruce Millman of Ione was caught on film as he landed a 10-inch rainbow from Cutsforth Pond.

**Picture Credit**

**SALEM SCENE** BY Jack Zimmeran

**Worker's Comp will again be issue**

The high cost of Worker's Compensation Insurance was a major issue during the 1977 legislative session and promises to occupy a position at least as prominent when lawmakers next convene in Salem.

The fact that costs more than doubled—from \$203.5 million in 1974 to \$424 million in 1977 and will soar to \$488 million this year—makes it easy to understand why this mandatory employer-paid fringe benefit is being scrutinized so intensely.

And high on the list of Workers' Comp law changes to be sought in 1979 will be curbs preventing overlapping of multiple benefits that tend to pave the way to early retirement for a growing number of claimants.

Essentially, Workers' Comp was designed for the benefit of workers sustaining job-related injuries and illnesses. Workers so suffering are entitled to have temporarily lost income replaced, to have medical bills paid, to be returned to the workforce and—if unable to return—to be compensated for permanent total disability when that situation occurs.

Benefits are not awarded as punishment to the employer. Workers cannot be penalized if their injury occurred because of their own carelessness. Employers cannot be sued for negligence. It is called a no-fault system.

As described by law, benefits are designed to make the injured worker whole. They were not intended to raise the injured worker to a higher economic status than existed before the injury.

The problem that is becoming more troublesome each year is the use of the system as an early retirement program. This is encouraged by multiple benefits from many overlapping social programs that have come into existence since the birth of Worker's Comp in the early 1900s.

A recent study by auditors of the Secretary of State's office for instance, concluded job disability often can provide Oregon public employees with a tax-free income greater than their former gross salaries.

The study of 100 disability cases from the beneficiary files of the Public Employees Retirement System revealed that 85 also were collecting

payments from Workers' Compensation Insurance. Further investigation uncovered the fact 33 of those collecting benefits from two sources were being further subsidized by disability checks from Social Security.

The problem is not uniquely something that occurs only among public employees. Overlapping benefits are just as prevalent in the private sector.

An interview survey conducted among 1036 subjects in Illinois, Georgia, New York and California by Cooper and Company for the federal Interdepartmental Workers' Compensation Task Force indicated the overall significance of the overlap problem.

Of all respondents interviewed, 37 per cent said they received benefits related to their injury or illness from at least one other source and 18 per cent from at least two other sources.

The largest single overlap appears to involve Social Security disability insurance benefits. Next largest overlap in the Cooper survey was Social Security survivor's benefits. Also involved are Social Security retirement benefits, unemployment insurance, Medicare, public assistance (Welfare), Medicaid, Supplementary Security Income, private insurance plans and

veterans benefits.

No one has ascertained the magnitude of this iceberg. But the tip is fully exposed.

Investigation so far shows most overlaps do not involve defrauding the system. The legality of overlaps is seldom contested. But some states are moving to close the more obvious loopholes before the system becomes so overburdened it can no longer exist in a fiscally responsible manner.

Lawmakers in the State of Washington made changes when they learned there were

more police and firemen on disability than on service pensions. Police and fire disability claimants in that state now receive only token payment from the retirement system. Their cases are handled by a Workers' Compensation Board that determines the extent of disability and limits payments accordingly.

The Oregon Legislature in 1977 enacted Senate Bill 1048, which offsets the cost of Workers' Compensation by the amount of Social Security benefits without reducing a claimant's total entitlement. The resulting new law also requires periodical physical examinations to prove continuing disability and calls for monitoring claimants' income sources by requiring income affidavits each April 15.

**Sifting through**  
**the TIMES**

With this issue of the Gazette-Times, "Sifting Through The Times" passes a special milestone—a year ago this week the fertile pen of then-editor Jim Summers produced the first column, written entirely in the vernacular no less.

Let's take a glance at that first "Sifting" creation: "You know, it don't take too much sense for a body to figure out that these parts are in the midst of quite a dry spell these days. And it seems like only yesterday that I was reading about the new flood alert gizmos that Heppner was getting hooked up to. Something about the Weather Bureau tracking down clouds with radar or some such nonsense.

"It don't take no fancy machines to tell me when the sky's about to let loose and it's time to head for higher ground.

"But there it is, smack dab on the front page of the Gazette-Times dated May 25, 1972. I've been collecting these papers for longer than most people care to think back. Keep 'em right here on the front porch, next to the rocker. Durn stocks are getting so plentiful, it's hard for 'ol Spooner to find a place to rest his flea-bitten bones. Worthless hound dog..." And on it went.

Columnist Jim changed "Sifting" to a more grammatical format for its second appearance, explaining:

"I've heard a couple of people saying they didn't appreciate the incorrect grammar...in last week's column. They seem to think that young people at an impressionable age might pick up some bad habits from reading that kind of phraseology in the newspaper..."

"But my intention here, from the beginning has not been to let clumsy semantemes cloud the message. My aim has been to draw some of the interesting items from the past that might trip a dusty memory switch and open the gate for a few good recollections that might wander in. For the young people, a mirror held to the past can often be as instructive as a window opened to the future. That is my intention, nothing more, nothing less..."

Well, Jim has now gone on to greener pastures, and we can only hope the column he originated continues, in years to come, to reach the goal he set a year ago.

A lot can happen in ten years on the political scene. A front page Gazette-Times story reported the results of primary elections in 1968: "Morrow county voters apparently followed state trends in the primary election Tuesday, giving Eugene McCarthy the edge over Robert Kennedy for president on the Democratic ticket, strongly supported Richard Nixon on the Republican side, and giving a slight margin to Robert Duncan for the U.S. Senate on the Demo ballot..."

Graduation activities for Morrow County schools is in the news in the Times this week as it was in years past. This list of HHS seniors graduating in 1948 may trip one of those memory switches for some people still living in these parts: Richard Allstott, Robert Kilkenny, Jack Ployhar, Doyle Key, Donald DuBois, Elizabeth Ann Smethurst, Clarence Greenup, Morgan Connor, Kenneth Green, Myron Rill, Donald Rippee, Harriet Ann Ball, Corabell Lee Nutting, Mary Ellen Gearhart, Leila Joan McLachlan, Beverly Ann Yocum, Edda Mae Thorpe, Ollie Hastings, Clara Sue Ledbetter, Joan Marie Hister, Merle Padberg and Herval Ray Pettyjohn.

LaVerne Van Marter and Harriet Hager took high honors at commencement ceremonies 40 years ago this week, in which 27 members of the class of '38 graduated from Heppner High School. Van Marter won the Norton Winnard Memorial cup, given to a senior showing high ratings in leadership, character, cooperation, activities and scholarship; while Miss Hager earned a place on the class honor plaque.

In a flowery editorial entitled "Sand Through the Hour Glass" the Times offered some words of encouragement to the graduates of that year:

"Constantly sifting sand through the hourglass of time is lifeless and leads to hopeless contemplation so long as the sand particles are looked upon as aluminum silicate...But when each grain...is seen as a human being...then the hourglass takes on a brighter, more hopeful aspect.

"It is thus we see...the new class of high school graduates each passing the meridian that so many graduating classes have passed before. They are not sifting through aimlessly, they are dropping into a world, and we see in each the ability and ambition to help mold that world into a new and brighter form..."

"May we not offer you the world as your 'oyster', for to do so would be misleading. But may we offer you the chance of success if you continue to do your best, and be determined...in applying your talents where the field is most fertile, and your chance for happiness the greatest...You, particles of sand now sifting through the hourglass are the hope of the world."

In less metaphorical language, the present staff of the Gazette-Times, says to the Class of '78: "Congratulations and good luck in the years ahead."

Such offsetting legislation appears the most likely solution to the problem of overlaps. And while the law resulting from passage of SB 1048 in Oregon last session applies only to Social Security benefits paid claimants on

permanent total disability, additional offset will be sought at other levels of disability as well.

When tax-free benefits even begin to approach take-home pay, it becomes increasingly difficult to restore recipients to productive pursuits in the workforce.

Overlapping disability benefits rapidly are approaching a point at which the cure for one social illness may create a malignancy of even greater magnitude.

Wednesday May 31  
County Court, 10 a.m., Irrigon office

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**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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**Community BILLBOARD**

Call 676-9228

Thursday May 25  
ECOAC meeting, 10 a.m., West of Willow  
Heppner kindergarten registration, 1-4 p.m. & 6:30-8 p.m., Elementary School  
Ione High School commencement, 8 p.m., IHS gymnasium, reception following  
Friday May 26  
Heppner High School commencement, 7:30 p.m., HHS gymnasium  
N.W. Regional College Finals Rodeo 4 p.m., Pendleton, Round-up grounds  
Saturday May 27  
Spray Rodeo—parade, 11:30 a.m.; rodeo, 1:30 p.m.,

N.W. College Finals Rodeo, 1:30 p.m., Pendleton, r-Up grounds  
Free film, 2:30-4 p.m., Masonic Hall, Ione  
Sunday May 28  
Pioneer Memorial Picnic—registration, 10 a.m.-noon; dinner, 12:30 p.m.; Fair Pavilion, Heppner  
Spray Rodeo—parade, 12:30 p.m. rodeo, 1:30 p.m.  
N.W. College Final Rodeo, 1:30 p.m., Pendleton R-Up grounds  
Monday May 29  
HOLIDAY  
No Chamber of Commerce meeting