

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

## Bid to ban steer busting is taken seriously in Salem

By Kathleen Glanville  
Eagle Newspapers Reporter

The chute opens and the steer charges off, racing across the arena pursued by a horseback rider swinging a lasso.

As the seconds tick away and the crowd roars, the cowboy casts his rope and pulls the steer to the ground.

To the crowd in the grandstands it's an exciting test of skill as old as America's West. But to a small, but determined group of animal lovers, it's a grotesque display of man's cruelty to animals.

And that group is back before the Legislature this year with a bill to ban the rodeo event called "steer busting." The House Judiciary Committee last week heard testimony on House Bill 2924 which would classify the steer busting as torture and outlaw it in Oregon.

"Steer busting" is a competitive rodeo event in which the steer is roped around the horns, tripped to the ground and tied. Proponents of the measure told the committee that the sport is a brutal event which is banned in most states.

"Man can concoct the most outrageous tortures," said Otto Jorgensen of Scappoose. "This steer busting—I think that it should get the blue ribbon for man's overworked crippled brain when it comes to torture."

The 70-year-old Scappoose man said he once wanted to be a buckaroo when he was young, but when he began going to rodeos he quickly changed his mind because of the inhumane treatment of animals.

He said he drove 70 miles to argue for the bill because he is an animal lover.

Sen. Mike Thorne, D-Pendleton, who has competed in the Pendleton Roundup, said the people who are against steer roping don't understand the sport.

"Sometimes people get hung up on something when they don't understand the history or the background," he said. "At one time roping was the only way a rancher could doctor a sick animal. That's one of the reasons people originally started roping a steer. It became an art."

Thorne said the rules of steer roping have been changed over the years to protect the animals. He said plaster is placed around the horns to keep them from being broken. The contestant is not allowed to throw the rope around the animal's neck and he has only one chance to trip the steer.

House Bill 2924 would define the following event as torture: "A person pursues a steer while on horseback, loops a rope over the horn, head or neck of the steer, then turns his horse at an angle from the line on which the steer is running, flips the slack of the rope around the rump of the steer and causes the head of the steer to be whipped around when the end of the rope is reached."

Royal Raymond, chairman of the Pendleton Round-up board of directors, objected to the term "steer busting." "The word busting is used because it sounds cruel and this bill has been instigated by those with high emotions and sponsored by those who are misinformed."

Raymond said in the past two years, 432 steers have been roped in Round-up competition. He said in 1977 there were no injuries and in 1978 the only casualties were two broken horns and one broken leg.

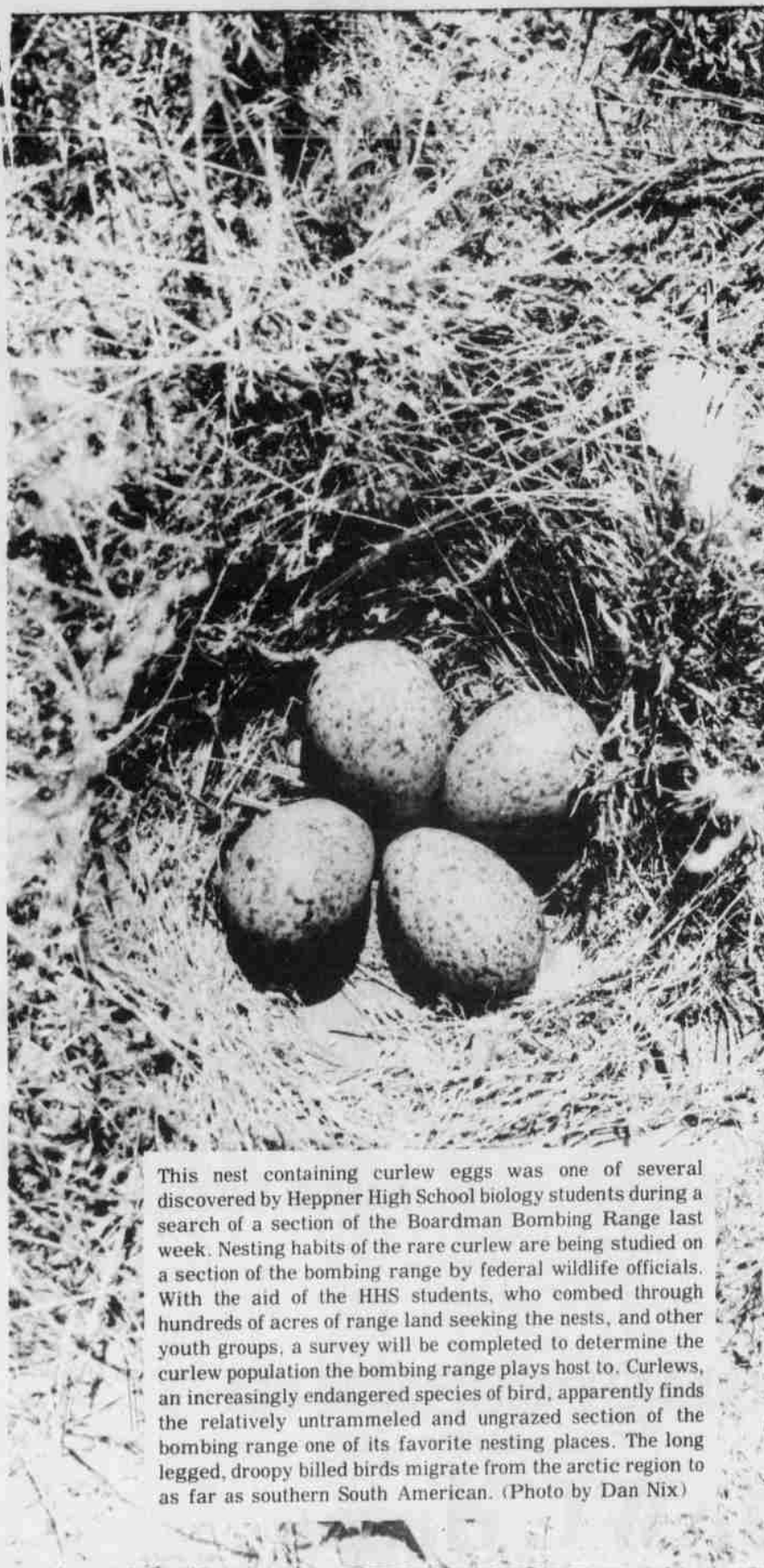
Raymond said the goal is to loop the rope over the horns of the steer. If the rope goes over the head or neck the entrant is disqualified. When the steer is down, the cowboy must tie three legs as in calf roping.

Legislative counsel Dennis Bromka, wondering if the ban would affect ranchers, asked, "Is this the normal way of apprehending a steer?"

Raymond said it was. He said it's difficult for one person to treat a sick animal unless the steer is roped, knocked down and tied.

Lois Winchester, a Heppner woman who's been trying to get steer busting banned for several years, asked Rep. Wally Priestly, D-Portland, to sponsor the bill.

"In this day and age it's disgusting that there are still people who promote cruelty as entertainment," she said. "Steer roping is prohibited in most states because it is considered excessively cruel." "Would any of these cowboys like to trade places with the steers?"



This nest containing curlew eggs was one of several discovered by Heppner High School biology students during a search of a section of the Boardman Bombing Range last week. Nesting habits of the rare curlew are being studied on a section of the bombing range by federal wildlife officials. With the aid of the HHS students, who combed through hundreds of acres of range land seeking the nests, and other youth groups, a survey will be completed to determine the curlew population the bombing range plays host to. Curlews, an increasingly endangered species of bird, apparently finds the relatively untrampled and ungrazed section of the bombing range one of its favorite nesting places. The long legged, droopy billed birds migrate from the arctic region to as far as southern South America. (Photo by Dan Nix)

## Atiyeh 'stacking of commissions' denied

By Senator Ken Jernstedt

There is both good news and bad news coming from the State Capitol this week.

The good news is that the Atiyeh administration, through its appointments, is restoring balance and judgment to several important boards and commissions.

The bad news is that some members of the State Senate are using the new appointment confirmation process as a political war toy to try to embarrass the governor.

We've heard a lot of controversy, perhaps too much, about the fact that two of the Governor's appointments have not been approved by the Senate. A number of tactics have been employed to keep delaying and postponing action and there is a strong possibility that these two are being held "hostage" as a trade off to secure changes some senators want in bills concerning Trojan and the proposed two Pebble Springs nuclear plants. Such changes would result in Trojan being shut down permanently and Pebble Springs never being built.

To keep the matter in

perspective, the Governor has appointed 166 Oregonians to positions of public trust. One of them was rejected by the Senate, for purely political reasons. Another nominee, former Chief Justice Kenneth O'Connell, was withdrawn by the Governor.

The positive side of the question, and the side about which we've not heard enough, is that the Governor's appointments have received universal acclaim—a handful of Senate prime-time prima donnas notwithstanding.

Most pleasing is that the Governor has a strong commitment to unstacking those boards and commissions where one point of view has been over-represented through appointments made by the previous administration.

The Governor has been accused of trying to stack the Energy Facility Siting Council by filling vacancies with two new members who refused to commit to a decision on the Pebble Springs application until all the facts are in.

The chairman of that Senate committee wanted the reap-

pointment of two members whose terms expired eight months ago but who were kept on by Governor Straub even though they had served the maximum years allowable.

These two members had already publicly announced how they would vote on the application request more than

a year before all studies can be made upon which a decision will be based.

One thing that is clear is that it isn't the Governor who is trying to stack the Energy Facility Siting Council. Guilty instead are the chairman and a few members of the Senate Committee on Energy and

Environment.

As Oregonians, we can all hope that the Governor will stick to his guns and continue with his policy of seeking the cream of the crop of Oregon's citizenry to serve on those boards and commissions which have a big impact on all of our lives.

## 'Sifting Through Times' rekindles reader's memories

Editor:

Your "Sifting Through the Times" Column of April 5th pertaining to Heppner's team in the long departed Wheatland League certainly brought back fond memories to this writer. Ah, yes, recalling those great games played during the twenties and thirties.

The league comprised six teams (Wasco, Condon, Heppner, Ione, Fossil and Arlington) and what an interesting and entertaining brand of ball they provided the fans of that era.

How many Old Timers remember the Heppner roster of their town team of 50 years ago? Well, shall we bring back a little nostalgia and perhaps a tear or two that this type of baseball is dispensed no more.

Do you recall the following names? Crockett Sprouls, "Dink" Devaney, Hank Robertson, Elmer Hake, Roy Gentry, Buster Gentry, "Mitch" Thorn, Harold Erwin, "Ducky" Drake, Clair LaMear, Lowell Turner, Nolan Turner, Laverne Van Marter, the Bleakman boys from Hardman, Ray Ferguson, "Jap" Crawford, "Doc" McCready, Bob Corral and a pitcher named Aune whose first name I can't seem to remember.

Oh yes, we had recruiting in those days, too. "Ducky" Drake and Clair LaMear were both drafted from Portland to play each Sunday for the Heppner team. I was told that LaMear received \$50 per game to catch which was good money in those days. Drake did the hurling and what a job he did.

The first five names in the batting order were "Mitch" Thorn, (employed by Pacific Power and Light) Harold Erwin, Roy Gentry, Ducky Drake and Clair LaMear. Drake, a pitcher, must have had some power in his bat to be placed in the cleanup position.

Emory Worthington, a salesman from Pendleton and an employee of Buster Brown Shoe Store, called the balls and strikes in his umpiring capacity. I recall more than once some heated arguments on some hair line decision, he rendered.

I would say that the "pepper" man or the Rah Rah man of the Heppner infield was Ray Ferguson at the "hot Corner" or third base. Definitely the Pete Rose of his era.

It may seem strange to report that cars were allowed within the confines of the Rodeo Grounds and many a fan watched the games without ever leaving his auto. Of course, there was a liberal sprinkling of people in the stands, too.

I was somewhat of a spectator participant during the game. I was a vendor dispensing soda pop turned out by Andy Baldwin in a small plant he had built in a vacant lot near the old William Cunningham residence and adjacent to the Hinton Creek bridge which you had to cross to go up North Elder to the Gilman, Fredericksen, Morgan, Marlatt, Edwards, Doherty, Aiken, Josie

Jones, Driscoll, McCullough, Hisler or my residence.

"Doc" McCready might have been a dentist but he loved to do a little pitching on the side. He would probably like to forget one Sunday afternoon in Arlington when he was really shell shocked by the Honkers. If my memory serves me correctly, he didn't have a team uniform in his possession on that particular day. Just took off his coat and started hurling.

In closing, I would like to remember, also, a few individuals from other teams in the league.

Ione had a "Big Drink of Water" as a pitcher by the name of Larry Ritchie.

Also, who can forget "Kewpie" Clow, a pitcher for Condon, and his jerky motion in the act of throwing the ball.

Arlington had a pitcher by the name of Soden whom I thought had the speed of Bob Feller of a later era. However, he had problems with his wildness. Even with this shortcoming he was lucky enough to be given a tryout with the San Francisco Seals.

Undoubtedly, I inadvertently overlooked a number of other outstanding individuals and highlights of that great era.

After 50 years there must be some forgiving.

William J. Mitchell (Ole)  
Daly City, Calif.

### Forest management poses problems

Editor:

To my way of thinking we have two problems here in Morrow County, and both up here in the mountains.

One is that there is about \$4,000,000 worth of bug-eaten lodgepole pine which will be dead and will rot in a few years, and it isn't being harvested. I'm an old farmer, and when a crop was ripe I harvested it.

The other is that in the end, the Forest Service will log the headwaters of Willow Creek, and there goes the last year-round creek we have, also probably our shallow wells. There also, will go the last piece of virgin forest of 700,000 acres.

We are entitled to something better here.

O. W. Cutsforth

The Gazette-Times welcomes letters from readers on any subject of general interest...letters should be not more than 250 words



## Sifting through the TIMES

The Heppner-Spray highway came a step nearer completion during this week 50 years ago, when the Bureau of Public Roads authorized funding for surfacing a six mile stretch of the new thoroughfare.

The six mile link completed the highway through the section of forest between the two towns, leaving only a few miles to be completed on either end. Road surfacing costs were a bit more reasonable in those days, when \$40,000 was all that was required for the six mile segment.

Wasco County's "Sky" Soden had a field day pitching against Heppner's town baseball team in Wheatland League action during this week in 1929.

Soden held Heppner to three hits, while striking out 15 batters. According to a Gazette-Times account of the game, "Van Marter seemed to be about the only local who could distinguish the pellet from the balls of dust that rolled down to the plate with Soden's deliveries, and he made two of his team's three hits, the first of which was responsible for Heppner's lone tally."

In other local news half a century ago, Elsie Owens, superintendent of Morrow General Hospital, became the bride of P.A. Mollahan, the new owner of Bayless service station.

Cougars were well on their way to becoming an endangered species in Oregon 50 years ago this week, when the Oregon Game Commission announced it was holding a contest with \$500 in prize money to amateur shootists bagging the most cougars.

The hunter killing the most cougars in the state was to receive \$175, in addition to regular bounties, with \$125 going to the second place gunman. According to the Gazette-Times, "for some time the game commission has had under consideration a plan which would stimulate greater activity among cougar hunters and thus save the lives of many deer..."

Bacon was selling for 29 cents a pound at the MacMarr Store in the Heppner Hotel building, and Poland China weaning pigs were advertised for \$5 each by lower Rhea Creek farmer Walter Jepson.

Thirty years ago this week, the town of Kinzua retained the services of a full-time barber, after several years without a resident hair clipper. J.B. Dyer of Fossil returned to the Blue Mountain timber town, after barbering in Condon and Fossil.

During the same week in 1949 Kinzua, according to Gazette-Times Kinzua correspondent Elsa Leathers, "little Jerry Samples was injured Saturday afternoon

when struck on the head by a baseball bat during practice. He was taken to the doctor at Fossil and had the wound stitched up."

"Little Jerry," now owner of Jerry's Mobil and Minimart in Heppner, appears to have recovered from his baseball injury.

A late-season snowstorm greeted Heppner residents 25 years ago this week.

Nearly five inches of snow fell on the city, and more in the county's mountain reaches, helping to ease a predicted period of insufficient water for the 1954 irrigation season. Only 3.87 inches of moisture had fallen on the area since Jan. 1 of that year.

During the same week, Ron Baker of Ione was elected president of the Students of the College of Agriculture at Washington State College, and on the home front, Beverly Nolan was named valedictorian of Lexington High.

Shutler Flat near Arlington was the topic of discussion by NBC talk show personality Johnny Carson 10 years ago this week.

During a Monday night airing of "The Tonight Show," Carson, who has bantered from time to time with NBC bandleader Doc Severinson about his Shutler Flat childhood, produced a map of Oregon and demanded that Severinson show him where Shutler Flat was located. Since Shutler Flat is not one of the larger metropolitan areas in the state, Doc was unable to find his home-place marked on the map, prompting Carson to comment, "see, there is no Shutler Flat." Johnny did find Arlington, Olex, Ione, Mikkalo and other area towns—but no Shutler Flat.

The Gazette-Times told its readers that it would forward a Metsker map "which has Shutler Flat on it in nice, big letters" to Carson, who acknowledged that he would "probably get a lot of letters from Shutler Flat," as a result of his comments to Doc. The G-T also suggested that the "Chamber of Commerce should invite Carson out for a tour of these famous places—if he could stand the congestion."

Five years ago this week, city engineer Steve Anderson, back from hearings in Washington, D.C., on the Willow Creek Dam, said prospects for Congressional re-authorization of the project looked "promising."

Others testifying before Sen. Mike Gravel's senate subcommittee included O.W. Cutsforth of Heppner. A letter from Heppner's W.W. Weatherford was "well-received" by the subcommittee, Anderson said.

### Public Officials

U.S. Sen.  
Mark O. Hatfield

Russell Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510 Member of Appropriations Committee, Interior Committee, Rules Committee, and Indian Policy Review Commission Portland office, Pioneer Courthouse, Rm. 107, 320 S.W. Morrison, Portland, Ore. 97204 phone 221-2386

U.S. Sen.  
Bob Packwood

Dirksen Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20510 Member of Finance Committee and Commerce Committee, Portland office, 1002 N.E. Holladay, Rm. 700 (P.O. Box 3621), Portland, Ore. 97208, phone 233-4471.

U.S. Rep. Al Ullman,  
Of The Second District

House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515 Member of Ways and Means Committee, Salem office, 530 Center St., Rm. 330 (P.O. Box 247), Salem, Ore. 97308, phone 399-5724.

Gov. Vic Atiyeh

State Capitol, Salem, Ore. 97310, phone 378-3100.

State Sen.  
Ken Jernstedt

(Morrow, Gilliam and other counties), State Capitol, Rm. S317, Salem, Ore. 97310, phone 378-8850.

State Sen.  
Robert Smith

(Wheeler, Grant and other counties), State Capitol, Rm. S323, Salem, Ore. 97310, phone 378-8176.

State Rep.  
Bill Bellamy

(Morrow, Gilliam and other counties), State Capitol, Rm. H364, Salem, Ore. 97310, phone 378-8853.

State Rep.  
Max Simpson

(Wheeler, Grant and other counties), State Capitol, Rm. H481, Salem, Ore. 97310, phone 378-8789.

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