

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

GAZETTE-TIMES
Morrow County's Home-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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Work together to move ahead in teacher/board negotiations

To the Editor:

Enough already. The teacher/board situation is a no-win situation. We have lost our sense of community. We've forgotten what counts, we're so busy comparing bananas to grapes (I'm tired of apples and oranges). People have said "I don't have time to worry about it." They're worried. "I refuse to discuss it." They're discussing it. "I won't let it interfere with my work." It's interfering with their work. "It's the teachers problem." It's the teachers, the ranchers, the businessman on Main Street, the loggers, the parents, the kids, the county's problem...we're all in this together.

What's the solution? There are as many answers as there are people in Morrow County. Let's keep it local. Let's remember we're friends.

It's time to communicate and compromise face to face without hired negotiators. I propose that the board members and an equal number of teachers be brought together in a

comfortable location where the following shall occur: 1) they first have a "bonding" session where each shares something about themselves. 2) They discuss the issues. 3) They break for meals together. 4) They sit at the round table again, this time in different locations. 5) They again share a part of themselves. 6) They discuss. 7) This process continues until a workable solution brings this entire situation to a grinding halt even if it takes days. A minister might be on hand to mediate. 8) We get on with educating our children and forgive and forget with understanding.

Nothing is worth the friendships lost, the bitterness, the "let's get even" attitude. It's time to move ahead. Together discard the rotten grapes and bananas, make a fruit salad and work out a fair way to have an affordable quality education system for our future generations.

Sincerely,
(s) Claudia Hughes
Speaking for myself

Forum helps to dispel rumors and misunderstandings

To the Editor:

I would like to commend the South Morrow County Ministerial Association for sponsoring the public meeting allowing both the Morrow County Teachers Association and the Morrow County School Board an opportunity to make presentations concerning the issues involved in the teacher contract negotiations. The negotiations issues have become stressful for everyone. Maintaining quality education with the funds that we, as taxpayers, are willing to spend is obviously a ma-

ior concern. Helping to relieve stress is a valid Christian ministry. The open forum allowed questioning of both teachers and board and helped to dispel rumors and misunderstandings. Personal attacks on individuals and inappropriate comments or questions were not allowed. The large attendance at the meeting was a clear indication of its importance to all of us. Thank you, ministers of Heppner, Ione, Lexington for providing this opportunity for so many to listen, ask and express our concerns about our school system.

(s) Chloe Pearson

Letters to the Editor

School board exercising prudent stewardship of funds

To the Editor:

During the course of the school board/teachers informational meeting, February 16, the school board was criticized repeatedly for maintaining a cash forward budget balance to fund the districts operation from July 1 till late November when the new tax funds start to come in. It was suggested that this fund balance be used for pay and benefit increases. Is it not good management to have this money drawing interest until needed rather than borrowing funds and paying interest?

It was suggested that the board was remiss for not utilizing contingency for a "band aid contract

fix". Contingency funds are required to meet unanticipated and catastrophic events and are normally not expended but rather become part of the next years cash forward. As an example of the soundness of a well-funded and maintained contingency, the people of Baker, Oregon will be well served if their school system has adequate contingency funds to see them through the problems created by their terrible school fire.

It seems that the board is exercising prudent stewardship of the public funds in their trust.

(s) A.K. Felt
Heppner

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No. Morrow adds support to bond election

To the Editor:

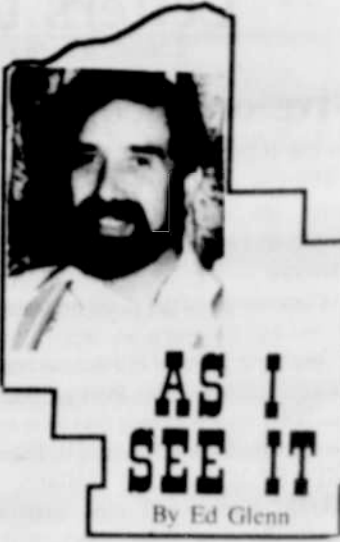
The Boardman/North Morrow County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee adds our support for the upcoming bond election on March 28, 1989. The refinancing of the older revenue bonds will allow minor reduction in the utility rates and a step toward making the plants in our area more competitive on a regional basis. That additional edge and the strong show of support by passage of the bond issue should go a long way in securing the jobs that are currently here as well as more incentive to add additional jobs. We have long supported the payment of revenue bonds for economic development items such as T-3 and the Ullman Boulevard overpass by taxes rather than adding them to utility fees. This issue will further that goal.

Please add our support to that of the Chamber Board, City Council of Boardman, Irrigon Chamber, Heppner Chamber, Heppner Economic Development, ICABO, and others in your efforts to inform the general public.

Sincerely,

(s) John Grace
Chairman Boardman/North Morrow County Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee

'Tain't My Fault



AS I SEE IT
By Ed Glenn

Isn't it nice to be able to point your finger at someone else and say "It's his fault?"

We've become a whole nation of blame finders. When something goes wrong, our very first (and often only) reaction is to find who's at fault. We rarely spend as much effort correcting the wrong that we spend laying the blame for it.

In many years practicing law it was always a mystery to me that there is really no such thing as an "auto accident." In every wreck, if you looked hard enough, you could find that someone was at fault. It was my job, of course, to make it look like the other guy was at fault so my client could tap into his insurance coverage. It's that search for fault that ties up the court system and drives up insurance premiums.

It now appears that the real blame lies with the purveyors of assault rifles. The deranged trigger man is not to blame, but rather the demented merchant that sold him the gun. And by banning those assault rifles we hope to take a big bite out of crime.

Within a few days of the school yard slaughter that prompted this current assault on semi-automatic rifles, we read about the execution, finally, of Ted Bundy.

Authorities think he may have killed as many as 100 young women and not a one of them with a gun of any sort. Nor did the Green River Strangler use a gun. Banning assault rifles wouldn't have taken even a nibble out of those two crime sprees.

Some folks think that Bundy's sexually related murders were encouraged by pornography. True to the blame finders cause, they say the real fault lies not with Bundy, but with those sleazy merchants who sell pornography. It, too, should be banned, they say.

Yet banning pornography wouldn't have bothered the terrorists who downed Flight 103. They used hi-tech explosives hidden in a portable radio. Some voices have been heard calling for a ban on portable radios on airplane flights.

All of this ban, ban, ban of physical objects as the way to solve crime is a terrible mistake. People commit crimes and their instrumentalities are many and varied. The real fault lies not with the weapon but with the criminal. Bound to commit crime, a criminal will resort to whatever instrumentality that might be available and if not readily available, there is practically no end to which a criminal will go to create the means.

This line of thought has a great peril which probably accounts for its unpopularity. If we agree that crime really is caused by criminals, people, human beings, somewhat like ourselves, rather than a gun or knife or porno, then we must stand up and accept responsibility for our own acts.

If we hold Ted Bundy personally responsible for his murder spree, we must hold ourselves responsible for our own acts.

That's hard to do. "The devil made me do it," will no longer be the by-word.

But it will explain why the hundreds of thousands of semi-automatic gun owners (me included) do not kill school children. And why the perhaps millions of porno readers don't strangle even a single young lady. And why the tens of thousands of airplane flights that take off and land safely every day are not blown up in mid-flight.

Accepting responsibility for one's own acts would also explain a greater degree of harmony between neighbors and friends and even strangers. We would hear "I can't do that," much less often when, of course, I could do that if I just wanted to expend the little extra effort.

We would hear "you can't do that," much less often when, of course, you could if I would only give a little help or advice. Both of those excuses imply that the decision is beyond you, that it is not your responsibility.

The next time you are tempted to reply "I can't do that," or "you can't do that," stifle the temptation and see if there is a way. Take responsibility for those decisions upon yourself rather than pass it on to some nebulous force beyond you.

As we all take more responsibility for our own acts, we can better assign responsibility to others for their acts.

The buck has got to stop here.

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