

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Gazette-Times will not publish unsigned letters. Please include your address and phone number on all letters for use by the G-T office. The G-T reserves the right to edit. The G-T is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. (Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$5.)

Put differences aside, work together

To the Editor:
It is important that the Morrow County School Board focus their attention on the curriculum they are offering the students in all schools in the county. As the state and nation push for increased performance in schools, our students will face increasing difficulty keeping pace if a more comprehensive curriculum is not provided. Breaking up the county's high school system is counter-productive in this regard.

The end result of the current Morrow County School system is as follows (provided by the Morrow County School office):

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

School Year (1999-2000)
Senior Results

State/District/School	Verbal	Math	Percent & Number Taking the SAT	Total
National	505	514	-NA-	1019
State of Oregon	518	517	13,738	1035
*Morrow County School District	506	482	42.6% (66 out of 155)	988
Heppner High	532	532	78.8% (26 out of 33)	1064
Ione High	515	463	44% (11 out of 25)	978
Riverside High	472	450	29.9% (29 out of 97)	922

* MCSD average scores are not true district averages. Since the schools receive the individual and school scores, the district computes a school average to figure the district average. A true district average could only be computed by using individual scores to compute an average.

Traditionally, all Heppner and Ione students have valued a solid academic achievement record. But if the school board fails to focus on the curriculum and workable scheduling offered, the students will suffer from increasing difficulty.

The people of south Morrow need to put differences aside and work together for the benefit of their children.

(s) Meg Murray
Ione

County museum survives transition

To the Editor:

The Morrow County Museum Board of Commissioners took on the task of planning the future of the Morrow County Museum in July of 2000. Budget cuts by the county no longer provided for the salaries of a director and assistant. Most museums within Oregon's rural areas are operated by Museum boards or Historical societies and depend solely on volunteers.

At the Feb. 20 meeting of the Morrow County Museum Board it was unanimously agreed upon that the board would merge with the FARM Foundation, a non-profit organization formed to secure expansion and development funding for the Morrow County Museum as a whole.

A new board has been named to continue fund-raising and operations. The new president is Cliff Green, Heppner. Vice-president is Robert Harrison, Lexington; secretary/treasurer, Larry Mills, Heppner; board members, Barbara Bloodworth, Betty Carlson, Ken Nelson, Howard Mullins, Butch Laughlin and Bob Jepsen. Robin Krebs will continue as director. She is volunteering 25 hours a week.

The county will continue to provide for basic operations, building upkeep, janitorial and utilities. Robin Krebs is in charge of recruiting volunteers for maintenance and operation of the museum, and will oversee the volunteer staff. The board has provided funds to send Mrs. Krebs to museum operation seminars in Portland, and private funding was provided by Mullins Industries for her to attend the Northwest Museums Conference. Training and education will continue to be provided by the board.

The museum closed for the winter in order to complete the transition period. Inventory was taken, and cleaning and painting were completed. The Museum Board members and other volunteers put many hours in at both museum sites. St. Patrick's Day will present the opportunity for the ag equipment to be displayed at the elevator from 10-5 on Saturday. The Morrow County Museum will host the spinners and their wool products as tradition holds.

Museum hours continue to be Tuesday-Friday 1-5 p.m., and Saturday 11 a.m.-3 p.m.. On Saturday, St. Patrick's Day, special hours will be 10 a.m.-5 p.m.. The genealogy department is free for public use.

Museum admission is \$3 for adults and \$2 for senior citizens and students. Children under 12 are admitted free. Museum Board meetings are the third Tuesday of each month, 7:30 p.m., at the museum.

The board is pleased that the future of the museum is stable and secure and the crisis of July 2000

Letter merits an explanation

To the Editor:

The letter last week from Bonnie and Jack Engler merits an explanation to them or others who may have similar reactions to my earlier letters.

First and most important: you misunderstand my purpose. It is to look to what might be in our future that could destroy our democracy.

It is not to continue the election campaign with that endless, hackneyed repetition of allegations, etc. That is history.

It is not to defend Democrats. Both parties are equally guilty of accepting the three billion dollars of special interest funding to buy the power to govern.

My growing concern is based on (1) Pres. Eisenhower's prediction, (2) the definition of fascism (see dictionary) and Senators McCain and Feingold's work to stop corporate and other special interests from buying the government. They include unions as special interests in their bill. (Their interests are special since they do the work in factories, mills, fields, transportation and work that makes the country produce.)

My stance comes from my past, of course. I love my country, having always thought that the promises inscribed on the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor that my country is the only one on Earth that offers home to the oppressed. To me, it is like Jesus' words: "Come to me, all you are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I believe passionately in democracy where every single person has a vote to determine what happens to the whole.

In World War II, I was in college. We had to fight the fascist dictatorships because democracy can have no power in fascism. Some of my classmates, students and friends, some them very close, died in that war. They had to do it. I still think of them. Do you?

That said, returning to Pres. Eisenhower: having served as the great general in the great war and with two terms as president, could anyone in the 20th century be better qualified to make a prediction about the future of our country? His further comments on the military will be in the next letter. The military has always played prominently in fascist dictatorships.

Let's be clear. I did not say that the R party is fascist or that Bush II is a dictator. Only what may be symptoms have been pointed out. The quotes from him on the trillion dollar tax cuts or others by Cheney, Tom DeLay or Ashcroft which swear to do only exactly what the president wants cannot be denied. They are documented.

Regarding your denial that anyone was denied the right to vote, consider this: if 40,000 votes were cast but not counted, isn't the result the same as if they had never been allowed to vote? Florida law clearly provided for the hand count as the way to handle ballots that the machines were unable to count ... as do other states, including Texas. The D's are really at fault there. Under Childs they had known about the voting mess for years. In 1988, Buddy McKay lost a U.S. Senate race to Connie Mack by a razor-thin margin after a recount. Same counties... Broward, Dade and Palm Beach ... were involved then... same problem with the punch card ballots and nothing done about it in all these years... Now they plan to change

it. Something good happened.

Apologies to Bonnie and Jack. The mention of the Beer Hall Putsch expected readers to make the metaphorical comparisons. A putsch occurs when on a specific scene, a group who feel they have the power move in quickly and take over. In Florida, the storm troopers were the R's with the governor, secretary of state, legislature and other election players. Those who resisted at the Beer Hall were the Florida Supreme court judges, and the shot by Hitler was the U.S. Supreme Court Judge (one of the five) who stopped the counting. It was a putsch... a naked, unconstitutional, illegal, undemocratic power grab. Hitler didn't succeed but he had a foot in the door. Bush II was successful; he became president. Those who love democracy should never let it happen again.

Bonnie and Jack, you mention Clinton. Whatever one thinks of him, all have to admit that he was a very popular president, retaining that popularity through two terms (and impeachment, Monica etc.), emerging in January 2000 with a 67 percent majority, greater even than Reagan's. Still young, he represents a power--majorities have power in a democracy.

What is happening now reminds me of a tour of Auschwitz a few years ago where I learned that a good percentage of those imprisoned, shot or incinerated there were not Jews, but anyone offering resistance to the Nazis, not only the individual but everyone in his family. Now two R Reps. Burton and Barr who have built their political careers on bringing Clinton down are heading a campaign to destroy his popularity in retirement. Look at the D's who are joining the mob, seeking to destroy his wife, his brother, her brothers, their friends. Is this the same process used by one-party governments? Is it because they fear his potential political power? It is true that President Carter derided his pardons, but Carter also said, "Gore got a bad deal in Florida," and answered "No" when asked if his well-known election-monitoring team would have gone into the Florida situation.

In summary, I ask only that Americans for democracy take time to listen to our prophets and assess if and where we are on a "slippery slope."

Someone with more power than our politicians said, "A prophet is not without honor, except in his own town."

(s) Jane Rawlins
Heppner

MCEA endorses Renfro for school board

To the Editor,

On Feb. 28, 2001, the executive board of the Morrow County Education Association held a school board candidate interview.

The interview team was impressed with the sincere interest and positive responses of the candidates. After much deliberation, the Morrow County Education Association voted to recommend John Renfro for the Zone 2 position.

We hope you will take this into consideration when you cast your vote.

(s) Sally Walker,
for Morrow County
Education Association
Heppner

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David Sykes Publisher
April Hilton-Sykes Editor

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Species Act seriously flawed

To the Editor:

The Endangered Species Act is seriously flawed. The threat of a lawsuit to stop or delay irrigation development in Morrow County was serious enough that an environmental group, The Nature Conservancy, acting in concert with a number of other environmental groups, was able to extort 20,000 acres for its own purposes, purchased for a token amount of money. These 20,000 acres will never again be able to positively impact the economy of Morrow County. Why? To preserve a few colonies of squirrels in second rate habitat.

If the Washington Ground Squirrel is indeed endangered, they should be taken care of in Washington and not Oregon. These squirrels, which are thriving in Oregon, may be similar to their cousins in Washington but they have been separated from them for many thousand generations. The same agency that contends that salmon can develop genetic variations in

one or two generations through a hatchery tells us that these two populations, which have been separated for many thousand generations, are identical.

The other flaw with the act is that the protection is not limited to national parks and federal wilderness areas (which seem to be growing constantly) but it extends to private lands dedicated to other purposes. For instance, a livestock grower must care for his livestock which includes protecting them. Therefore, the producer has a strong moral imperative to eliminate any predator that menaces his herd. This includes bears, cougars, wolves, coyotes and stray dogs. Producers are being forced to shoot, shovel and shut up. This makes criminals out of honest livestock growers and this has already happened in Montana, Idaho and Oregon.

Talk of aversion therapy on the predatory species is as naive and as likely to succeed as aversion therapy is on the human species.

(s) CR McElligott
Ione

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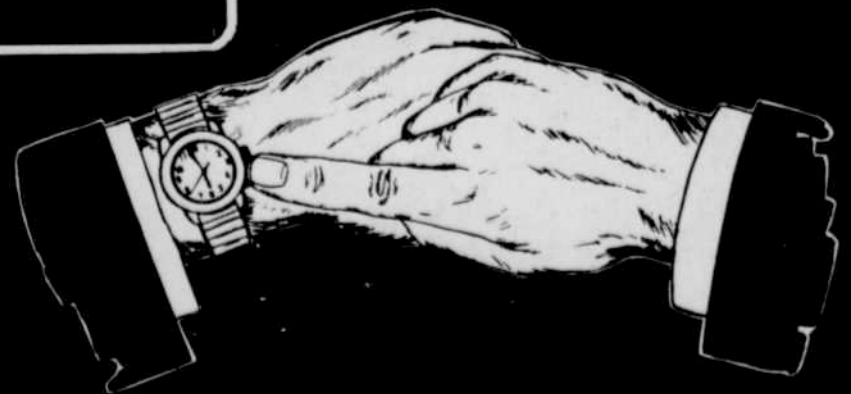
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