

Klamath Falls Teachers Seek Boost In Salary

By LAMAR HOOVER
Proposals which would increase Klamath Falls teachers' salaries an average of eight per cent over the present scale climaxed an able presentation made by members of the economic welfare committee of the Classroom Teachers Association Monday night. The audience was a joint meeting of the budget committees of school districts 1 and 2.

The presentation of the teachers' spokesmen was keyed to the theme that teachers' salaries in this city must remain competitive with those of other districts, particularly in Oregon, if the quality of teaching is to be maintained and strengthened.

The arguments presented in support of the teachers' claim that the local salary scale must be modified upward in order to be competitive were various. One was that the trend in salary levels elsewhere is upward. Another was that the cost of living, which is constantly increasing, is higher in Klamath Falls than elsewhere. A third was that the present salary scale, which provides for increments of only \$100 a year for the first three years, tends to discourage the young teachers the schools need from coming here. Many other places offer increments of \$200, which Klamath Falls did until this year.

Finally, the teachers argued that Klamath Falls is financially able to maintain itself in a competitive position.

The first speaker introduced by Roderick Groshong, a teacher at Pelican School and chairman of the welfare committee, was Robert Johnson, instructor at Klamath Union High School. Johnson's theme was "Salary trends and salaries in the state of Oregon." Among the trends he cited were: The appointment of "lay committees" by budget-making bodies, to do research in teachers' salaries and welfare, and to make recommendations. The teachers were able to cite the Aloha-Huber Union High School District as one in Oregon which has followed the recommendation of such a committee. The recommendation was for a straight \$500 salary increase, which brings their scale for teachers with a Master's degree, for example, up to a minimum of \$4,450 and a maximum of \$6,850, with 12 years' experience. The respective figures for Klamath Falls are, at present, \$4,600 and \$6,300, but the latter figure is only reached with 15 years' experience; at 12 the figure is \$6,000.

The shortening of the salary schedule. Only 10 school districts in Oregon, of which Klamath Falls counts two, require 15 years' experience to reach the maximum salary level. The average, he said, runs between 12 and 13.

More attractive salaries. Johnson said that the Cottage Grove Union High School District had granted flat raises of \$400 to teachers with the Bachelor's degree and \$500 to teachers with the Master's. This brings their Bachelor's level up to a range of \$4,400 to \$7,200, compared to a present rate of \$4,200 to \$5,700 in Klamath Falls. The other instances he cited were of proposals made by school teachers in the course of negotiations now under way: a straight \$600 raise in Portland, the same project in the state of Washington—where salaries already average \$250 more than in Oregon, a \$350 raise in Springfield, \$400 in Roseburg and \$700 in Bethel.

"Klamath Falls must compete on a state-wide basis for teachers," Johnson said. "It must therefore stay near the trends, though not necessarily lead them."

Edward Myers, an instructor at Fremont, spoke on the cost of living. He began by citing figures to show that the cost of living has been increasing. Figures taken from the consumer price index compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics showed a five per cent increase in the Portland area from October, 1956, to October, 1958. The increase from October, 1957, to October, 1958, was 2.6 per cent. Such studies are made in only 20 urban areas in the United States, and are based on studies of the prices of food, housing, apparel and medical care.

Myers said that he had checked these figures for the Klamath Falls area by comparing a food store advertisement for December, 1957, with one from the same store in the comparable week of 1958. This showed, on the basis of 31 comparable items, an increase of 4.1 per cent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics figure for food only in the Portland area, on the basis of October comparisons, was 3.6 per cent. Myers therefore maintained that the Portland figures were substantially accurate for Klamath Falls.

However, Myers' principal argument was that percentages of increase apart, the dollars and cents cost of living in Klamath Falls is higher than in the Portland-Hillsboro area. He estimated that for an average family this difference would amount to \$196.80 per year, without taking account of the prices of housing and apparel.

To compare prices of food, he arranged to make comparisons between the prices on a given day in locally owned supermarkets and chain stores in Hillsboro and Portland with similar stores in Klamath Falls. On the basis of 16 items costing \$3.91 in Hillsboro, he found the prices in Klamath Falls to be 21 per cent higher. Thirty-four items costing \$14.20 in

Portland cost 12.5 per cent more here. However, an item for item comparison between a "manager's sale" advertisement for a non-local chain in Portland and in Klamath Falls showed prices on 43 items to run only 1.3 per cent higher in Klamath Falls.

Myers said that he had not included milk or bread in the above calculations. Milk, he said, runs from 2.5 to 5 cents a quart more in Klamath Falls than in Portland, while bread runs 2 cents a loaf higher.

Myers estimated that the cost of fuel oil averages 15 per cent higher in Klamath Falls than in Portland. Electricity, he said, runs 23 per cent higher on the basis of 300 kilowatt consumption, and reaches 37 per cent over the Portland figure on the basis of 900 kilowatt consumption. Cooking gas costs 2.5 per cent more here at the lowest level of consumption, and the gap widens as use increases. The normal price of gasoline in Portland, without a price war, is 28.9 cents a gallon for regular, 33.9 cents for Ethyl. The respective figures in Klamath Falls are 38 and 42.

The speaker said that he had not compared the prices of housing or of clothing, but that housing was very short in Klamath Falls, while clothing was probably more expensive here. Myers added that teachers who wish to improve themselves professionally are at a financial disadvantage in Klamath Falls, which is located far from any college or university.

Finally, Myers criticized Klamath Falls' "prophets of financial gloom." The facts about Klamath Falls economy, he said, would make even the most conservative economist admit that it is healthy and growing.

Two banks have come to the county in 18 months he said, making a total of five, not counting the savings and loan association. Meanwhile, consumers credit paper has been increasing at the two older banks in the city, steadily for the past three years.

"Moreover," Myers said, "this is the highest city in the state of Oregon in effective buying power per capita. It is 21.9 per cent ahead of the state average."

"I can't believe this is the state of a city going into financial ruin," he concluded.

Chairman Groshong spoke on



THE RECENTLY ORGANIZED Modoc Circle Chapter of the Columbian Squires of Klamath Falls held its first initiation January 11 in the Knights of Columbus Hall. The Klamath Falls chapter, a Catholic youth organization, was sponsored by Mount McLoughlin Council, Klamath Falls Knights of Columbus. Initiation day activities began with the 25 initiates, members of the Knights of Columbus and a Knight of Columbus Fourth Degree Honor Guard attending 8 o'clock mass at Sacred Heart Church. A breakfast in the parish hall followed. The squires under leadership and guidance of Delbert Folk, Frank Jacobowski and Stan Neitling adopted the old Squire Charter and name which belonged to the Squires Council, dissolved in 1930.

The initiation was under supervision of Gene Schwerzler, state chairman. Standing, left to right, are Gene Schwerzler, state chairman; Oscar DeNault, counselor; Charles Smith, grand knight; Delbert Folk, chief counselor; Frank Jacobowski, counselor; Father Simard, chaplain; John Novak, counselor; John Lynch, district deputy. Seated same order are initiates, John Phillips, Bob Maloney, Bob McClurg, Jim Novak, Dick Miller, John Brunner, Jerry DeNault, Larry Conforti, Shan Britton, Victor Flores, George Flores, Elmo LeBeau, Daniel Folk, Mike Arne, Dale Heffley, Edward Luczycki, Pat McClurg, Wayne Bracco, Lubert LeBeau, Lyle Kensler, John Ocho, Mike Brumble, Bill Foster, John Novak, David McGregor. — Photo by Charles Van

the framework of salary schedules. He urged restoration of the \$200 yearly increment for the first five years, and said that the present system, granting \$100 only for the first three years, places city school teachers at a permanent \$300 salary disadvantage in regard to teachers in Klamath County schools. Making salary decreases in the early years more attractive would attract new teachers here, he said.

"Today, our substitute list is very short, and is made up, I believe, mostly of persons who are not fully certified," Groshong said. "We have used up the local potential of school teachers and must bring them in from the outside."

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KU Symphony Plans Event

The Klamath Union High School Symphony Orchestra, on the approval of the Board of Education, has accepted an invitation to play at the Music Educators' Conference and Workshop to be held in Seattle on March 4, 5, 6 and 7. Groups chosen for this event were picked on the basis of recorded tapes sent to the committee. The orchestra will not only play a concert, but will also act as a clinic group in addition.

4-H NEWS

MIDLAND DAIRY
Ten members attended the Midland Dairy Club meeting held at the home of Marlu Costel on January 18. At the conclusion of the regular business meeting each member demonstrated his ability to show a dairy animal and received constructive criticism from other members. Refreshments were served by Mrs. Fred Costel. The next meeting will be February 13 at the home of John Espinosa, when a discussion will be held on Hord's Dairyman cow judging contest.

Marlu Costel

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