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Weather

by Don Gilliam

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OSU dean assails ag policies

Dr. Ernie Briskey, Dean of Agriculture at Oregon State University, spoke out against federal policies during his speech at the Conservation Man of the Year Field Day last week, at Don and Jean Bennett's ranch.

"For decades, food has remained ridiculously cheap," he said. "And we (farmers) have to pay the price. Why? The politicians use it (food) as a political tool (in dealing with other nations) when we should use it to our financial advantage."

Last year, the U.S. spent twice as much money on pollution control as it did on food production, he said. Regulation costs are high and cause an "unbearable financial burden" with the flood of new laws. If pesticides are curtailed, it will mean "a tremendous loss in crops."

But the U.S. still has to feed the world. Since 1965, the world has increased 25 percent in population and since 1935 the world population has doubled, he continued.

"The need to produce more food is gigantic," Briskey said. "The next world crisis will be an agricultural deficit. Exports in the U.S. the last 10 years have increased from \$6 (billion) to \$40 billion. We have to be aware of new markets and technology. Our success or failure will depend on agriculture."

"But the farmers have to struggle just to break even. In agriculture, a higher profit base is needed. People think farmers and ranchers are getting rich but it actually often costs more to produce than what you get for your crops. Farmers have yet to reap their just economic benefits."

Briskey said, "Food is still the best buy in the world," with an average person in the U.S. spending 15 to 17 percent of his income on food while in other countries, it costs 50 to 100 percent. He said the government must control inflation by stopping to spend more than it earns. He said if inflation continues at its present rate, a man who makes \$20,000 a year now, will be making more than \$1 million a year 30 years from now. A hamburger will cost \$32 then, he said. The interest on the national debt is the third highest expenditure in government behind Health, Education and Welfare and the Defense budgets.

Briskey spoke to more than 200 persons attending the Conservation Man of the Year Field Day at the Bennett Ranch eight miles east of Heppner. The group was packed into a barn because thunder, lightning and rain halted the outdoor program.

Don Thompson, Oregon Wheat League president, also spoke at the Field Day. He said the OWL has sponsored the Conservation Man of the Year for more than 30 years. "I learn conservation practices at every farm I go to," he said. "When I started farming, I was not a conservationist (so I had to learn)."

Thompson said farmers have to help themselves by developing new markets around the world.

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Dr. Ernie Briskey, speaker at the Conservation Man of the Year Field day, was forced inside the Bennetts' barn to deliver his address because of a rain-threatening storm.

Morrow port board OK's rodeo lease

Port of Morrow Commissioners agreed to lease 14 acres of port property to the Oregon Trail Pioneer Days Association for \$1.

The lease will expire in December and the port decided to grant such a cheap rate because it would benefit a nonprofit organization.

The rodeo association had planned to build a multi-purpose rodeo area on the site but since it is smaller than the group will eventually need the port commissioners decided only to lease the land on a temporary basis for just this year.

Other conditions are the association must remove whatever improvements it puts on the property, provide a \$2,000 security deposit and \$300,000 worth of liability insurance.

In other action at the Port of Morrow meeting last week, Harold Little of HGL Inc. spoke about leasing a 20-acre site for use as the location for a concrete wall-panel business.

He requested the purchase of \$800,000 worth of Port of Morrow Industrial Revenue Bonds.

The concrete panels would be five inches thick and provide an insulation factor of R70. The business would have eight to 12 employees, he said.

Little added that he thinks the site is perfect for the project because of the excellent, high-quality artesian water that is available and the access to the railroad.

Port commissioners gave themselves a raise at the meeting, approving in the budget an increase from 15 to 22 cents a mile for travel and from \$25 to \$50 per diem. The previous rates were established six years ago.

The port discussed the

proposed Boardman-Irrigon Airport with members of the Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division. The airport has been under discussion for about two years.

The two groups considered that the airport will probably not be federally funded. It will be able to handle small jets. Machinery voluntarily donated will be used to build the airstrip. The location of the airstrip was also discussed.

The port management met with the Eastern Oregon Farm Corp. to discuss its lease with the Port of Morrow, which stands at \$30 an acre and is much less than the same type of property leased to other businesses.

Beginning July 1, Port of Morrow employees will receive a fully funded retirement plan. It was announced at the meeting.

The port decided to have Dick Brown design the Master Plan proposal for all of the Port of Morrow property.

Frank Dye of Miracle Potato talked about problems he is having with his sprinkler system plugging up. The reason behind the problem is the wastewater treatment system solid removal sedimentation basin has not been built yet.

In a related matter, the port decided to lease another 125 acres of port land to Miracle Potato. Miracle Potato will use a circle irrigation system on the land.

Port Manager Buddy Toadvin is evaluating the possibility of acting himself as the general contractor for the sedimentation basin project. He said he could save the port \$43,000 in costs if he is the general contractor and sub-contracts to five other companies to do the work. The port commissioners told Toadvin to keep evaluating that proposal.

BACK TO THE POLLS AGAIN

22¢ Morrow tax hike asked

The proposed Morrow County budget to be voted on this Tuesday would, if passed, result in an increase of 22 cents per \$1,000 in property valuation more than the taxpayers have paid in the current year.

The tax rate has been estimated at \$3.35 per \$1,000 of true cash value. For a \$60,000 home and property, the taxpayer would pay \$213 to the county for the services it supplies.

The county budget was defeated by more than 300 votes at the May 24 Primary election. The budget has not been cut since by the county budget committee.

But the proposed tax is \$74,600 less than that which was defeated because the U.S. Forest Service has estimated that \$75,000 more will be paid to the county from forest receipts.

Total resources had to drop because the estimates were too high from other areas. Judge Don McElligott told the Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce Monday.

The idea of creating an animal control district, which was defeated by more than two to one at the last election, will not be on the ballot this time. That will cut about \$24,000 from the taxes.

County voters will decide on the fate of Pioneer Memorial Hospital in a separate ballot.

The reason it will be voted on a separate ballot is because a group of citizens in north Morrow County said it will vote against the entire county budget if the hospital is included in it. But McElligott said he does not know, in his own mind, if it was a good decision to vote on the hospital separately.

"I hope the people in the south end of the county can carry it (the hospital budget)," McElligott said. "We will try anything (to get the budget passed). We may have to make a dozen budgets."

We can eliminate any part of the county you (the voters) want."

Hospital Administrator A.K. Felt said the cost of the hospital will be 14 cents per \$1,000 valuation (\$8.40 on a \$60,000 piece of property.)

"With a good turnout in the south end (of Morrow County), the hospital budget should not be in much jeopardy," Felt said.

Felt said more than one third of the Pioneer Memorial Hospital budget will go to the North Morrow Medical Clinic in Boardman, so he thinks the people in that city will vote for the budget but he does not think Irrigon voters will.

Voters will decide on a tax levy of \$70,457 for the hospital budget outside the six percent limitation. The total budget for the hospital, nursing home and North Morrow Clinic is \$1,313,027. To balance the budget, local property taxes in the amount of \$23,803 are needed for the clinic and \$46,654 for the hospital, nursing home and ambulance service.

If approved, all the taxes will be partially funded by the state.

On the overall county budget, McElligott said salaries have been the principal problem.

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Heppner budget cut \$18,300 since last vote

City of Heppner voters will be deciding at a special election June 24 on a city budget that has been cut \$18,300 since its defeat in March.

Because of added resources, the total decrease in taxes needed from local property owners is \$45,847. The added resources total \$27,347.

The amount to be voted on is \$74,059 outside the six percent limitation allowed by law. This is a 16.6 percent decrease from the previous budget.

Frank Pearson, city councilman, spoke to the Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce luncheon Monday about the new budget that will be voted on for the 1980-81 fiscal year.

Pearson said the city budget committee decided not to cut basic services or the city crew. Some of the cuts that were made will be "unpopular," he said.

In past years, the city budget has been pretty basic in an effort to save the taxpayers money, Pearson said. But there was no room in the budget for expansion or emergencies. Two years ago there was an emergency in the city water system that depleted the city account balances to where they are at a minimum now.

Of the \$18,300 in cuts, \$5,000 came from the street fund for the paving of city streets and roads. Another \$3,000 was cut from street supplies and \$3,000 more for the shutting off of about 50 street lights in mid-block areas of town.

Another \$3,000 was cut from water supplies, \$1,500 from water meters and \$1,000 from sewer repairs with \$1,800 for other items for the total of \$18,300.

If the budget passes, Heppner taxpayers will pay approximately 60 cents per \$1,000 valuation more than they paid during 1979-80.

The library and the swimming pool operations were not cut from the budget.

The total amount will be partially funded by the State

of Oregon for homeowners who apply for the property tax relief.

Anticipated revenues for the city budget are \$229,491, up from \$174,292. Resources

other than local property taxes are anticipated at \$115,177, up from \$79,365. The major increase in the budget is in materials and services for the amount of \$102,855, up

from \$75,320.

To balance the budget, \$114,314 is needed in local taxes. Of that, \$64,461 is for a bond debt that has been approved in past years leav-

ing the total figure to be voted on Tuesday at \$74,059.

The voting will take place from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Heppner City Hall building on West Willow Street.

Smallmon seated as judge

The new District Court judge for Morrow and Umatilla Counties, John Smallmon, took his oath of office last week in front of more than 50 persons who were crammed into the small courtroom of the Hermiston Safety Center.

Circuit Court Judge William W. Wells of Pendleton, the presiding judge of the Sixth District that includes the two counties, performed at the brief ceremony.

Judge Wells said he is sure the new District Court will be "a great service to both counties." He said the Justice of the Peace Court in Hermiston will be phased out because of the new District Court, and that same type of arrangement is possible in Morrow County.

Judge Wells said he is thankful for the creation of the new court because it will reduce the caseload in the Pendleton Circuit Court. Appeals from the Hermiston Justice Court have been going to the Circuit Court but now, with a district court, appeals will go straight to the Court of Appeals in Salem.

Smallmon, who has been in the private practice of law in Hermiston since the early 1960's has served there also as the justice of the peace. Standing before Wells with hand upraised, he repeated the oath, and at the conclusion of the brief ceremony, his wife Helen helped him don his black judicial robe.

Wells handed Smallmon a written commission from Gov. Victor G. Atiyeh naming him to the new District Court bench. He will be ending his law practice at least until the November general election, when he will run for the job.

Pendleton attorney George Anderson spoke on behalf of the Oregon Bar Association. He said the population needs of the area have been realized.

"It has been cumbersome for lawyers to work with the justice court," he said.

According to Judge Wells, district courts are trial courts with jurisdiction limited to \$3,000 in civil cases and to misdemeanor criminal cases, including traffic offenses, where the misdemeanor is punishable by a fine of up to \$3,000, imprisonment of one year or less, or both.

District courts conduct preliminary hearings in felony matters which may result in binding over to the circuit court grand jury. They may not try cases involving title to real property.

District courts have small claims departments which have jurisdiction for recovery of money or damages where the amount of claim does not

exceed \$700.

Circuit courts are the state trial courts of general jurisdiction and have appellate jurisdiction over the justice courts and some municipal courts. They have adoption and juvenile jurisdiction in most counties—but not in Morrow County, where the county judge has such jurisdiction. Circuit courts also exercise jurisdiction in probate, guardianship and conservatorship cases.

Attending the ceremony from Morrow County were County Judge Don McElligott, Commissioners Dorothy Krebs and Warren McCoy, Clerk Barbara Bloodworth and Heppner attorney Her-

man Winter. "We will see you July 1 (the day the position officially begins)," McElligott told Smallmon.

"I want to thank all of you for your support today," Smallmon said. "Especially the people that came over from Morrow County. I am excited about entering my new career and promise to be fair and impartial in my decisions."

A reception took place after the ceremony in the home of his neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. G.M. (Jerry) Reed. Jerry Reed is the Hermiston Herald publisher and former publisher of the Heppner Gazette-Times.



Circuit Court Judge William Wells, left, assists the new District Court judge, John W. Smallmon, with his robe. Smallmon was sworn in during a ceremony in Hermiston last week.