

The Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
VIEWPOINT

An important issue concerning the transfer of students from one school to another within the Morrow County School District will be decided later this month.

Earlier this year attendance—or whether or not parents have a choice in deciding where their child will go to school—came before the district's school board. At that time several residents brought up verbal commitments made by school boards many years ago when consolidation of the district was taking place. Basically, the parents were saying that a previous school board had said parents have the choice.

Since that time the present administration and school board began taking steps in the right direction, establishing a written policy for attendance transfers.

**EDITORIAL
COMMENT**

In April the district administration presented an attendance policy—which was also adopted at the meeting—allowing transfer from one school to another for academic or social reasons.

Attached to the policy was a restriction on athletic eligibility for transferring students. It states simply that any student who transfers from any school in one attendance area to a school in another attendance area, be restricted from participation in athletics for a period of one year. The policy only applies if the student was involved in athletics at the school he previously attended.

In essence then, a student that receives approval for transfer based on academic reasons—of which there are many—is penalized of sorts by being prohibited from participation in athletics. No mention is made of restricting other activity such as participation in stage band, drama, or FFA, none of which are offered at Ione High School but are at Heppner High School.

At the admission of two school district administrators to The Gazette-Times this week, finding reason for transfer on academic grounds is not difficult. If that is the case—and we feel it



**Picture
Credit**

County Roadmaster Doc Sherer shows broken pavement along Ione-Boardman Road caused by a Caterpillar-type farm tractor. The clefted tractor tore up the edge of the county road for more than a mile. Most of the route it traveled was along empty summer fallow land, on which it could have moved without causing damage. Sherer figures it will cost more than \$600 to repair the road. Similar damage is common on county roads, he said.

is—then a student who receives approval of transfer from the district's administrators is being unjustly penalized with the athletic restriction.

The district administration is concerned about students who want to transfer for purely athletic reasons but veil their request in academics. Also, recruiting of fine athletes by coaches in another school may occur, according to the administration. They propose the athletic eligibility clause to prevent that from happening.

The district's policy says that athletics shall not be criterion for transfer. That means then, that all applications for transfer are based on academic reasoning and if the student gets approval for transfer because of academics, why should he or she be penalized if they also want to participate in athletics.

A multitude of questions concerning equalization of education between high schools, junior high and elementary schools are raised with this issue, and answers should be diligently sought. The biggest problem with equalization of education appears to be at the high school level, where students are preparing for college and life in the working world.

On the subject of attendance policy, we see it this way: If students and parents can readily apply for and receive approval for transfer on the grounds of academic superiority at one school over another, then there should be no athletic restriction attached. To penalize a student who seeks out academic excellence with non-participation in athletics is capricious, arbitrary and doesn't have a place in the Morrow County school system.

Death penalty favored

Editor,

I know that the younger generation's thoughts are not generally heard by the people who live and run this community. But I took a poll on the views of the students who were for or against the "Death Penalty". Because I heard that it might be on the ballot, and I wanted to see what the students around me felt about it. I took 100 students' answers and reasons from the grades 5th through 8th. The results are 79 per cent was for it, and 21 per cent were against the "Death Penalty". Here are some of the reasons they gave, one student said, "Why should we kill people who kill people to prove that killing is wrong?" A lot of students came up with this one, "If they kill someone they deserve to die." One other student said, "If we have the 'Death Penalty', everyone on the jury would believe in killing the convicted." And another student said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." This is what the students of the Heppner Jr. High School feel about the "Death Penalty".

Signed a concerned citizen,
Shelly Fraser

Recreation needed

Editor,

I am writing this letter in response to the lack of activity around Heppner.

I think that somebody could consider and probably pass a bill that would allow the city to build a roller rink, movie theater, or some other type of recreation for the people of and around Heppner.

I'm sure that there are a lot of other people that feel the same way about this situation and would like to see something done about it.

The space for something like this might cause problems, but I think that if people cared enough they would find space. Just to think that you have to go 45 to 60 or more miles just to see a movie, and at least 65 to go roller skating.

The cost of something like this would probably be high but I'm sure that there would be enough people interested enough to pay the prices to get in and etc.

I hope that this will be put into consideration, it really would be grand if something could be done.

Sherry Clement

Editor's Note:

The above letters from two of next year's eighth graders, Shelly and Sherry, were encouraged by their language arts teacher, Linda Murray. We welcome the opinions of area youths to this page.

**LETTERS
FROM
READERS**

Living in Richland, where there are no pine trees or mountains we really appreciated the area near Penland Lake.

During the day, Saturday, our two sons got lost in the timber. When I discovered that the boys were lost most of our group had left for home. It was a very unpleasant experience to feel that myself and a few friends, all unfamiliar with the area, would have to start searching for the boys.

However, before long, the Captain of the Search and Rescue Posse was on the scene.

From then on, even though it was several hours more before my sons were located, I felt much relief knowing that the fine men of the Rescue Posse were helping.

My wife and I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the Morrow County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Posse, and to Sheriff Larry Fetsch.

Indeed, Morrow County can be very proud of these fine people.

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Buchanan

Pioneer picnic lauded

Editor,

Another Annual Pioneer Memorial Picnic has come and gone. It has been a satisfying experience for the Green-Bryant committee to work together as a family and with others in the community to arrange for and serve this 25th anniversary picnic.

We express thanks to the civic organizations, businesses, fraternal groups, clubs and individuals who cooperated so well with their services and contributions of gifts, time and money. And, to the Heppner Gazette-Times for the fine promotional coverage.

We served more than 300 people and feel that such a response indicates the importance of continuing this annual event. Again, thanks everyone for your help.

Sincerely,
The Green-Bryant Committee

Rescue Posse praised

Editor,

Last week end May 26th & 27th our church in Richland, Washington had a Father and Son outing in the mountains near Heppner.

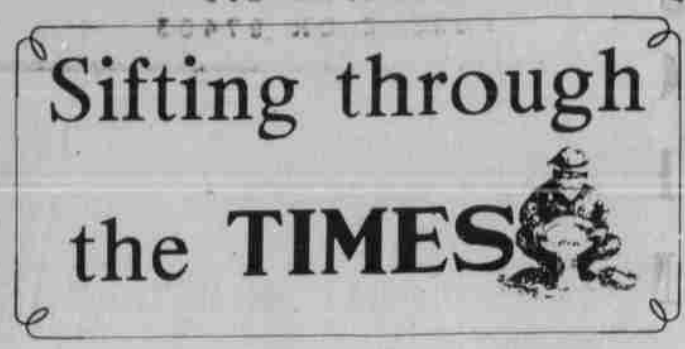


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With primary elections barely out of the way ten years ago this week, Morrow County voters were getting set to go to the polls again—to vote on the School District operating levy for a second time. The slim 3-vote passage the first time around had been declared void by the School Board because of five invalid ballots cast in that first election.

The Paul Pettyjohn Company of Ione celebrated its 25th anniversary this week in 1968. According to a front page article in the Gazette-Times, Pettyjohn first purchased the General Petroleum bulk plant in Ione from Ernest Lundell in 1947, and became affiliated with the Shell Oil Company (he's now a mobile dealer) in 1957. Observing its 35th anniversary this year, the Paul Pettyjohn Co. continues to distribute fine petroleum products throughout the county.

"Happy is the rancher who brings in an artesian well" read the cutline under a front page photograph ten years ago featuring Don Evans capping the brand new 250-foot deep well on his ranch between Heppner and Lexington. Within a few days after harnessing the artesian flow, Evans reported that the well was operating 11 sprinklers without a pump.

"Songs" was announced as the theme of the 1968 Morrow County Fair at a meeting of fair superintendents this week 20 years ago. Among superintendent changes also announced at the organizational discussion were: Jerry Brosnan in charge of sheep to replace Ron Currin who had been named to the fair board; Mrs. Walter Wright, general home economics to replace new fair board member Mrs. John Graves; Robert Jones, superintendent of vegetable to replace Tom Wilson; and the addition of Mrs. William Rawlins, Mrs. Omar Rietmann and Mrs. Helen Cox as flower superintendents.

Marion T. Weatherford was the guest speaker at the County's pioneer picnic on Memorial Day in 1958, comparing the facilities of the pioneers with modern day advantages and urging all citizens to do their part towards preserving American heritage. The annual picnic drew a crowd of 222 people that year, with Dr. A.D. McMurdo acting as chairman and Mrs. Clive Huston and Mrs. Lenny Loudon assistant officers. Mrs. Floyd Adams was in charge of registrations and guest book, assisted by Mrs. James Hager, Mrs. Elaine S. George and Mrs. Joe Hughes.

Flooding conditions on the Columbia River this week 30 years ago, gave many travelers a forced tour through this part of the county. Cars were routed from Highway 30 above Boardman, through Heppner, and over the Heppner-Condon Highway to the John Day where they chose a north or south course, as their destination called for. According to a front page report in the Times, the Columbia was the highest it had been since 1894. The river had Willow Creek backed up for more than a quarter of a mile, with ranchers busy trying to save hay crops in the path of the swollen stream.

Meanwhile, back in the Portland area, the community of Vanport had been devastated by flood waters when a dike gave way. The Times commented:

"Sympathy is of little avail in times of crises unless that sympathy can be put to practical use, yet in the case of the Vanport disaster there is not too much that the outside world can do. All that can be done is being accomplished through the efforts of the people of Portland and the relief agencies centered there. Flood conditions, still in a dangerous stage, makes it next to impossible for effective aid from upstate communities regardless of the desire to help..."

"It is a picture that recalls, vividly, the scene that was enacted in Heppner 45 years ago, although that flood was of a different nature. Here the water rushed and left its wreckage behind. Relief work started immediately and it was possible to search for bodies within a few hours after the flood passed. It is a different story in Vanport where flood conditions still prevail. Not until the water has subsided will it be possible to get an estimate of the loss of life and to recover the bodies of victims."

Wheat farmers in the area have probably been somewhat encouraged by the recent target price hike for their grain, and a glance back to the crop and price situation this week in 1938 might provide even more encouragement, from the "it could be worse" point of view.

"The average production of wheat in Morrow County for the ten-year period 1928-1937 was 12½ bushels per acre," reported the Gazette-Times 40 years ago. Yearly averages were: 1928, 17.5 bu.; 1929, 12.8; 1930, 16.4; 1931, 11.2, 1932, 16.2; 1933, 10.7; 1934, 7.6; 1935, 4.9; 1936, 10.7; and 1937, 13.5.

A separate but related article in that same issue in 1938, was the account of an attempt by the Eastern Oregon Wheat League, headed by president George N. Peck, to get an additional 12 cents a bushel payment on contracted acres from the government in return for a reduction of a similar amount in the commodity loan rate applicable to the area.

Peck said that such a concession to Pacific Northwest wheat growers was necessary to assist in disposing of the section's large exportable surplus while making it possible for ranchers to stay in business.

The local market price was quoted at 56 cents a bushel at the time the report appeared in the Times.

It could be worse.

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., 97838.