

LaGrande educator stresses environment and responsibility for students

Dr. Gary Bruner, vice principal of LaGrande High School, spoke to a joint meeting of the American Association of University Women and the Heppner

Parents Club Nov. 6 in the Heppner High cafeteria. Bruner, quoting statistics on several violent crimes, assault and suicide involving youth, blamed drugs, alcohol,

stress and the environment. He said that drug and drinking problems are happening everywhere and citizens of rural towns like Heppner can't sit back and

think, "It won't happen here." Changing the drug laws won't do away with the drug problem, according to Bruner. He is more concerned about alcoholism than drug situa-

tions. "More kids are turning to alcohol than drugs," he said. "We, as a society, need to be concerned about the kind of environment we are providing

our children)." Bruner said the American solution for problem children has been to build more reformatories and mental institutions.

"We can't take a checkbook and buy solutions for our kids' problems," he added. "No matter how much we spend, it doesn't solve the problem. Part of the solution is to

teach the kids to take responsibility for their actions. Children must learn that there are 'Natural and logical consequences' for what they do."

The control that one exercises over one's own life Bruner called the "focus of control," or internal control.

People whose actions are externally controlled base their decisions on the fear of "getting caught." According to Bruner, schools should set up situations in which students make decisions and then live by the consequences.

Children should be treated with respect by teachers and other adults, he said. He stressed that "respect" was not the same as making the children equal to adults but showing them courtesy and consideration.

Children should learn from mistakes, he continued, for now, he feels, when a student failed in a test, for example, he is learning he is "stupid."

Instead, he should gain knowledge from a test.

Children are given too much in the way of material goods, he added, and "learn to take, take, take."

"Kids need to feel significant," Bruner said. "Children have a place in the home and can contribute as a member of the family. Presently they are given no responsibility and need to help at home."

He said his audience, "as teachers and parents, should provide action instead of words. Children learn by actions. We should say something once, then follow through. Guidelines and bounds should be set."

Bruner said he believes strongly in parent education programs and that they should be available in all communities.

Since a child's character is almost set before school age, a proper molding in the home should alleviate much counseling in the school. Bruner advocates parents and teacher groups working together, also a children's group that would meet simultaneously with the parents' group for mutual guidance.

Marine Major assigned to Guantanamo

Marine Major Lonnie M. Myers, whose wife, Jacquelyn, is the daughter of Patricia Brindle of Heppner, is participating in a reinforcement exercise at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

He is an officer assigned to the 38th Marine Amphibious Unit, 2nd Marine Division, based at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

The month-long exercise involves more than 3,700 U.S. sailors and Marines. It began Oct. 17 when Marines from the 38th Marine Amphibious Unit were put ashore from three Norfolk, Va. based ships by landing craft and helicopters during an amphibious landing operation. Throughout the remainder of the exercise, the Marines will be conducting small unit maneuvers and artillery and tank firing while the Navy was to practice sea control techniques.

The reinforcement exercise was being conducted to demonstrate the United States capability to reinforce the Guantanamo naval base and to show the U.S. interest in ensuring the free use of the Caribbean area.

A 1961 graduate of LaGrande High School, and a 1965 graduate of Eastern Oregon College, LaGrande, with a Bachelor of Science degree, Myers joined the Marine Corps in October 1965.

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