


The Official Newspaper of the  
City of Heppner and the  
County of Morrow



**The Heppner  
GAZETTE-TIMES**  
Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper  
U.S.P.S. 240-420

Published every Thursday and entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Heppner, Oregon under the Act of March 3, 1879. Second-class postage paid at Heppner, Oregon.

Office at 147 West Willow Street, Telephone (503) 876-8228.  
Address communications to the Heppner Gazette-Times, P.O. Box 337, Heppner, Oregon 97836.  
\$10.00 in Morrow, Umatilla, Wheeler & Gilliam counties. \$10.00 elsewhere.

**Jerome F. Sheldon, Publisher**  
**Steven A. Powell, News & Sports Editor**

## Willow Creek Dam & Heppner's Water System

Thanks to the Willow Creek Dam project, Heppner is faced with the immediate necessity of making water system improvements. These would be financed through a general obligation bond issue to be presented to the voters on May 20.

Portions of the system, including a section of transmission main and a storage reservoir, must be relocated. This work would be the responsibility of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency that would build the dam. Other work the city would undertake. It would be an opportune time to do so, for portions of the water system are deteriorating and the growth of the community calls for improvements.

The wells used by the city as its water source are located south and east of the town along Willow Creek. The wells are linked to Heppner's water system by an 8-inch diameter steel pipeline. The farthest well, at the end of the pipeline, is more than 12 miles from the city. Another well is tied into the line about nine miles out, and two other wells are tied in further downstream, closer to the city.

The transmission line was constructed in stages throughout the last four and a half decades. The pipeline's oldest section, which would be inundated by the dam and its lake, was installed in 1936 and has reached what the city's consulting engineers consider the end of its useful life. The steel has eroded and breaks and leaks are common.

The Corps of Engineers would relocate about two miles of this section but leave another mile for the city to rebuild to connect with the distribution system within the town. The work would be financed by the \$430,000 bond issue to be placed on the ballot.

Other work to be funded, should the voters agree, would include the drilling of a new well to replace an existing but unused well above Balm Fork, and the installation of new mains within the city to provide for stronger water pressure. The new reservoir, to be paid for by the Corps of Engineers, would be near the crest of Cemetery Hill, and a line would extend from there to the hillside area above Pioneer Memorial Hospital.

According to the city's engineering consultants, favorable financing terms may be arranged. Heppner is looking to the Farmers Home Administration as a potential buyer of the bonds, at a current interest rate of 5 3/4 percent. The city's debt would be spread over 40 years. This would be an obligation of the taxpayers, although water revenues would continue to pay for the system's operation and maintenance costs.

Heppner's current bonded indebtedness totals \$681,000—money borrowed to finance the city's swimming pool, flood damage repair and improvements, and past water system improvements. The swimming pool issue will be paid off in 1983, the flood repair issue in 1987 and the water improvement issue in 1994.

The city's assessed valuation is almost \$21 million. There have been increases ranging from 12 percent to 38 percent each year for the past five years.

These factors would determine the ability of the taxpayers to repay the bonds as well as support other obligations of the community.

The fact is, the city needs the improvements as much for its citizens' health as anything else, and this is the year they should be authorized. A special feature is that the Corps of Engineers will pay for the portion of the system that would be displaced by the Willow Creek Dam project. City revenues that might otherwise be spent for this work may be used in other areas of the water system.

The water system bond proposal should be approved at the May 20 election.

## Hazards of highway driving

# Where's the 'professional' trucker?

"Watch the truckers and they'll help keep you out of a jam. The men who drive those big trucks are professionals and they know all about driving." Those words were spoken to me by my father 33 years ago when he was teaching me to drive.

What has happened? These "professionals" have, in the last ten years set me up for numerous highway accidents in any one of which I would probably now be dead if it were not for my own driving tactics.

What has happened to the professional trucker? He seems no longer exist. My highway apprehension is no longer directed at the "Sunday driver" or the harried housewife taking herself and her children to the supermarket. Is aimed at the so called professional truck driver, who apparently feels the most important control in his cab is the mikie button on his CB radio. These here-to-fore referred to as "knights of the road" now must be called "devils of the drive."

It is to be granted that there are many aspects of heavy equipment driving which are unknown to the average motorist. The driving habits of many car and pickup operators can drive the trucker up the wall. There are many things which the thoughtless motorist does without thinking which can cause the trucker a lot of unnecessary work, and considerable frustration. This writer knows, because he was a road driver for several years. There is, however no excuse for a lot of the tactics employed by these so-called professionals.

Unsafe passing is the offense most often made by truckers, in my experience at any rate. Passing without signaling, or in areas where the solid center line is displayed is a common occurrence.

This writer has encountered so many safe driving infractions by drivers of those "18 wheelers" that he couldn't begin to list them all in this article.

Television, and the CB radio are probably the major contributing factors. They seem to be emulating the Smokey and the Bandit life style.

Recently, on a federal highway, this writer was forced nearly into the ditch when the first of two "big rigs" swerved over the center line. The driver had one hand on the wheel, and the other on his C.B. mike. He was apparently talking to the truck behind. In the course, he almost killed an innocent driver who was merely trying to get to work.

It's a real shame that a legend should come to this pass. It would seem that all that is required to drive an "18 wheeler" anymore is to wear truckers boots, and know how to say 10-4 big daddy on the CB radio.

The most graphic example which comes to my mind occurred a few years ago...Sitting on the living room carpet, fitting a large picture into the protective carton which would help to get this possession to its new destination unharmed, I listened while the young man (scarcely twenty years old), who would be entrusted with the shipment of the family's goods across most of the U.S. as he bragged about his truck driving adventures to the home owner.

There he was, representing an agent of one of the country's largest and best known van lines, telling a customer of the times he had wrecked a truck!!

A few moments later, in private conversation with the shipper I asked, "that driver certainly inspires a feeling of confidence in the safety of your goods, doesn't he?" I don't remember what the response was, but I do remember the sick look on his face.

This editorial is prompted by, and based on my own experiences. I have not investigated to learn what facts, or insurance statistics might indicate; but I wouldn't be surprised if they showed that trucking industry wide, those who some of us thought of as "heroes of the highway" may have sunk into a position of disgrace, and become a public menace.

—Don W. Kester  
Nyssa Gate City Journal  
Nyssa, Oregon

## Salem Scene 'Absentee' parents caught by the state

BY JACK ZIMMERMAN

This is the time of year when most gainfully employed Oregonians receive a cash windfall in the form of refunded overpaid income taxes.

But an increasing number of individuals are discovering their refunds are being withheld to satisfy an unpaid debt to the state.

They are classified as absent parents, predominantly fathers of children living with mothers who have applied for aid to dependent children (ADC). State law also permits withholding of homeowner and renter property tax refunds (HARRP) for the same purpose. And in the last two years, both programs have returned more than \$700,000 to the state.

State and federal tax dollars

supported 31,400 single-parent Oregon families at a cost of \$105.7 million in 1978—excluding medical costs.

"Those staggering figures are the product of the failure of absent parents to provide financial support for their dependent children," Leo Hegstrom, director of the Department of Human Resources, told members of the 1979 Legislature. And lawmakers responded by again beefing up laws that have helped make Oregon a leader in the nationwide movement forcing absent parents to assume financial liability for their offspring.

Causes for this public assistance burden are largely those producing single-parent

households at an alarming rate. Soaring divorce rates and increases in illegitimate births produced circumstances that saw 17 percent of all youths less than 18-years-old living in single-parent households five years ago. And authorities now believe that by 1993, some 51 percent of the U.S. children will live in single-parent households part of their lives.

Early recognition of these conditions by Oregon lawmakers has helped our state achieve its role as an effective enforcer of parental responsibility and in creating a state agency that brings in three times as much revenue as it costs to operate.

That agency is the Support Enforcement Division of the Department of Justice. Administered by Robert E. Elvin, SED is the contractual enforcing agency for the Department of Human Resources.

During the present biennium its projected collections are expected to exceed \$36 million. With a staff of 261 people in 13 statewide field offices, SED handles an on-going caseload of 43,500.

Little known and seldom heralded, Oregon's SED oper-

ates amid an emotional climate ranging from extremely difficult to nearly impossible.

When SED sets out to contact an absent parent the situation has typically evolved from extreme financial strain.

"The absent parent has probably left home under conditions medical authorities describe as the most severely traumatic in human experience," Elvin declared.

"They often feel as if their world has been destroyed and nothing matters."

"When the custodial parent applies for ADC, it is our job to find the absent parent and remind him of an obligation growing out of a relationship he may want to forget completely."

Armed with a sophisticated arsenal of laws, regulations and painstaking methodology, SED successfully locates between 70 and 80 percent of absent parents.

Through reciprocity SED's activity extends into all 50 states. Oregon's parental locations system has become so effective Elvin claims it is possible to locate 96 percent of absent parents but that percentage cannot be economically achieved.

## Sifting through the TIMES

1930

Fifty years ago, the Heppner Common Council voted to put water meters on homes that used city water from the new artesian well that had been drilled. Under the new system, water users would only pay for the amount of water they used. Cost of the meters was estimated at \$12 installed. About 356 homes in Heppner would be affected. The method of financing the meters was not discussed at length but the city wanted to buy them so the meters would remain the property of the city.

At the same meeting, the council gave the Lions Club the go ahead to proceed with its street sign and house numbering project.

The results of the Lions Club crow and magpie shooting contest ended with a total of 2,338 killed. C.W. Smith's team shot more birds so C.L. Sweek's team treated them to a dinner.

1955

Twenty five years ago Janice Martin was named valedictorian and Carolyn McDaniel salutatorian of the Heppner eighth grade class.

Mrs. Elvira McDonald accepted the position of tax deputy in the county sheriff's

office to fill the position vacated by Sylvia McDaniel, who was named the new county treasurer.

Dennis Doherty of Lexington, seventh grader, won the annual Morrow County spelling contest by spelling all 100 words in the contest correctly.

Ione's Garden Club was set to build an outdoor fireplace in the city.

Another Heppner Value Day was set in Heppner with free parking for all who shop downtown and a free show at the Star Theatre for all the kids.

1975

Five years ago the Blue Mountain Community College budget was voted down 3,106 to 3,509.

Heppner was facing water and sewer problems and the city council discussed the problem with Dan Russell, plumbing inspector for the State of Oregon, and Steve Anderson, city engineer.

Evelyn Sweek, Barbara Paullus, Marge Eckman and Avon Melby were named officers of the Soroptimist Club and Anne Doherty, Jeanne Howell, Pat Edmundson, and Judy Henni were named officers for the American Association of University Women, Heppner branch.

## 'School district levy must win support'

Editor: Morrow County School District must have a voter approved tax levy in order to operate schools next year.

The School District tax base of \$588,510 is only about 20 percent of the amount required in order to provide funds for one full year of school operation.

The budget law permits local governments to exceed their tax base by 6 percent each year, without voter approval.

However, operating within this 6 percent limitation would depend on a district having a realistic tax base. The school district tax base was established many years ago and has not kept up with either growth or inflation. In the meantime, the district has almost doubled in enrollment since 1974.

The amount of money that

could be raised within the tax base would only be sufficient to carry the district for a month or two of operation.

The current budget proposal has been reduced by a little over \$73,000 after the March budget defeat.

I believe the proposed budget, which will be on the May 20 ballot, is a realistic budget and is worth of voter support.

M. Ray Boyce  
Heppner, Oregon

## School budget 'realistic'

Editor: On May 20, the voters of Morrow County will have another opportunity to vote on the school district budget levy. I am writing this letter in support of this levy.

(Continued on Page 12)

## Business Directory

### Auto Parts



### Heppner Auto Parts

234 N. Main Heppner 676-9123

### Floor Covering



### M & R FLOOR COVERING

Carpet, Linoleum, Ceramic Tile, Kirchen Cabinets, Rapco Insulation

### Furniture

### CASE FURNITURE

Carpet, Linoleum, Counter Tops Installed Beauty Rest mattresses, Fabrics and Accessories, Sherwin Williams Paint

### Insurance



For all your Insurance needs

Telephone 676-9119 LAUREN VANMARTER, JR. HOWARD BRYANT

### Medical Supplies



### MEDICAL CENTER PHARMACY

Free Mailing Service On Prescriptions Hospital Supplier Mon-Fri. 9-6 pm Sat. 9-1 pm Located in the Medical Center 1100 Southgate Pendleton 276-1531

### Monuments

### SWEENEY MORTUARY

Cemetary, Grave Markers Granite, Marble, Bronze Serving Ione, Lexington & Heppner p.o. Box 97

### Office Equipment



Service calls every Wednesday in Heppner, Ione and Lexington

332 S. Main St., Pendleton Telephone 276-6441 811 N. First, Herndon Telephone 567-2731

### Petroleum



GLENN DEVIN  
Chevron USA, Inc.  
Commission Agent  
676-9633