

**Vote yes on the recall**

To the Editor:

On July 1, 2002, Morrow County School District will have a new superintendent. Now more than ever, the school district needs new board members who will work as a team, do business openly, consider all possible solutions, not just eliminating staff and programs before acting, and respect each others' opinion. They must be willing to work at obtaining the best person for the job who truly will have the welfare of Morrow County students as his or her primary concern. Therefore, I urge you to vote "yes" to recall John Rietmann, Larry Frederickson and Pat McNamee.

Three current members of the board have shown that they cannot work as a team with other board members who have different opinions. They have knowingly withheld information from board members, and in fact, they have attacked their own peers. In the 30-plus years that we have been involved with public education either as a teacher, parent or concerned taxpayer, we have never seen such dysfunctional behavior on the part of board members. It is less than professional and takes time away from more important considerations to say nothing of the wasteful expenses that are incurred along the way. If each of the board members would take time to do their homework, listen to each other, respect each other's point of view and then make decisions as a team, their productivity would be invaluable to students, staff, administrators and taxpayers.

Having executive board sessions prior to regular meetings looks very suspicious to the average person even though they could be totally above board. As already stated by others, the board has been cited for doing business illegally in executive session. These pre-board executive sessions have only begun in the past three years which also makes them unusual. The board needs to look and act in a correct manner to regain the trust of the public.

Lastly, a school board needs to do their homework and then consider the solutions based on the facts they have obtained. There is always more than one way to solve a problem or make a decision that will be in the best interest of everyone. During the last superintendent's search, several possible scenarios were suggested, but Mr. Rietmann indicated that the board did not want to go to all the work that might be involved in order to find the right person for the job. This does not indicate a willingness to put students needs first.

I feel that there are people in Morrow County who would be willing to step up and serve on the board in an open and honest way. Therefore, I again urge you to cast your vote to recall Frederickson, McNamee and Rietmann. They are not working for the best education for our students or in the best interest of the school district as a whole.

(s) Ralph Walker  
(s) Sally Walker  
Heppner

**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.)*

**Mark ballot carefully your representative could be next**

To the Editor:

A common tactic of the perpetrators of undefendable actions is to twist the facts to obscure the truth and deceive the public. Bin Laden and fellow Muslim terrorists are masters of this tactic by claiming America's response to terrorism is an attack on Islam in an attempt to incite support for their indefensible cause. In overview of the prominent facts of the crisis facing Morrow County education, which has culminated in a recall election Oct. 30, reveals a clear attempt to twist the facts to justify indefensible actions.

Fact number one: Based on an anonymous letter the Morrow County School Board chose to remove two duly elected officials. The board has admitted under oath they violated Oregon State open meeting laws in planning this action. They also violated their own written board policy (#8700) that excluded anonymous letters from being used for this purpose. Because of these premeditated illegal actions South Morrow County citizens have been denied representation, leaving them at the mercy of a school board that has removed their representatives.

Fact number two: Duly elected board member Barney Lindsay, at significant personal expense, has challenged the legality of the board's decision and was granted a stay to allow the court to settle the dispute. Lindsay and those that he represents contend the board had no authority, in this case, to remove duly elected officials. East Oregonian editor Richard Hensley agreed, in part, in a June editorial which questioned the board's actions. Hensley noted the zones were unclear and advocated that the system, not the elected officials, needed correcting.

Fact number three: Citizens of Morrow County, primarily from the south end, have sought redress for their loss of representation for their own children's education. They are exercising the democratic process of a recall election of those board members that violated board policy and Oregon open meeting laws for the clear purpose of removing duly elected representatives of separate districts.

Fact number four: Citizens of the county that stand to lose their duly elected representatives in a democratically approved manner of recall have cried foul. Please note these same citizens did not cry foul when their fellow citizens lost their representatives in an undemocratic manner. Three prominent citizens of the south end, Larry and Betty Mills and George Koffler, who (consistent with this writer) have no children in the system and have attended no public meeting regarding the controversy, have joined their cause arguing the recall would divide the county and damage public education.

In summary I believe any unbiased citizen who has studied all the rhetoric would come to the conclusion the above facts have been twisted so that Morrow County citizens would overlook or condone the abuse of the public trust by the current school board and the superintendent. Mark your ballot carefully, especially in Lone, Boardman and Irrigon. Your representative might be next.

(s) Stuart Dick  
Pendleton

**Board members' work exemplary**

To the Editor:

I am a past budget committee member of the Morrow County School District and have worked with Gary Frederickson, John Rietmann and Pat McNamee. These men have dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and effort to the school district and should be retained in their positions as board members. To remove them would be a disservice to the school children they serve and wrong on the basis of the unfounded allegations made against them by the proponents of the recall effort. These men are held in the highest esteem within their respective districts and their work on behalf of the entire school district has been exemplary.

I would urge all patrons of the school district to vote "no" on this recall.

(s) John A. Prag  
Boardman

**Board members should not be punished**

To the Editor:

We invite you to join us in support for Gary Frederickson, Pat McNamee and John Rietmann. They should not be punished for saying yes to fair and equitable opportunities for all the children in Morrow County. We ask you to vote "no" on their recall ballot. We need men of their dedication and vision to guarantee the next generation will receive all the tools they need to become productive, responsible adults.

Your ballots can be dropped off at the county annex in Irrigon or mailed. They must be in Heppner by 8 p.m., Oct. 30.

(s) Wayne Huwe, Jr.  
(s) Barbara Huwe  
Irrigon

**Symphony, singers to perform**

The Willow Creek Symphony and the Willow Creek Singers will perform on Saturday, Nov. 3, in Irrigon and on Sunday, Nov. 4, in Heppner.

Saturday's concert will be held at 7 p.m. at the A.C. Houghton Elementary Auditorium. Sunday's concert will be held at 2:30 p.m. at the Heppner Elementary Auditorium. The concerts are sponsored by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District and the Morrow County Commission on Children and Families.

**Removing board members a disservice**

To the Editor:

To the voters of Morrow County:

Using innuendo and unfounded allegations a small group persuaded enough people to sign a petition to recall three Morrow County School Board members.

These three members, along with present and past members of the school board, have devoted countless hours of their time to ensure that the children of Morrow County are provided with the best education the district's limited funds can provide. They were instrumental in influencing the legislature to provide additional funds to make it possible for small schools in Oregon to maintain adequate educational programs.

In spite of the declining state revenues they have provided our classrooms with up-to-date technology that is second to none in this state and provided the kids with current textbooks and instructional materials.

They have increased grant funds focused on improving student learning; consequently Morrow County students have achieved a much higher performance on state tests.

Due to their decision to reassign teachers, none of our children are struggling to get an education in an overcrowded classroom. Our children enjoy class sizes among the smallest in Oregon.

They developed and passed a bond measure that will provide additional elementary schools in Boardman and Irrigon. In the future A.C. Houghton and Sam Boardman will house K-3rd grades. The yet-to-be named new schools will house 4th-6th grades. Due to the board's foresight, both CMS and Riverside have been designed to accommodate grades 7-12, making it possible for Irrigon's children to stay in their hometown and receive a quality education. And the expense to the district is minimal. Aging facilities in Lone and Heppner will also be replaced. All this, because of the board's planning, will be accomplished with a very affordable tax increase.

Those who have recalled these dedicated school board members have insinuated that the reassignment of teachers was done because of bias against south county schools. This is such a disservice to these men. With the decline in enrollment in south county schools and the major increase in north county schools they simply had no choice. All they did was equalize class sizes in the entire district. How could a responsible board do anything else?

Making sure that all children have a fair chance to get a quality education is the board's first job. We appreciate all our board members for their dedication to our children on our behalf.

It is imperative that we keep Gary Frederickson, Pat McNamee and John Rietmann on the school board.

(s) Merideth DeHaven  
(s) Barbara Huwe  
(s) Billie Griffin  
(s) Samie Griffin  
(s) LaVelle Partlow  
Irrigon

**Health district to meet**

A regular meeting of the Morrow County Health District is set for Monday, October 29, at 7 p.m. at the Lexington school district office.

The agenda will include: September financials, audited financials, union contract, CEO evaluation, CEO report and an executive session.

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**Heppner  
GAZETTE-TIMES**

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David Sykes ..... Publisher  
April Hilton-Sykes ..... Editor

**News deadline is Monday at 5 p.m.**

For Advertising: advertising deadline is Tuesday at noon. Cost for a display ad is \$4.50 per column inch. Cost for classified ad is 40¢ per word. Cost for Card of Thanks is \$5 up to 100 words. Cost for a classified display ad is \$5.10 per column inch.

For Public/Legal Notices: public/legal notices deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Dates for publication must be specified. Affidavits must be required at the time of submission. Affidavits require three weeks to process after last date of publication (a sooner return date must be specified if required).

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**new teachers continued from page 1**

at North Howell Elementary School out of Mt. Angel and then began working at Lawen, a two-room school with 14 students in eight grades, 17 miles from Burns on the way to Crane. Spinks taught the first five grades.

Spinks and her husband, Billy Ray, were married and then the couple moved to Oklahoma, his home state.

She taught for five years at Watts Elementary and then at Westville Elementary before moving to Ephrata, WA. They were there for a short time before moving to Long Creek. She finished out the school year teaching there and then they moved to the Mt. Vernon-John Day area where she taught for 15 years. She taught at Mt. Vernon Elementary School and, after a school merger, at Blue Mountain Junior High at John Day.

Spinks is the special education teacher at Heppner High School. She and her husband live in Lexington. He is employed with Frontier Energy, the co-gen plant at the South Morrow Industrial Park in Heppner.

They have three children, Joyce, 23, who is working in Redmond, Kevin, 20, who works in John Day, and Megan, 18, who lives in Roseburg. Spinks says that all three kids were involved in horse 4-H growing up and her eldest, Joyce, was on a fair and rodeo court.

In her spare time, Spinks enjoys crocheting, reading and cooking, especially baking. She had worked for several years in a restaurant as a baker, making pies, cinnamon rolls, cakes and cookies.

Spinks and her husband have a horse and a mule. He enjoys working with the animals, especially plowing and packing with the mule.

**Pesticide rules tough on cattlemen, farmers**

To the Editor:

I'm sure Phil Ward, director of the Oregon Department of Agriculture, will implement pesticide use reporting rules more restrictive than the 1999 legislation requires. He has a board meeting in The Dalles, Nov. 2 at Cousins Restaurant. Mr. Ward's rules will be tough on the small cattlemen and farmers. Most operations of size already keep the newly required information and are aware that after New Year's Eve we have to report all uses of all chemicals.

Even though the department recognizes that 35 percent of Oregon ag operations do not have Internet capability, these operators will be required to report electronically. These operators best come to The Dalles Nov. 2 to hear what the fines will be for non-compliance. Attendees should ask what the law requires because you will find it less restrictive than what you will be required to do. Except in the case of urban household use where the expectation of fairness in reporting will not be met.

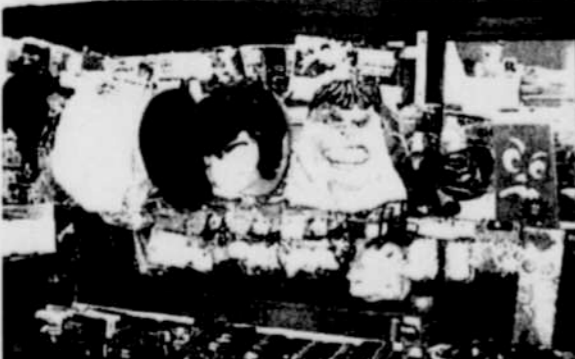
My expectation of fairness of household use would include retail sales reporting in conjunction with the household survey being proposed. Homeowners could not fill out my farm report or would rebel against reporting if expected to do so. Agricultural operators legally apply at least 99 percent of their purchases due to expense and various monitoring methods already in place. Household users legally apply far less than 99 percent of their purchases. We need to know how much less, then find out what happens to the rest of it.

If you use any chemistry on your cattle or crops you will be reporting every use, every time to Big Brother. Unfortunately only one other state west of New York reports, so this burden will make Oregon producers just a little less competitive with producers in other states. Our green friends have just placed one more straw on the camel's back. My camel is big enough to pack this extra straw. But a few of my neighbors say this straw will finish them. Oh well, small producers not Internet-connected; who needs them? They are, however, the backbone of our rural communities. Give the board chairman some help on this. She has fought for two and a half years for some latitude on these regulations.

(s) Eric Anderson  
Ione

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