

The Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES
VIEWPOINT

Commissioner's role:
'Of by and for' the people

At the latest count, six or more candidates are seeking the position of county commissioner to fill a vacancy created by the death of Homer Hughes.

Those candidates were given a brief sketch of the role of a county commissioner by incumbent Republican, Warren McCoy who is in his fifth year in the job. McCoy said it's not just a one-day job and often he is contacted at home on county business. At least two days of the week, he spends 12 hour days going to meetings and taking care of work at the courthouse.

A great deal of his time, said McCoy, is occupied with membership on various boards and intergovernmental council which deal with Morrow County business. Citing his future attendance at a health systems planning program in Ontario, McCoy said his membership is important to Morrow County.

We feel the role of a county commissioner could have a broader outlook than a mere job description. The commissioner's role as a member of the County Court has a major impact on the lives of Morrow County citizens, probably more so than the President of the United States and the state's congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. A commissioner is part of the governing body which can decide whether a community should have needed services or prioritize budgetary items according to their cost-effectiveness. In times of disaster or major loss of life, the County Court is the first to make an official declaration of impact before state and federal agencies will allow such aid to follow.

In Morrow County, the County Court must approve the hospital levy on the budget, decide how much and where the money will be allocated for road

maintenance, approve or reject proposed social services such as welfare and aid to senior citizens and regulate the financial structure of the other county offices, the District Attorney, Assessor, County Clerk and County Sheriff, who are elected independently of the court.

Candidates for the latest vacancy must also realize that undertaking the day to day work of a commissioner is only a small part of the job; it is vitally necessary that the commissioner become intimately aware of the problems and concerns of Morrow County citizens, so that the person might better represent them in dealing with city, state and federal government. It is also important that the commissioner initiate solutions and progress toward problems affecting the county rather than wait until they reach crisis proportions.

It has been our experience that when office-holders first enter office, they are more attuned to the citizen needs. Barriers develop and some become less responsive to needs and responsibilities to the people. An excellent way to avoid the pitfalls of governmental intransigence is for public officials to remember that government is "of the people, by the people and for the people."

Following the changing winds of public opinions can also lead the commissioner up a blind alley. The person must try to make the most responsible decisions based on the best knowledge at hand.

The County Republican Central Committee has an excellent field of candidates to choose from — people who are vitally interested in the workings of local government.

We are pleased these citizens have accepted the challenge of governmental service and Morrow County will reap the benefits.

Sifting through the TIMES

Fifty years ago, the Gazette-Times announced the death of James Morrow, one of Heppner's early pioneers.

His death resulted from injuries received in a fall Thursday night at his home at 794 Hoyt Street, fracturing his pelvis in four places.

Morrow was the son of Jackson L. and Nancy Morrow, pioneers of the Northwest and born at Olympia, Wash., May 5, 1859. He died at the age of 70. When he reached 70, he

was not forced by Union Pacific rules to retire on a pension. He had served the railroad for twenty years as a general tax agent and a special provision was made to continue him in the position.

As a four year old boy, Morrow went with his parents to live in La Grande, then moved to Heppner in 1872. His father entered the mercantile business with Henry Heppner, for whom the town was named. Morrow County was named for his father.

James Morrow served the county as clerk from 1890 to 1898 and upon retirement from that office was elected joint senator for Morrow, Grant and Harney counties. He served in the state legislature for four years, then ran the Palace Hotel.

He married Katherine Rea in 1885 and they had two children, Mrs. Hazel Sutherland and Jackson Lee Morrow, Portland. Mrs. Morrow died in 1916.

It was also announced that 17 seniors received diplomas at Heppner High School. The

students included Virginia Dix, Vivian Prock, Dorothy Herren, Patricia Mahoney, Margaret Notson, Velt on Owens, Gertrude Doherty, Terrel Bengel, Clair Cox, Harlan Devin, Maurice Edmondson, James Hager, Clarence Hayes, Paul Jones, Hadley Stewart, John Farley and Harry Wells.

Twenty-five years ago, Morrow County voters elected County Judge Garnet Barratt to another term but elected to change assessors, voting in Harry Dinges replacing the incumbent, Mrs. Olive B. Hughes. Barratt defeated his Republican opponent, 440-396.

Phil Church, head of the meteorological department of the University of Washington will be the main speaker at the annual meeting of the Tri-County Weather Research, next Thursday, June 3 at the Lexington Grange. Ralph Crum, a director of the Morrow County Weather Research, a unit of the Tri-County organization, said two chemical companies will provide a free lunch for those who

attend.

Morrow County farmers will have the opportunity on June 1 to observe conservation practices that are setting the pace for better and more economical farm production for years to come. First farm to be visited will be the William Barratt farm on Hinton Creek, where tall wheatgrass will be observed growing in alkali soil. Next step will be at the 1953 "Conservation Man of the Year" farm, Kenneth Peck, Newt, O'Hara's farm, the Nelson Brothers ranch on Baseline, John Proudfoot ranch at North Lone, Delbert Emerit and Herb Ekstrom ranches and end at the Donald Peterson ranch at Eightmile.

Al Lamb, manager of the Morrow County Grain Growers and a former district governor of Lions Clubs, was named new president of the Heppner Lions Club Thursday night.

Five years ago, Heppner's traditional community-wide Memorial Day Reunion Luncheon and program was set for Monday, May 27. Mr. and Mrs. Orville Cutsforth are

chairmen for this year's gathering to which everyone is invited.

Bob Jones was chosen the county's conservation man of the year for his conservation practices at Heppner Flats and Rhea Creek.

More than 55 area farmers are scheduled for appeals before the Morrow County Board of Equalization as a result of the land assessment value raise implemented this year. They will meet in the offices of Judge Paul Jones.

And the Heppner Mustangs finished the season with a shining 15-3 record, one of the finest ever compiled by a baseball team from Heppner High.

Bike lane rules set

A standard to delineate bike lanes to provide greater traffic safety was adopted as a temporary rule by the Oregon Transportation Commission today.

The standard adopted is a solid white, eight-inch wide stripe that will be placed in the position of the standard four-inch shoulder line. The new marking will be applied to a Type 3, one-way bike lane on each side of a non-curbed facility.

Reporter named

Sean Griffin, county government reporter for the Polk County Itemizer-Observer, will assume the responsibilities of legislative correspondent for the Eagle Newspaper effective May 14.

Griffin, 29, replaces Kathleen Glanville, who will return to the Albany Democrat-Herald.

The new correspondent's experiences include local government reporting as well as education, rural communities and elections. In 1978, he earned 1st place honors for in-depth and feature reporting from the National Newspaper Association, Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association and Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists. In addition, SDX-SPJ awarded him a second place award in the category of editorial writing.



The Heppner High School Band performed Thursday under the direction of Jim Ackley at the annual Spring Concert. The group played a medley of selections from traditional to contem-

porary. It was the final concert of the year and the last with Jim Ackley as high school band director. Ackley resigned his position effective at the close of the school year.

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Refutes charges

Editor: Since only one statement in the letter you printed last week from L.J. Turner 4606 N.E. Glisan, Portland, Ore. was correct, I feel I am compelled to answer it.

It's most questionable what papers he has been reading to state, "I was supporting a bill to end particular rodeo events." HB 2924 at Salem is as all papers stated, "A bill to outlaw only steer-busting."

It is not classified as a regulation rodeo event since it is a unique cruel act put on stage only at the Pendleton Round Up. There are hundreds of rodeos all over Canada and the United States that are popular and profitable without steer-busting.

What a warped brain to say, "My family and I participated in all rodeo events in the past." The cowboys don't even do that! They sign up for events they are best in. To ask such a question as this, "why is it any worse to bulldog a calf than it is to rein your horse so tight around the barrel races that your horse bleeds at the mouth from the bit or to run your horse so hard and so long that it is hot and exhausted," is tops for stupidity. Who ever heard of bulldogging a calf? Has anyone ever seen a horse become exhausted from running the standard clover leaf barrel pattern? I have yet to see my first barrel race horse with a bleeding mouth.

I've never said, "it is harder on calves, horses and bulls nowadays than it was 20 or 30 years ago." But I will state for his benefit, "My family never participated in those same events 20 or 30 years ago or at any time as he said."

My dogs were never in a rodeo parade, nor were they dressed up. The nearest to dressing old King Tut up was a pack saddle that I made for him to carry goodies which I baked for my friends in different parts of town. He knew them by name and delivered them to whom I requested that he take them to. I made Tilly a pair of pants once to keep her from having puppies until I could get her sprayed. That was the extent of their being dressed up.

The only true statement in his letter was that I used to use a few drops of harmless cake coloring to put on my white Spitz dogs after they were bathed to color them. In comparing that to animal cruelty, I would have to say L.J. Turner is really nit picking the bottom of the barrel.

I'm sure people in this community have much to be thankful for and proud of since Morrow County Rodeo has never presented the revolting act of steer-busting.

I would suggest L.J. Turner read his

papers more thoroughly or have someone translate for him before he condemns me for trying to outlaw something that I have never done.

As the late Dr. David Starr Jordan wrote: "There cannot be a perfect civilization until man realizes that the rights of every living creature are as sacred as his own."

Humely Yours,
Lois Winchester

Correct roster

Editor: As a subscriber of the Heppner Gazette-Times I find the column "Sifting Through The Times" very enjoyable. However in the May 10 issue, may I suggest a correction in the roster of the item covering the graduation of 1929 of Heppner High School. The ladies of that class were Margaret Notson, Patricia Mahoney, Vivian Cason, Velt on Owen, Elizabeth Elder, Dorothy Heron, Virginia Dix, Julia Harris and Mildred Hanna. The lads were Paul Jones, Harlan Devin, Clarence Hayes, Clair Cox, Hadley Stewart, James Hager, Maurice Edmondson, Jim Monahan, John Farley and Harry Wells.

This is the line up of that class as I best recall it.

Respectfully,
Clair H. Cox
Senior Class Pres,
Class of 1929
Heppner High School

Reunion Sun.

Editor: I am looking forward to attending the Memorial Day Picnic, May 27, and I am wondering if it could be possible to have those who attended the Golden West School on Rhea Creek meet in one section of the building; that school is now part of the Rhea Creek Grange at Ruggs.

Wouldn't it be delightful to renew old acquaintances? I attended the school in the early Twenties and have a picture which would prove interesting and perhaps give readers a few laughs.

Virginia Thompson Meck

Live Stereo

The Heppner High School Band performed Thursday under the direction of Jim Ackley at the annual Spring Concert. The group played a medley of selections from traditional to contem-

porary. It was the final concert of the year and the last with Jim Ackley as high school band director. Ackley resigned his position effective at the close of the school year.

How do you spell tax relief?

By Sean Griffin
Eagle Newspapers
Salem Reporter

Confused about the current status of the Great Property Tax Revolt of 1978-79?

Little wonder. To date, Governor Atiyeh has offered two ways of spelling tax relief (some would say four); each of the legislative chambers has produced separate and distinct proposals, and at least six petitions have been taken out by lay tax rebels to place tax relief initiatives on the 1980 general election ballot.

Not to mention Measures 6 and 11, last fall's harbingers of the current confusion.

Complicating matters is the mailing of 1979 property assessments to property owners. In the new appraisal areas—amounting to one sixth of the property in the state—properties are jumped in value 50-60 percent and more. Other property owners have their property values trended upwards based on the current housing market.

The new assessments had two distinct ramifications. Statewide, property taxpayers were irate—particularly homeowners—and more than one county assessor was called on the carpet for doing the job the law requires him or her to do.

In the Senate Chambers, alarmed legislators (whose phones have been ringing endlessly since the mailing of the assessment statements) incorporated a limit on assessments at the 11th hour of the development of their tax plan—a limit the Senate had previously rejected.

What the Senate was responding to was the public perception—however incorrect—of the main elements of the tax dilemma.

In fact assessments are not the problem. If you doubt that, consider the

situation of Dallas last year. There, assessments increased 18.1 percent over the previous year, but the actual tax bill homeowners paid decreased.

Under the Senate's plan, assessment increases would be limited to the yearly increase in the cost of living, with reappraisals at full market value only when the property changed hands. Opponents of that plan argue that doing so banishes the concept of equal tax treatment by penalizing at least three groups of people: first time homeowners, growing families and achievers, who frequently are required to move in the pursuit of career goals.

Reason for the decrease, according to Polk County assessor John Lamers is

that local governments—particularly City Hall and the Dallas school district—budgeted responsibility effectively, reducing the overall tax rate 20 percent.

With the lid on assessments, neighbors living in identical tract homes could have widely differing tax bills.

The result, obviously, is that the property tax bills of the long-term homeowner will be subsidized by the homestead-changers.

And that's only one of the differences dividing House and Senate conferences, whose task is to devise a plan for tax relief that is simple to comprehend, effective and marketable to the taxed.

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 221-3386.

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.

Persons wanting information on bills, hearings, and other doings of the Oregon Legislature may call, toll-free, 1-800-452-0290

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