

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

**Caution urged when viewing eclipse**

The natural show of the century is coming our way next Monday and with it comes a potential danger that can't be stressed too much.

The show is the total eclipse of the sun to be seen in the Northwest—an Morrow County lies almost in the middle of its path—and the potential danger is to the viewers eyesight.

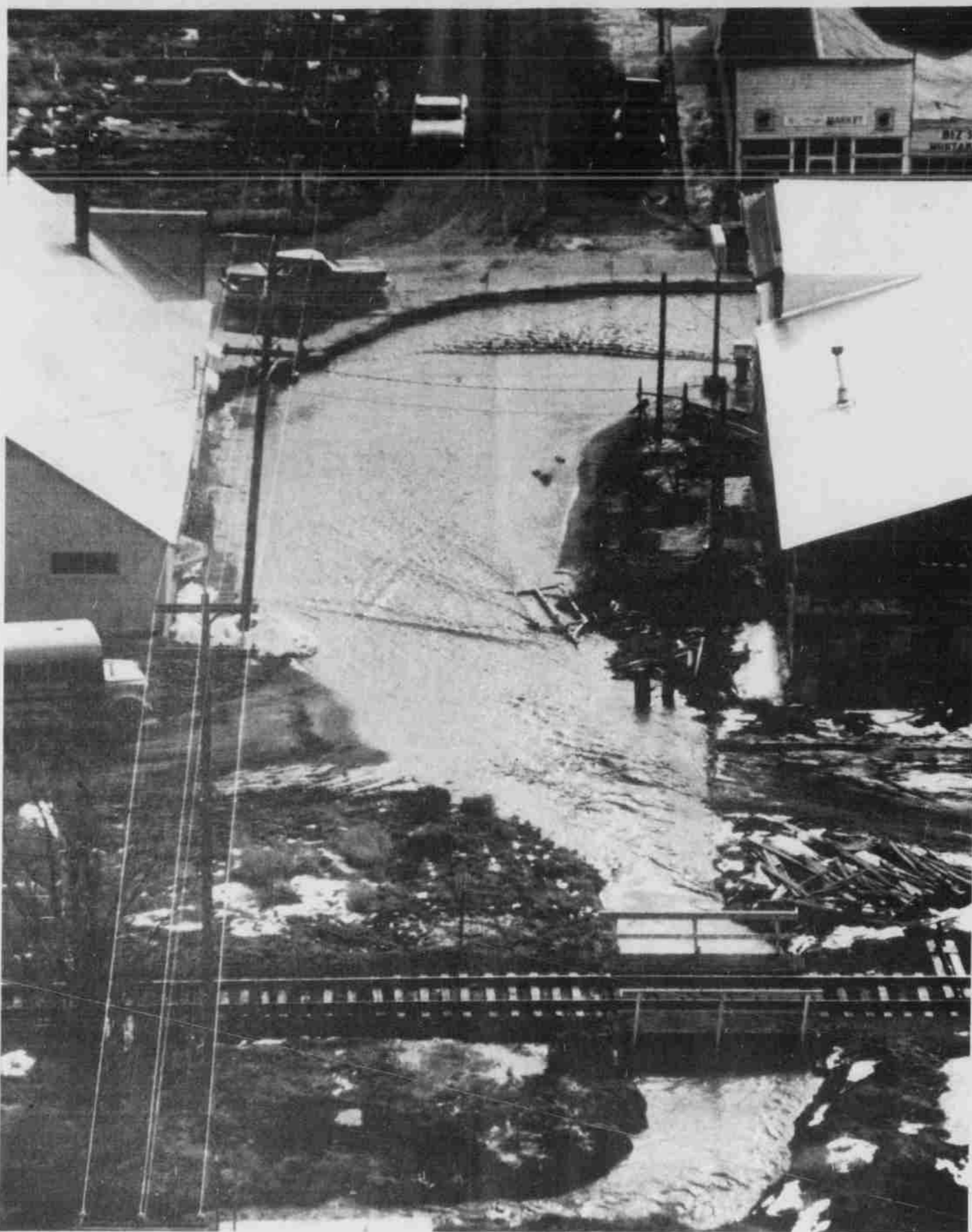
A total eclipse is caused by the moon coming directly between the earth and the sun over a gradual period of time. It is during the partial eclipse that damage can occur to the eyes; the sun's rays partially obscured allowing easy viewing of the partial eclipse. During this period the sun's rays are bright enough to burn the retina of the eye which cannot be corrected once the damage is done.

One of the best descriptions of this type of eye damage was best given by the Oregon Journal. Take a pair of glasses and smear vaseline over the center of the lenses—about the size of a quarter. Put the glasses on and the blurred image is the permanent damage that can occur by looking at the sun during the partial eclipse.

We suggest carrying out this procedure with children to graphically illustrate to them the reason why they shouldn't look at the sun. The phenomenon is so unusual the desire to look up at the sun as everything becomes dark around you is almost irresistible.

Stories relating to the eclipse appear on pages one and three of this issue and one describes a method of indirectly viewing the eclipse. Even if this procedure is followed we recommend that adult supervision is given children.

The safest and recommended way of viewing the eclipse is to watch TV next Monday morning.



**LETTERS FROM READERS**

**Cantin urges County residents to 'band together'**

Editor:

I believe it is past time the people of Morrow County should band together and save the hospital.

The hospital cannot survive without doctors and vacant beds in the nursing home and limited use of the hospital are causing it to go deeper in debt. It has been brought to the board's attention the run-down condition and apparent lack of maintenance of our hospital. During one meeting it was asked that the lawn mowers, hoses and other equipment be put under cover and the back ambulance entrance swept. After one of the big snows we had a picture of the situation taken of these mowers and hoses piled high with snow; apparently the photographer was seen because within a day or so the equipment was moved. Something was accomplished.

Also during the snow storms the sidewalks and emergency entrance were piled high with snow for several days—hoping it would thaw, I guess. Water stains on the ceiling and walls are caused by gutters overflowing with leaves.

The board wonders in dismay as to why the union is being formed by the employees. These people had only one thought in mind at the time. They weren't unhappy with wages or benefits—self protection from administration is Number One and still is. Because the board did nothing about it at the time, they are now faced with having a negotiator that will cost the public quite a sum of tax money.

The study made by the NWMF has been brought forth to the public. I know all of the board has read it because they are trying to use the NWMF study to make improvements, which was the intent of the study. In addition we gained some valuable information from the study and Mr. Blair and I feel the board is wasting time by not acting on some of the recommendations to keep our hospital open.

It was pointed out that unless improvements are made the regulating bodies of the state and federal governments

could close our hospital. Only one infraction may be needed to close it, but a lot of effort would be needed to try to open it again.

The public has asked that the administrator be replaced. This still remains a big problem and I feel the public is still dissatisfied. The board was asked to form an executive board, a group they could turn to for advice as to finance, construction, etc., but this too has not been done.

The board wants to get their own planning consultant to come in and make a study. The feeling is that the study by NWMF was complete and informative and that another study does not need to be made. NWMF's study pointed out the following: (1) Doctors are needed in the Boardman clinic; doctors and a surgeon are needed in Heppner; a doctor and a nurse practitioner in Condon and Fossil, (2) The hospital must be brought back into shape as a hospital—not just a first aid station for a band-aid; to stay open it must have patients, (3) the nursing home should be moved to the upper level and a new acute care unit added.

I feel enough information is before the board to make some wise decisions. At the last meeting the board was again told what must be done about the problems the public feels they have. Until the present administration and the board chairman are removed and the board starts working for the public, I feel Pioneer Memorial Hospital will not have the public support it needs to survive.

The board has decided to contact several "management" firms and have them submit proposals within the next 30 days. The board has also been asked to explain several budget items approved by voters that have not been purchased.

I hope there will be results because I feel the public has a right to know more about how and for what their money is being used.

Merl Cantin

**Amtrak's 'Pioneer' route worth retaining**

Editor:

Thank you for running the excellent article by Senator Ken Jernstedt regarding Amtrak's popular "Pioneer" route.

Senator Jernstedt pointed out some of the real advantages of rail travel—that trains offer much in the way of energy efficiency, minimal environmental impact, comfort, safety, convenience and scenic enjoyment. Amtrak is beneficial to the economy of Oregon, bring in tourists, sightseers, college students, sports enthusiasts, business people. Trains help preserve our environment by decreasing dependence on the automobile and airplane, and their energy efficiency helps lower our petroleum import requirement with its associated inflation and balance-of-trade problems.

The Federal Department of Transportation has proposed the discontinuance of the Amtrak "Pioneer", as well as many others in the Amtrak system, basing its recommendation solely upon financial considerations without regard to people matters, environmental concerns, or quality of life. While it is clear that government waste must be cut down, it should also be apparent that cutting a vital public service such as Amtrak's "Pioneer" is not in the best interest of Oregonians.

Unless our congressional representatives make a move soon to counter the Department of Transportation proposal, most long distance passenger trains will go down the tube. If you have not yet written to your senators and representatives, do so immediately to let them know your views about Amtrak.

Sincerely,  
Rodney A. Aho  
Oregon Assoc. of Railway Passengers  
Heppner

**Volunteer help in Ione flood is lauded**

Editor:

In the seven years that I have been a resident of Morrow County, I have always felt that the people that live here are very special. The recent flooding, particularly involving our schools here in Ione, has not only confirmed my feelings, but has given me an even greater appreciation of the friends and neighbors we have in this part of Oregon.

Space does not permit me to list all of the many people who spontaneously volunteered their equipment, their vehicles, and the many hours of work necessary to clean up our buildings so that we were operating again on Monday following the flood. Students, faculty and staff, townspeople, farmers, forest service people, and others all contributed greatly to this tremendous effort. The numbers working varied from as many as 40 during the day to as few as 4 in the evening, but every single person was appreciated.

We still have a lot to do to repair the damage and clean up our grounds, but we will make it, thanks to all of you. Just saying thank you seems inadequate after such an effort. Perhaps I can better express the way I feel by saying I'm very proud to be one of you.

Chuck Starr  
Principal  
Ione Schools

**Sifting through the TIMES**

Free-running dogs attacked and killed more than 100 ewes at the R. A. Thompson ranch near Heppner 50 years ago this week.

Thompson reported the canine attack to officials at the Morrow County Courthouse, with hopes of collecting funds to help defray his loss. A recently approved Oregon law diverted a portion of money collected from dog taxes to stockmen suffering losses caused by dogs.

During the same week in 1929, the Heppner Commercial Club passed a resolution calling on the Oregon Legislature to include the Heppner-Spray Highway in the state road system. The Heppner-Spray route was nearing completion at that time. The Commercial Club noted that once a 24-mile link along Service Creek was completed between Spray and Mitchell, traffic would be able to move from Walla Walla to the California state line, passing through Heppner, Spray, Mitchell, Prineville and Bend.

The news took a dimmer note, when it was learned that Fannie Rood, a long-time resident of the Heppner area, died at sea while making a long-planned cruise to the Mediterranean. Mrs. Rood, widow of Edward Rood of Heppner, succumbed to a heart ailment only the day after her ship departed from New York. She was making the voyage with two nieces.

But not all the news during this week a half century ago was of life and death importance. Union Oil deliveryman Frank Conner dropped a 50 gallon oil drum on his toe, breaking it, and E. E. Clark of Clark's Barber Shop put down his razor and scissors for a week to tag sheep at the Frank Wilkinson ranch. W.H.I. Padberg was advertising that he was interested in buying pigs and "chicken feed horses."

High water problems were in the news 30 years ago this week, as they are today.

The cause of the 1949 flooding was the same as that in 1979—a sudden thaw in the Willow Creek Basin. The 1949 flood blocked roads to Pendleton at Butter Creek and along Hinton Creek, and covered Chase Street with more than a foot of water. Basements were flooded with water and mud across much of town, and the Union Pacific Depot was surrounded by a lake of water for several hours, as was the Tum A Lum Lumber yard. A railroad bridge washed out between Lexington and Ione, shutting down rail service to Heppner for several weeks.

Heppner City Council had recently set aside funds for building curbs and paving streets, but the flooding meant that most of the funding would go to repairing flood damaged streets.

Heppner's recently organized Boy Scout troop got its first taste of active duty. Members were excused from school early during the day the flooding hit, and helped direct traffic around flood zones, kept tabs on the Morgan Street Bridge, and helped residents move property away from the rising water.

Heppner High School FFA members Ken Turner and Elwayne Bergstrom had their Future Farmers' livestock projects jeopardized by the flooding. Calves owned by the two youths were stranded by raging floodwater along a fence adjacent to the rodeo grounds. The boys waded into the fairgrounds, broke out a section of fence, and drove the calves to high ground, where they managed to put on halters and lead them to safety.

A student protest was in the news 25 years ago this week, when members of the student body at Boardman high school went on strike.

About 30 students took part in the protest, which centered on their not being given a day off for Washington's birthday. The disgruntled students walked out of their classes and congregated on the banks of the Columbia River, when Morrow County Sheriff C.J.D. Bauman arrived at the scene and sounded his siren.

According to a Gazette-Times account of the incident, after Bauman "consulted" with several of the strike leaders for a few minutes, the students agreed to return to classes. "Maybe it was just coincidence, or the strength of the appeal he made," the Gazette-Times commented. "However, the sheriff is also the county truant officer."

Ten years ago this week, Morrow County School Board members and county teacher's reached a salary agreement. The terms of the new wage pact called for a base salary of \$6,100 per year—up only slightly from the previous year's base of \$6,000. The teachers had been seeking a base of \$6,400.

During the same week, Heppner High FFA member David Hall, state FFA reporter, was in Salem meeting with Gov. Tom McCall to outline state plans for commemorating National FFA Week. Making the trip with Hall was Sherman County High's FFA Sentinel Bill Bellamy, now District 55's delegate in the Oregon House of Representatives.

**Picture Credit**

Officials have not yet determined what type of flood disaster relief may be available to Morrow County residents but were expected to do so by the end of the week. Ione was hardest hit by floodwaters, however private residences in nearly all areas were damaged to one extent or another. The Gazette-Times will report disaster relief information as it becomes available.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE  
\$8.00 in Morrow, Umatilla, Wheeler & Gilliam County, \$10.00 elsewhere




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**DEADLINES**

General News & Society	Friday, 5 p.m.
Sports & Weekend Events	Monday, 5 p.m.
Late-breaking News	Tuesday, 12 noon
Classified Advertising	Monday, 5 p.m.
Display Advertising	Monday, 5 p.m.

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