

The Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
VIEWPOINT

Voters to the polls Tuesday; 'yes' vote recommended on all

Morrow County voters will again go to the polls next Tuesday, June 27 to approve or deny three special levy requests.

Morrow County is asking voter approval of a \$246,655 levy outside the six per cent limitation—the first time in more than a decade that the county has had to do so.

Watching the budget-making process this year, one could sympathize with the County Court and budget committee as they straightened out a county budget that had used federal revenue sharing money over the last 12 years to keep from going outside the six per cent limitation. In addition, many areas of the budget overlapped and employees in one department have been paid out of a "richer" department, for the same reason.

That kind of budget-balancing wasn't done this year. It had to stop because federal money has been on a constant decline for the very reasons outlined in the previous paragraph and the county court and budget committee decided to bite the bullet. A good move.

If voters fail to approve the levy request, cuts in county services will certainly result and they're not in a flush position now.

We recommend a "yes" vote on the county budget.

A second ballot handed to voters next Tuesday will be a special levy request in the amount of \$190,082 for the operation of Pioneer Memorial Hospital.

One of the few remaining county owned and operated hospitals in the state, the continued stability and operations at Pioneer Memorial are in the hands of the voter.

The hospital has some problems, but the problems can and are being worked out. We feel that County Court and hospital board indecision in recent years is a part of the problem and making the hospital stand on its own this year in regards to obtaining voter approval of its levy request has helped in motivating the board.

Hospital Administrator Bob Byrnes and the board have undertaken a massive project in determining the needs of the community and the formation of a health care district, and more...there's a long road ahead.

Another problem area is patient use of the facility. While not enough patients use the hospital to keep it on a break-even basis, certain equipment and personnel must be kept and-or added to provide care for the patients that do. Every effort is being made to attract patients in need of health care from surrounding areas to bring more non-tax revenues into the hospital's coffers.

With the announcement this week that two of Heppner's physicians will be leaving soon, the need for a modern hospital is magnified if Morrow County is to attract new doctors.

Moreover, if the hospital levy is defeated some new equipment and possible personnel will be cut, resulting in some patients traveling to other communities for hospital care which in turn puts Pioneer Memorial in an even more precarious position financially.

Residents should not worry about the hospital shutting down because a couple doctors leave the community. There is no justification for such reasoning...only rumor.

For continued modern and competent health care, Morrow County voters should cast a "yes" vote for the Pioneer Memorial Hospital levy.

The third special levy request before voters is for Blue Mountain Community College. We endorsed the levy request last week and reiterate our position now. The BMCC board and administration has cut the budget twice after levy defeats this year and voter denial of the BMCC levy threatens closure of the facility.

In summation, The Heppner Gazette-Times endorses a "yes" vote on all three levy requests.

Bad news...

The announcement this week that Drs. Richard Carpenter and Joe Diehl will be leaving the community is unfortunate...in a couple ways.

First, no community likes to lose its physicians and secondly, the handling of the announcement was poor and reminds us of an afternoon soap opera.

One can't really comment on the decision of the doctors to leave the community because—whatever their reasons—it certainly is their right to make such a decision.

The revolting baseness in the decision, we feel, lies in the fact the County Judge D.O. Nelson had to call the doctors to confirm or deny the rumor that had been circulating for over a week.

Secondly, with all that the community has done in setting up not one, but two clinics at minimal rent for the doctors (they dropped the idea of staffing the second clinic in Boardman after it was built and an x-ray machine was ordered) their decision is a bitter pill to swallow.

Thirdly, the doctors' decision to give the community 30-days notice before they walk away from a healthy practice in a clinic their patients, in effect, helped finance through tax money.

When The Heppner Gazette-Times tried to contact the doctors for comment this week, a spokesman in the office said the doctors didn't want to comment because they thought their decision would influence a "no" vote on the upcoming hospital levy. They shouldn't flatter themselves...we give the voter more credit.

We hope the doctors will outline their exodus from the community next week as they said they will, for the benefit of their patients and the community.

LETTERS FROM READERS

Board member backs BMCC levy

Editor,

I am addressing this letter to all citizens concerned with the continued operation of Blue Mountain Community College.

The college budget has been defeated twice and the will of the people has been heeded. The budget committee and the administration carefully reviewed the budget and made substantial cuts. To cut further would eliminate courses and or programs resulting in the loss of students.

Now is the time for us to decide the future of this college. It is my sincere belief that the people of Umatilla and Morrow Counties realize and appreciate the benefits of having Blue Mountain Community College to serve many of the educational needs beyond high school. The American educational system has played a large role in making America the great nation it is. Blue Mountain Community College is a part of this system.

The faculty, the administration, and the board are working together in a unified effort to provide quality education to the students and citizens of this area. We need your help and are calling on you to vote "Yes" on June 27.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,
Malachi Campbell, Chairman
Blue Mountain Community College Board of Education

Faculty supports College levy bid

Editor,

We are writing this letter to urge a YES vote for the Blue Mountain Community College budget in the June 27 election.

The college faculty is working with the board and administration for your support. We want BMCC to be able to continue its history of educational excellence in this area. BMCC provides low-cost, quality classes and programs of many kinds to the citizens of Morrow and Umatilla counties. Such opportunities are available days and evenings, on and off campus. Voting YES in this budget election will ensure the continuance of our fine community college.

Please support BMCC by joining all of us in our efforts to have the budget pass, so the college can continue to be the important part of Eastern Oregon and your community that it always has been.

The BMCC Faculty Association Officers
Cindy Hilden, President
Alan Insko, President Elect
Tony Svetich, Jr., Secretary
Bob Irving, Treasurer

Roger says 'thanks' to area residents

Editor,

Although my campaign for the Republican nomination for Governor was not successful state-wide, Morrow County did support me in my effort and I will always have a warm spot in my heart for the great people of your county.

I especially want to pay tribute to two of the best campaign workers I have ever met, Steve and Cathy Peck, and to all the people they were able to enlist on my behalf. It was their efforts that resulted in my success in Morrow County. And, you can rest assured, their hard work and your voters' response will never be forgotten by me.

I have no immediate political plans, but if I run in the future, you can be sure that Morrow County will again be one of my favorite and priority areas in the State of Oregon.

My thanks to all of you.

Sincerely,
Roger Martin
House Minority Leader

OTHERS SAY...

Mainly because of the big play in the nation's press and on teevs, California's Proposition 13 has had a national impact and "tax revolt" groups are springing up from nowhere in what seems to be every village, town and state in the U.S.

But we would caution Oregonians to tread softly when it comes to a "tax revolt" when only property taxes are involved. Here's why:

REASON ONE: The bulk of your property tax goes for schools, and we would want to study the situation very carefully before cutting the jugular vein of education.

Sure, nobody likes property taxes and they like the continual raises even worse. Take my humble, two-bedroom abode, for instance. The assessed valuation on it went up \$5,000 just a couple of weeks ago. Larger homes up

the hill from us went up \$8,000 to \$10,000. On mine, that \$5,000 increase means about a \$125 tax increase if we use a rate of \$25 per thousand. That's pretty stiff for one year and I'm hoping the final tax rate is as low as \$25.

But schools cannot be the whipping boy for assessment increases. Your county assessor and inflation does that. He's supposed to assess your property at its true cash value. And if home-and-property inflation increases 8 per cent in one year, you can bet your assessment will rise about that much.

Your neighbors do it to you, too. If your neighbor's house sold for \$30,000 five years ago and \$40,000 today, you can promise yourself a healthy increase just because of that.

Inflation certainly seems to be a never-ending nightmare, especially with Oregon's true



Moonshining was front-page news in the Gazette-Times 60 years ago, when two South Carolina men were arrested at the head of Little Butter Creek, where they were operating a 10-vat still.

The Prohibition violators had been producing about 40 gallons of "corn squeezings" per day at the spring-fed Butter Creek site, which was nestled in a grove of trees, well out of sight from local roads.

Police said the moonshiners had been selling their wares for \$50 per gallon, making the operation a profitable \$400 a day.

Several barrels of whiskey, as well as 12 bushels of cornmeal, barley, and rye were confiscated in the raid. Pendleton and Heppner were believed to be two of the main local consumers of the still's output.

Also in the news 60 years ago was the accidental gunshot death of Rhea Creek sheepman Louis Groshens.

Groshens' body was found in his car, in which he had been following the herding of his sheep from Rhea Creek to summer range near Stites, Idaho. The car was located near the Hynd Brothers ranch along Sand Hollow.

Groshens, a native of France, had lived in Morrow County for 35 years prior to his 1918 death. He was 58.

Fifty years ago this week in the Gazette-Times, an editorial appeared praising the Republican nomination of Herbert Hoover for President. New Chevrolet roadsters were selling for \$495 at Ferguson Chevrolet in Lone.

Twenty-five years ago in Heppner, the Heppner Chess Team returned from a victorious road trip to Pasco. The Heppner team of LaVerne Van Marter, Harry Tamblin, C.J.D. Bauman, Forrest Adams and Joe Winslow beat the Pasco team 6 1/2 to 3 1/2.

Fire destroyed 15 square miles of Morrow County rangeland between Heppner Junction and Cecil 20 years ago this week. The 1958 blaze charred all of the Hynd Brothers' range, but damaged no wheat. More than 100 firefighters, including fire departments from Irrigon, the Army munitions center at Ordnance, and the Navy bombing range helped the area farmers battle the blaze.

The sheriff's department had problems controlling traffic on the Willow Creek Highway, which was clogged with hundreds of spectators.

However, the Gazette-Times reported, "the loss of life was confined to thousands of kangaroo mice and jackrabbits."

Ten years ago, Louis Carlson of the Valby District was honored by a visit from 200 state farmers and wheat producers, after being named Oregon's Conservation Man of the Year.

That same week, Barbara Gribble of Heppner was leaving by plane for Athens, Greece, where she was to marry Airman First Class Larry Derrick of Baker.

Wheat support prices in 1968 were set at \$1.28 per bushel, and yearling steers were selling for \$26.50 per hundred pounds.

Five year ago in Heppner, one of the first public meetings on the proposed Willow Creek Dam was being held with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The possibility of relocating the town of Heppner was dropped, when it was determined that property values in the flood plain totaled more than \$9 million.

As has been the case in subsequent hearings on the dam, nothing concrete was decided.

That same week in 1973, Mrs. Rose Kilcup celebrated her 100th birthday.

Mrs. Kilcup operated a dress shop in Heppner from 1901 to 1907, when she married Butter Creek rancher Walter Kilcup. She continued to operate the ranch for a number of years following her husband's death in the 1950s.

Class of '68...

Editor,

The Class of '68 would like to thank everyone who helped make our Car Wash and Bake Sale a complete success.

We would especially like to thank all the parents who donated food for the bake sale and Cal & Bev Sherman for the use of their service station for our car wash.

Sincerely
Class of '68
Susan Johnston

Watch for Proposition 13

cash value system.

Perhaps limiting assessments to a certain per cent on a base year is a good place to start. But at the same time, we must look to other means of financing education. We just can't leave them out there in the cold.

REASON TWO: If there's going to be a tax revolt, why limit it to property taxes and schools? Why not go for the big one?

In most cases, your federal income tax far outstrips your property tax. You just don't realize it since your income tax is withheld by your employer a little each week. It's money you earn, but never see. And many Americans even get a refund at the end of the year. It's the refund they look forward to and remember, not the big amount that actually came out of their checks.

So if we're going to have a "for real" tax revolt, let's direct it at the most wasteful and inefficient tax collector... federal government.

Milton-Freewater Valley Herald

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