

Band teacher resigns; cites 'lack of discipline'



Jim Ackley

Last week, Jim Ackley, high school and elementary school music teacher in Heppner, turned in his resignation to the Morrow County School District after six years of motivating, instructing and leading young musicians.

Ackley cited personal reasons for his decision and asked by the Gazette-Times to define these feelings, he said, "frustration with student and parent attitudes."

"I emphasize self-discipline and I've become frustrated." He says most students aren't giving 100 percent of their efforts to the music

program and the community and school administration seems to place a greater emphasis on athletics.

Not that Ackley is against athletics. He has been the supervisor of a Junior Basketball League.

What type of advice would he give his successor? Ackley says the program should cover all kinds of music and parents and students should "give the next guy a fair shake."

"The faculty and administration are behind the program but guidance is lacking from parents with the students running around all over the

place and vandalism on the rise."

The band director feels students in the school's music program have been the best students which he has encountered and he expressed concern that because he was leaving, some might drop out of band.

"If they drop by the wayside, they are not interested in continuing the program at the level which I left it."

Ackley said his high school band program has doubled in numbers to 46 from the 23 band members he started with six years ago. And out of that group, nine are seniors, two are juniors and the rest, freshman and sophomores.

"The sophomores were the first beginning band I had," the director said in pinpointing the increased level of high school band interest to greater elementary school participation.

"I've tried to concentrate on the fundamentals and make it a fun thing to do."

The band director has tried to make band more fun by developing a variety of musical styles and getting away from strictly pop music. He has introduced contemporary arrangements such as the music offered at the recent band concert and for two or three years offered a rock ensemble class.

He said he would attend future band concerts under the direction of another music

teacher but if the students were not putting out 100 percent, he would be inclined to stay away.

The high point of his career as school band director was his nomination by the faculty for State Teacher of the Year and his low point, "deterioration of discipline and morale at the high school level."

"I'm not quitting but retiring," Ackley said, promising that he would return to music education if his other goals fell through.

When his six year career ends, Ackley will continue living in Heppner and open an upholstery shop in his home, hopes to make a recording of his own vocal music in Portland, continue staging disco dances at schools and local organizations and write his own arrangements.

He said Bill Kenny, this year's recipient of the John Phillip Sousa Award, was the hardest-working student whom he has ever taught and had as much of an influence on him as his parents.

A native of Malalla, Oregon, Ackley majored in music at Clackamas Community College in Portland State. His first teaching job was at Heppner.

The Jim Ackley Band is expected to disband because two of the members are leaving for college.

Ackley hopes to concentrate his future music career on county rock.

Lexington news

• Delpha Jones • 989-8189

Lexington Grange No. 726 met for their regular meeting on Monday evening with Kenneth Smouse, past master, presiding.

A pot-luck dinner was enjoyed and the group entertained with slides and talk concerning the Carty Coal-Fired Plant at Boardman, presented by Bus Clough, public relations man for PGE, Arlington.

A surprise visitor arriving later was Walter Fenton, state deputy from Central Oregon, and his wife. The Fentons spoke a few words and encouraged the Grange members from Eastern Oregon to attend the state session in Gresham and to be sure that each grange had delegates there.

During the business meeting, the members voted to hold the 50th Anniversary

Party of Lexington Grange, Sept. 16 on a Sunday. Plans are being made for a State Officer as speaker, dinner at 1:30 p.m. and a program.

Florence McMillan and Freida Majeske returned home Friday evening from Baker where they attended the Rebekah State Assembly. On Sunday and Monday, they attended the activities of the Ladies Patriot Militant Auxiliary. They also attended the State Rebekah Assembly on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Also attending were Mrs. Kenneth Palmer and Mrs. Cecil Jones as delegates. Enroute home, they stopped at the G.E. Irvin home in Irrigon where they met Bonita Stitts of Yakima who is visiting the Jones for a few days. She is a sister of Mr. Jones.

New appointee has experience

The new appointee to the Morrow County School Board, Jim Wishart, is no stranger to school boards, having served for five years as a member of the Union School Board and a member of the budget committee of the Prairie City School District.

He is currently a member of the budget committee for the Morrow County School District and chairman of the Heppner-Lexington School Advisory Committee.

Wishart's appointment to the board is filling a vacancy created by the retirement of Dr. Wallace Wolff, Heppner, and the new director will be up for election in April, 1980.

He is vice-president of the Bank of Eastern Oregon and he and his wife, Camilla, have four children, all of whom have attended Heppner schools at various times. The youngest son, John, is a member of the 1979 graduating class.

Senior Citizen News

By Alena Anderson
Senior meals for the next week include:

For Irrigon, Monday, June 4, braised tips with gravy over rice, buttered spinach, tossed green salad, bran muffins, butter and jelly, peach upside-down cake with topping.

For Heppner, Tuesday, June 5, beef stroganoff over noodles, buttered peas and carrots, cabbage slaw, biscuits and jelly, rhubarb sauce cake.

For Heppner and Ione, Wednesday, June 6, meat loaf with tomato sauce, oven baked potatoes, brussel sprouts, molded vegetable salad, cornbread and jelly, butterscotch pudding with topping.

Ten seniors went by bus to see "Fiddler on the Roof" at BMCC. Truman Messenger drove the bus.

A blood pressure clinic will be held June 6 at the Degree of Honor Bldg. in Heppner.

Social Security representative will be at the Heppner Neighborhood Center June 8, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Catie Padberg feted in Lexington

About 60 people attended an open house Sunday, May 20 for Catie Padberg. Hosting the 80th birthday party were her three children, Mr. and Mrs. L.D. Vinson, Monument, Oregon, Mr. and Mrs. Elden

Padberg, Lexington, and Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Padberg, Dayton, Wash.

A granddaughter, Mrs. Louis Corley made and decor-

ated a beautiful sheet cake. Colors used were pink and yellow.

Out of town guests were Mrs. Floyd Vaughn, Anaheim, Canada, Mrs. William Linde, Williams Lake, Canada, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Corley and children, Sandy, Pat and Bill, Dale, Oregon, Jill Perkins and son, Brandon, Pendleton and Mr. and Mrs. Tex Ross, Hermiston.

Toney praises faculty and community support

H.S. Journalism teacher back to school

For nine years, Dennis Toney has taught Heppner High School students how to publish the school newspaper and yearbook and photography. Next fall he will return to the University of Oregon to pursue a graduate course in film studies.

A 1966 graduate of the University of Oregon, with a B.A. in journalism and two years of graduate training in photography, Toney came to Heppner in 1970 to complete the work of Rachel Dick.

"Rachel started the nucleus for the journalism and photography classes which we have now. I've been able to develop it into a longer and larger program."

When he first started teaching at the high school, the journalism students had a single photo studio. It now has two photo labs and the curriculum enlarged to include two photography courses.

Toney praised faculty and community for its support of the journalism program here. "I've had tremendous support from Jim Bier, had a good faculty to work with and

community support. Numerous parents have told me I'm doing a good job and to keep my program going. I've always had the equipment."

His reason for leaving: "I've been stimulating kids for nine years, now I need to be stimulated. I want to further my options in career choices."

Toney is interested in furthering his knowledge of documentary production, mainly on the visual side and will be taking a newly started film production course at the U of O. He has taught photography and film study courses for Blue Mountain Community College but feels more knowledge is necessary

to open up his options in the future.

"I want to immerse myself in film studies," Toney said.

During his years advising the staff of the HEHISCH, the student newspaper, Toney has observed that students who are not motivated by English classes, have entered his newspaper class and done surprisingly well, spending from 15 to 20 hours a week writing stories.

He says journalism training helps some students scholastically.

As for photography, Toney says, "I'm interested in teaching students to see—and use photography as a language to express themselves."

Rather than emphasizing journalism classes for vocational purposes, Toney sees instruction in that area as increasing their visual senses.

Toney was honored this year as a guest of honor at the commencement exercises of the 1979 graduating class—an honor which he feels is largely due to his similarities with class members. Toney is an

easy-going man who views his former students as friends and one year shared the honor of teacher of the year with Jane Rawlins.

His wife, Ann, has also been active locally as a calligraphy and cross country skiing teacher as well as working at Heppner Elementary School.

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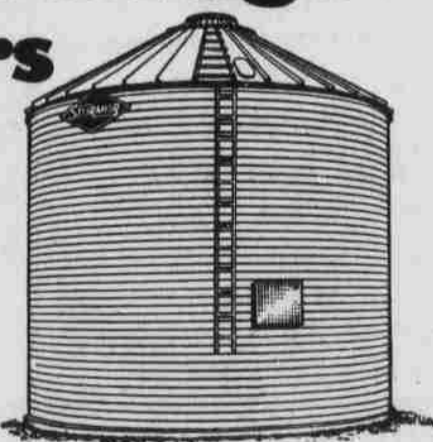
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