

The Heppner GAZETTE-TIMES

Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

VOL. 97 NO. 44

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1979

20 cents

12 pages

HEPPNER, OREGON

Photo Feature
New schools nearing
completion— See page 6

Controlled Substance Committee says

Penalties for illegal drug abuse may be lessened

If a person is currently found in possession of a pound of heroin or 100,000 tablets of LSD—the penalty is a maximum of 10 years in the state penitentiary and a \$2,500 fine.

But that maximum sentence may be diminished to a one-year county jail term and a \$1,000 fine, hardly a deterrent to a billion dollar business, if the recommendations of the Controlled Substances Committee are made into law.

Morrow County District Attorney Dennis Doherty said it "bothers me" to think that such a recommendation has been made and the possibility that it could become law is really frightening.

Doherty had set aside his other duties to concentrate on the problem this past week. Doherty and the other D.A.'s in the state were notified just last Wednesday about the proposed changes to the classifications of drugs in Oregon.

Doherty had only until yesterday to comment on the changes and he has worked many hours writing letters to the committee and the governor stating his objections.

"If the changes are made," he said, "Oregon could become the Mecca for drug traffickers."

What the Controlled Substances Committee decided

was to down-classify many drugs, some of which are known as "street drugs." If this down-classification is made into law, the penalties for the possession, manufacturing and delivery of these drugs will be less severe.

The seven-member board of three pharmacists, three practitioners and one public person were delegated the authority to re-classify the drugs by the 1977 Oregon Legislature. The committee's recommendations only have to be approved by the Oregon Board of Pharmacy to become law, Doherty said. The public will not vote on it, the legislature does not have to approve it and the governor does not have to sign it.

The Controlled Substances Committee plans to re-classify the Schedule I drugs like heroin, LSD, peyote, and mescaline to Schedule III.

The manufacturing and delivery of these drugs is currently an "A" felony but under the proposed changes, it would become a "C" felony.

The maximum penalty for an "A" felony is 20 years in the state penitentiary and \$2,500 in fines. A "C" felony carries with it a maximum of five years in the pen and the same fine. A "B" felony is 10 years in the penitentiary and the same maximum fine.

Possession of the drugs mentioned before is currently a "B" felony but under the committee's changes, it would become an "A" misdemeanor.

An "A" misdemeanor can carry with it a maximum penalty of one year in the county jail and a \$1,000 fine. A "B" misdemeanor has a maximum of six months in jail and a \$500 fine and a "C" misdemeanor can have a \$250 fine maximum and 30 days in jail. A violation comes next and it carries a nominal fine and no jail sentence.

The committee plans to drop marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule IV. Possession of

more than one ounce of marijuana would change from a "B" felony to a "C" misdemeanor. Manufacturing and delivering "pot" would go from an "A" felony to a "B" misdemeanor.

Under the proposed change, marijuana will be in the same classification as codeine.

Cocaine will be dropped from Schedule II to Schedule III with possession only being an "A" misdemeanor. Amphetamines will stay at Schedule II and opium will go from Schedule I to Schedule IV.

Possession of a Schedule I drug is a "B" felony, a Schedule II drug is a "C" felony, a Schedule III drug is an "A" misdemeanor, a Schedule IV drug is a "C" misdemeanor and a Schedule V drug is a violation.

With these lax drug laws, it is no wonder Doherty is concerned about Oregon becoming another Mecca.

Big Business

"Illegal drugs are big business and the traffickers will go where the money is and where there is less risk," he said.

Oregon presently is at the federal level in drug classification and the Controlled Substances Committee is planning on Oregon's becoming less stringent than the federal standards.

In his letter to the committee, Doherty said, "I simply cannot imagine you could seriously consider down-scheduling some of the drugs as contemplated by the proposed schedules."

He singled out the drugs LSD, mescaline, peyote and heroin going from Schedule I to III; cocaine and morphine from II to III; codeine from II to IV; and opium and marijuana from Schedule I to Schedule IV.

Doherty said these drugs have a high potential for psychomotor, psychosocial and impairment and for

developing addiction to the drugs.

"These are common 'street drugs' that are frequently abused and associated with crime against persons and property," the letter stated.

Doherty's letter pointed out that the growing of any amount of marijuana could never be more than a "B" misdemeanor and it is presently an "A" felony. Possession of any amount of marijuana over one ounce would only be a "C" misdemeanor.

Possession of hard drugs like LSD, heroin or cocaine in any amount would only be an "A" misdemeanor. He pointed out that a 30-day, \$250 maximum sentence and fine would hardly be a deterrent for someone who is growing tons of "grass" worth thousands of dollars.

The letter states that law enforcement at all levels will be diminished if the proposed changes become law.

"In light of these considerations, I hope that you will promptly trash-can the proposal," the letter concluded.

In District Attorney Doherty's letter to Governor Vic Atiyeh, which he sent Monday, Doherty said the proposed changes, "Would make Oregon the most attractive state in the country for drug traffickers."

Doherty said the Controlled Substances Committee proposes to make its changes without considering the realities of drug use and abuse and the problems of law enforcement. Their only consideration is how harmful the drug is in its purest form which is an abstract pharmacological way to test a drug but in no way shows how dangerous a drug is when it is adulterated and sold on the streets.

He pointed out that the committee has been appointed by a non-elected official and it should not make a decision of such magnitude without more public input.

Along with the letter to the governor, he sent about 10 Oregon newspaper articles taken in a two-day span just last week to emphasize there is already a big drug problem in Oregon and it will get much

worse if the re-classification is made.

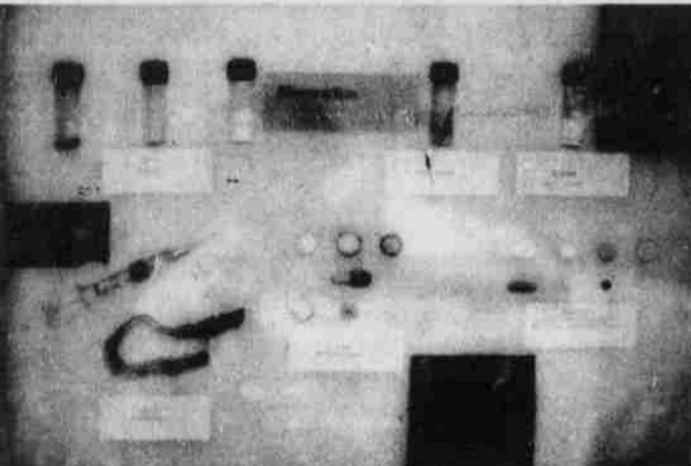
Doherty also sent along his critique of the Controlled Substances Act.

The Act created the Controlled Substances Committee

in 1977 to determine the total hazard potential of the drugs.

The committee is apparently relying upon studies of degree and permanence of

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Drugs like these on display at the Morrow County Sheriff's office may become a common sight at pharmacies if the new Oregon law is adopted.

Comprehensive plan studied by planning commission

The Morrow County Planning Commission met last week to discuss the Comprehensive Plan of the county.

The plan has been devised to set a standard for the way the county will develop. The Land Conservation and Development Commission will review the plan sometime in the near future, according to County Planning Director Deane Seager.

"The city plans of Ione and Lexington have already been

approved," Seager said. "In fact, all five of the major cities in the county (Heppner, Lexington, Ione, Irrigon and Boardman) have outstanding plans. The county can be proud of their city plans and that makes the county plan that much easier to make because we just have to fill in around the cities."

The next meeting will be Nov. 12 at the Courthouse beginning at 8 p.m. and Seager said public input is desired by the commission.

Irrigon man resigns from Commission

Daniel Creamer of Irrigon has unofficially resigned from his voluntary position as a member of the Morrow County Planning Commission last week, according to Deane Seager, planning director.

Creamer recently was a candidate for Morrow County Judge after D.O. Nelson resigned but Don McElligott was chosen by Governor Vic Atiyeh instead. Seager said in no way was this a cause of Creamer's resignation.

"He has had some problems come up that will take up a lot of time and he was afraid he was not going to be able to make all of the (planning commission) meetings," Seager said. "Not being picked as judge had nothing to do with it.

"It is going to be a tremendous loss to the commission," he continued. "Serving on the commission demands a lot of time."

Seager said persons interested in applying to take Creamer's place may write to the Morrow County Court, who will appoint the successor.

Seager said there are no credentials except an interest in serving the community. He also said applicants probably will have to come from Irrigon to represent that community.

Morrow County Court secretary Alma Green said the court has not officially received word that Creamer has resigned but that he had made the announcement last week verbally at the court session in Irrigon.



POSTER DESIGN WINNERS—Part of the decorative effect for downtown Heppner stores during the Halloween sale last week was achieved through posters designed by junior high school art students. The winners were presented checks by Randall Peterson, chairman of the Retail Merchants Committee. From left are: Susie Olson, second prize; Rodney Cole, first prize; and Teena Galbraith, third prize.

Election Wednesday

Co-op director challenged

Dick Krebs has been a director for the Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative since November of 1958 but he is being challenged for his position this year by Eric Anderson.

Krebs has been a director for 21 years. Anderson was 11-years-old when Krebs was elected to the cooperative.

The decision to run against Krebs was not made by Anderson alone.

"I was on the CBEC nominating committee before and I know they have a hard time getting people to run because the incumbent always wins," Anderson said. "I was asked and I accepted but I really did not expect to win. When my neighbors found out I was running, they started a committee and put ads in the paper. They probably have spent about \$1,000 on the campaign so now I am taking it seriously."

The Heppner High School graduate has a degree from Oregon State University where he majored in agriculture. He owns the Earth Carpet business 10 miles north of Ione.

Fritz Cutsforth and Eldon Padberg are the co-chairmen for the Anderson committee.

Anderson said he is going to look into the CBEC electrical rate increase. He said the CBEC had to increase its rate because the Bonneville Power Administration raised its rates and that company is the wholesale supplier for the CBEC. He said he does not

know, however, if the BPA has shown that it needed to raise its rates as high as it did.

He said he wants to look into the cooperative to see if everyone is paying for the increase fairly, even if he does not become a director.

Anderson said he does not believe in most cooperatives but he does believe in the CBEC.

"I can't blame the people for being shook up about the (40 percent) rate increase but power is scarce," he said. "Bonneville (Power Administration) did it to them (CBEC). Until another source of energy is developed, we have no choice but to allocate what we have. The cooperative is a good deal because we can work together. The CBEC has a low profit margin of about five percent so it is the cheapest way to get energy. I am a CBEC fan because it is democratic and well run."

Ballots have been sent to all members of the Columbia Basin Electric Co-op. Votes must be mailed in by Nov. 6.

The 35th annual meeting of the CBEC will take place next Wednesday beginning at 11 a.m. in Condon at the Elks Temple. All members of the cooperative are invited.

Registration begins at 11 a.m. with lunch at noon and a business meeting beginning at 1:15.

Three directors will be elected at the meeting for three-year terms. Besides the Krebs-Anderson match-up in Zone Three, the other nominees to be directors are from

Zone One—Van Rietmann, who is now the president of the directors, and his challenger Tim Marick. The other race is between incumbent Herb Wright and Steve Conlee to be the director from the city of Fossil.

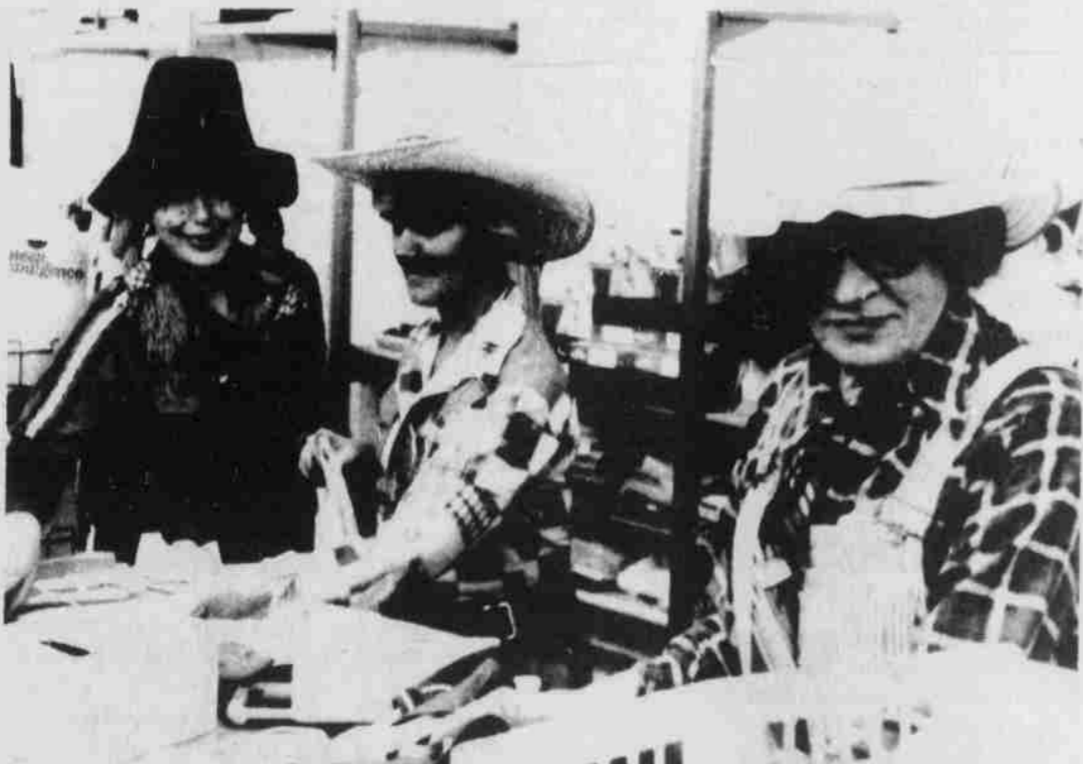
Rietmann has been a director since November of 1970 and Wright has been a director since January of 1972. CBEC manager Fred Toombs has mailed out a flyer to members of the CBEC to try to explain why there will be a 40 percent increase in the electrical rates.

The flyer states that the BPA has raised its rates 90 percent to the CBEC. The flyer also shows what the 40 percent increase will mean to the CBEC members.

The increase means that in December, residential rates will go up 37.6 percent, as will both large and small general service customers. Irrigation customers will have a 45 percent increase and lighting customers are hit the hardest with a 56.1 percent increase.

What this means is that if a customer has a present bill from CBEC of about \$20 a month, using 1,000 kilowatt hours, the bill in December will be \$27.60 if the same amount of kilowatts are used.

Customers with a bill of \$41 will have to pay \$60 and the unlucky ones who use a lot of electricity and have a bill of \$146 a month will be looking at an increased bill of 52 percent, or \$76, when the bill in December climbs to \$222.



MERCHANTS DRESS UP—The downtown "Moonlight Madness" sale sponsored by the Heppner Chamber of Commerce last Friday night had a Halloween theme. Sales people donned costumes for the event. This is how the staff at Doris LaRae's looked, from left: Linda Crane, Carol Mitchell and Melba Quackenbush. Merchants reported generally good sales and many visitors in their stores.