

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

Heppner
GAZETTE-TIMES

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Letter to the Editor

Board negative, argumentative

To the Editor:

We stood in the back of the stuffy and crowded board room quietly listening to the bickering. This was our first glimpse at Morrow County School Board politics. We found that members were argumentative and negative towards those in the audience and each other. The simple requests were drug out and argued over. Students who had the initiative to work to reinstate a lost program felt intimidated and put down.

Seven students from HHS attended the October 18 board meeting to request that HHS be allowed to have a dance team for the 1993-94 basketball season. The Heppner High School Dance Team was one of the cuts.

Dance team members decided to raise money last year for this year's season, believing that they would still be able to perform if they raised their own money. They received a \$400 donation from Oregon Together, raised \$200, and found an advisor. They also informed the other schools in the county of how they received the donation and worked for the \$200. This was done so that the other schools could follow their example if they wanted money to form a dance team.

The board turned down the request because they wanted to support the administrative position, which is that if one school can't have an activity, no school can have one. We understand that the board would want to support the original plan, but when a group of students work hard for something positive for our schools, it's worth the support from the board. Isn't it possible that in this situation the administrative opinion might be wrong? We believe so. Shouldn't the board exercise the system of checks and balances? They only talk democracy; they don't use it. We are not trying to get this decision reversed, we are simply trying to understand why only two members of the board are willing

to support the positive actions of the students of Heppner High School.

The issue of Measure 5 was brought up often at the meeting. Our girls used this as a defense, stating that, as seniors, they were caught in the middle, between the decision to cut certain activities and the creation of a procedure to reinstate them. We believe that when these cuts were made the procedure for reinstatement should have been put into effect. The school board replied by telling us we had it better than the younger students who will be hit harder by Measure 5. We realized this fact. The board also said that because of Measure 5, the cuts were made and that was law. They are in the process of coming up with a procedure to reinstate cut programs if the interest arises. But for the Heppner dance team this year it is just too bad, because there were no procedures in place.

We propose in these hard times, which will only get harder with cuts coming into full effect, that if programs can meet the requirements for reinstatement, the initiators should be praised for their hard work, and not be put down.

This situation is enough to make anyone frustrated with the way our school board handles the ever changing and growing needs of our country. We will get nowhere if change is not supported by our school board and arguing is not replaced with positive attitudes. We are glad we are seniors so that we won't have to deal with unclear directions and hard headedness as more and more cuts come our way.

Sincerely,
(s) Alissa Brownfield
Senior class secretary
(s) Candis Marshall
Senior class treasurer
(s) Sara Greenup
Student Body business director

Local control lost with passage of Measure 1

To the Editor:

As I have watched and read the discussion about the proposed sales tax, there are two issues I have not heard mentioned.

First, by financing all school systems at the state level, local control of the things we feel are most important will be lost. Policy making and power will eventually shift to the legislature and the powerful lobbies that influence it. That means that Morrow County with only 3000 votes will come pretty low down on the order of priorities.

Secondly, we all recognize that the higher up in the governmental ladder the money goes, the less efficient use of that money the taxpayer gets. We will get less back in educational benefits for

every dollar spent. I feel that if the tax is passed, we will be faced with new agencies to collect and administer those funds, which will have to be paid for from those dollars.

In the last few years, we have witnessed the failure of the world's largest centralized government. Why should we then be in such a hurry to follow the example of failure and move toward centralized control no matter how noble the cause? Yes, education needs support. But, we who live in Morrow County are still best suited to decide what those needs are and how best to support them.

Sincerely,
(s) Al R. Brazell

Does anyone care about patients?

To the Editor:

Five Oregon citizens have died while in the custody of Dammasch State Hospital since June 1, 1993. Two of them died choking on pancakes on the same day. Does anyone care?

Dozens of former patients of Dammasch have told me of medical needs undocumented and unmet while at Dammasch Hospital, and of people being chased and tackled during "take downs". Is anyone listening?

The deaths at Dammasch State Hospital indicate an institution in crisis. Several patients who died would be alive today if staff used proper procedures and recognized signs of serious illness. But we have a hospital at which 140 of the 300 staff are "temporary" employees, where doctors and nurses rotate through unfamiliar wards, dealing with people they do not know and whose medical and psychiatric histories are not well documented.

I know that administrators at Dammasch care as much as I do that people are suffering needlessly, people whose only "crime" is to need a safe and secure place in which to regain their mental health. One of the recent rounds of layoffs cost Dammasch their two doctors of internal medicine. Their concern and anguish will continue, with the "downsizing" of Dammasch taking two more big bites out of staff in December 1993, and June 1994. There's little they can do, because one of the options they would like to have "on the table" isn't: the planned and funded closure of the Dammasch Hospital facility.

Why is it not on the table? Certainly not because the law or federal policy require large institutions for care of individuals. Federal policy, in fact, strongly discourages such institutions, refusing to pay Medicaid reim-

bursement for any hospital for mental treatment of more than 16 beds. Certainly not because Dammasch is a model facility in which the latest and best practices are possible and delivered. Dammasch is an aging building, designed as a nursing care facility and out of date for even that use, which fails to meet current standards for patient privacy, security and therapeutic treatment.

Closure is not on the table because of hidden political realities. The grounds of Dammasch are extremely valuable for residential development (surrounded by expensive condos) but current state law says that if the land and buildings are sold by the division the proceeds revert to the general fund, giving the division administrators no incentive to dispose of land and buildings they

think of as assets. In 1992 the unions representing Dammasch employees forced the hospital administrator to withdraw a tentative plan for closure of Dammasch during the 1993-95 biennium and in 1993 a family organization forced a hearing to scare legislators and the public about the possible consequences of closure.

Replicable models to safely serve the most difficult and frail consumers now at Dammasch already exist in this state. They are not cheap, but they do meet federal standards for Medicaid reimbursement. They do provide care that keeps consumers near their families, their communities, their natural supports.

Many others are prepared to document the poor care that is currently dispensed at Dammasch and due to continue, if not deteriorate. We are ready to discuss ways to protect both staff and consumers in an orderly process. The administrators of the hospital need public support to break the political deadlock they find themselves in. The public has to care what is happening to its fellow citizens who must live or work at Dammasch. But it seems that no one is listening. And it seems that no one cares.

(s) Mary F. Byrkit
8291 Macleay Rd SE
Macleay 97301-9071

Library association supports tax

To the Editor:

The Oregon Library Association supports the sales tax on the Nov. 9 general election ballot, and it urges library users statewide to get behind the measure and work toward its passage.

Our association does not normally get involved in ballot measures, but providing stable funding for education is an issue of such over-reaching importance that it is clearly not a time to sit on the sidelines.

We wouldn't deny that there is self-interest involved with the library community's support of the sales tax.

If our education system fails to produce life-long readers and seekers of information, libraries will suffer an inevitable decline in patrons.

And if no replacement revenue

is approved and the next phase of Measure 5 cuts is implemented, libraries throughout Oregon will be in serious jeopardy of reduced service levels, sooner or later.

To be fair, our members are not uniformly enthusiastic about the sales tax. We're a pretty fair cross-section of Oregonians. Some would have preferred a different kind of tax, or a different rate or whatever.

But we were unanimous in our support of replacement revenue, and that comes down to a yes or no vote on the sales tax.

The Oregon Library Association strongly urges a yes vote on Measure 1.

Sincerely,
(s) Patrick Grace
President
2422 Green St.
Philomath, OR 97370

Justice Court Report

The Justice Court office at the courthouse annex building in Heppner reports handling the following business during the past week:

Ronald Allen Nonamaker, 51, Salinas, CA-Possession of Falsely Applied Deer Tag, \$255 fine; Possession of Falsely Applied Resident Combination License, \$255 fine;

Jerry Eugene Armstrong 35, Salinas, CA.-Illegal Possession of Deer (no valid tag) \$375 fine; Possession of a Falsely Applied Deer Tag, \$255 fine; Possession of Falsely Applied Resident Combination License, \$255 fine; Sean Patrick Harnett, 23, Walla Walla, WA.-Killing Antelope Closed Season, \$96 fine.

Marriage Licenses

The Morrow County Clerk's office at the courthouse in Heppner reports issuing the following marriage licenses during the past week:

October 29: Estanislado Alderete, Jr., 32, Boardman; and Lorena Torres, 23, Boardman. November 2: Francois Zayas, 28, Miami, Florida; and Patricia Cecilia McElligott, 24, Miami, Florida.

In the Service

Marine Sgt. John Martin, son of Carl and Geri Martin, Heppner, was recently promoted to his present rank while serving with Recruit Training Regiment, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego.

Martin, a 1984 graduate of Heppner High School joined the Marine Corps in April 1986.

Patricia McElligott & Francois Zayas
Wedding - Nov. 6

Jodee Ashbeck & Mark Swanson
Wedding - Nov. 27

Yvonne Frost & Keith Morter
Wedding - Nov. 27

Murray's Drug INC.
217 North Main Heppner 676-9158

November 18th

November Ladies Nite-Dinner at 6 p.m.
District Deputy Visitation by Mike Lusk

Dining every Fri. and Sat. 6-9 p.m.

Elk hunters-bring in your hides. The Vets in hospitals needs the leather

Heppner Elks 358
676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 N. Main

You Are Invited To Our
CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Saturday
November 20
9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Refreshments
Door Prizes
Special Savings



Murray's Drug
217 North Main 676-9158
HOURS:
Mon. - Fr. 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sat. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (pharmacy closes at 1 p.m.)

Vote for Measure 1

To the Editor:

Nobody would dispute the fact that we have entered the information age. As Time magazine has indicated, our children are traveling down an information highway unknown to us at their age. Sometimes we as parents may have difficulty keeping up with some skills our children are learning, skills that will see them successfully into the next decade as they make education, job and life choices.

The reality of recent school budget cuts resulting in first grade classrooms of 28 and 29 children and the specter of much deeper cuts to some have prompted some schools to abolish positions not directly tied to classroom teaching. This is resulting in the elimination of some school librarians, many of whom have recently undergone advanced training in information technology and are the best prepared to serve the information needs of our children.

We as Oregonians take pride in being independent thinkers. With no better alternative before us, how can we not try to solve the crisis facing our schools, and ultimately our children, by voting in favor of Measure 1 and giving the sales tax a fair chance.

Sincerely,
(s) Richard C. Forcier, President
Oregon Educational Media Association

Court Street Market
111 N. Court Heppner 676-9643
GROCERIES - MEATS - PRODUCE
Prices good Nov. 3rd - 9th

Roma Tomatoes	49¢ lb.	Boneless Beef Pot Roast	\$1.00 lb.
Golden Delicious Apples	39¢ lb.	Western Family 10 lb. Flour	\$1.50 ea.
Christmas Rose or Ribier Grapes	79¢ lb.	Oberti Black 5 1/2 oz. Olives	79¢ ea.
Red Potatoes	.25¢ lb.	Lady Elberta 29 oz. Peaches	\$1.10 ea.
Cooks Ham Steak	\$2.49 lb.	Heinz Ketchup 32 oz.	\$1.29 ea.
Boneless Pork Chops	\$3.00 lb.	Bumble Bee 6 1/8 oz. Tuna Fish	69¢ ea.
Pork Blade Roast	\$1.39 lb.	Diet Mt. Dew or Diet Mug Root Beer Pop 6 pk cans	\$1.10 +dep.