

### The Gate City Journal

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### Should Our Schools Consolidate?

For a long time, in fact since I came to Nyssa, I have been intrigued with the idea that Nyssa and Adrian should be one school district. I have heard it discussed by individual members of both school boards. Educators in the area and county school officials have considered the merger ideal from many angles, and almost everybody who has thought the plan through agrees that the idea has much merit.

The late Warren Farmer, who served on the Nyssa school board for many years was particularly sold on the idea. If he had lived it is more than likely that the plan would have been discussed at school board and community levels, and might have been a reality by this time.

The facts are that while it has been conversationally bantered around for a lot of years, nobody has ever really made the move to get the two boards together to sit down, study and talk it through, and see if the plan wouldn't work to the best interests of all, or most, of the people in the area. There is no doubt in my mind that from an educational standpoint our students would be much better off, and that we would have a much better school system. That is the only point in bringing the subject up and getting it out into the open where it can be discussed.

I have witnessed from pretty close quarters the undesirable features of having both a senior and junior high school trying to function from the same building. Scheduling two schools into one gymnasium, one library, one band room, one cafeteria, and one set of playgrounds and athletic fields is most unsatisfactory. It further is considered undesirable to have two student groups in close proximity for most of the obvious reasons, and to my knowledge we have gotten by better than is considered possible. I'm sure that the same conditions which exist in Nyssa schools also exist in Adrian schools.

In short, what I am suggesting is that we explore the possibilities of the two districts getting together, all of the high school students going to one high school (Nyssa), and all of the junior high students going to one junior high (Adrian), and all of the grade school students attending school pretty much as they are today.

Let's start first with the high school. Imagine, if you will, what a fine school we could have if the present senior-junior high school in Nyssa were a high school only. First, we would be over that magic figure of 500 students which is deemed so necessary for a full curriculum and full state support, particularly in the vocational areas. We would have adequate classroom space, one gymnasium, one library, one cafeteria, one band room, one Vo-ag building, one shop, one home ec department, and one of every other educational and vocational facility that is now shared by two schools. The student enrollment would be large enough to allow for a much wider curriculum, and this would be important particularly in the language area, and in the many vocational areas now being neglected or glossed over very gently.

Let's switch to the junior high school. Imagine, if you will, what an exceptionally fine junior high we would have with the present Adrian facilities. Much the same situation as in the proposed high school, with the junior high students by themselves and not under the influence, or intimidation, of high school students. Again, one gym, cafeteria, band room, vo-ag and other shop and vocational area; no scheduling difficulties, and overall a very fine junior high school facility and atmosphere.

Before we go any further, let me hasten to say that this is not in any way to be construed as finding fault with our Adrian and Nyssa schools. We have been most pleased with the education that our children have received, and we are delighted at the end of every grading period to see the large numbers of Nyssa and Adrian students who make the honor rolls and otherwise distinguish themselves as they go on to higher education. We would match their records against any like number anywhere.

We have also been impressed with the high quality of administrators, school board policy makers, and instructors of both institutions; which again partly accounts for the good records of their students. However, they are all operating under difficulties which I don't think are necessary, and which I think would be greatly improved through consolidation, or merger.

Consolidation, incidentally, is a subject which has torn some communities apart. It has made warring factions between neighbors and friends, and has led to bitterness and wounds which take years to heal. If I thought that could be the situation here I would not bring the subject up. We have a different situation than most, and we are not abandoning any schools or tearing down any buildings. We are simply suggesting that we could make better use of our buildings, offer our students a much better learning situation, and quite possibly make better use of our tax dollars.

Consolidation usually means that some locality gets a break at the expense of the other. That would not be true here, because while about 125 or so high school students would come to Nyssa High School from the Adrian area; about 250 junior high students would go to Adrian Junior High School from the Nyssa area. Grade school students would attend that grade school which was closest, or which would lend itself best to the program. There are many elementary students now attending Nyssa who live much closer to Adrian, and who more than likely would wind up there. The two districts are so close now that it would make little difference which direction several hundred students went, depending on the needs and classroom space available.

We have discussed some of the pros; let's consider some of the cons. First, about one class of high school students at Adrian would not like to attend Nyssa; and about one class of junior high students at Nyssa would not like to attend Adrian. This is natural and as it should be, because of loyalties and traditions built up through the years.

Second, some parents would not like the idea that their children would have to ride those extra miles to school. Again, this is a natural apprehension. However, we are basically a rural community, we are used to driving a few miles for almost any function, and our districts are so compact that only those students at the outer edges of the district would have even the normal riding time that students in most districts experience.

Third, what about school district personnel? There are Nyssa teachers who live in Adrian, Adrian teachers who live in Nyssa, and they would soon get shifted where they could function the best. Normal annual losses and replacements would soon solve this problem. We are talking only of secondary teachers who require secondary certificates, so this should not pose a problem. For instance, one band leader would teach senior high, one junior high band. One home economics teacher senior, the other junior high. One Vo-ag instructor for senior, the other junior. These are problems which should

be easily worked out by administrators depending on the instructors wishes, residence, adaptability, seniority, and other considerations.

Fourth, what about cost? We see not much difference in the overall cost. 70% of school district costs are for instructional salaries, and the two district salary scales are very close. Some savings could be made in larger quantity purchases, etc., but these would be small. It is quite possible that those of us in the Nyssa district would have a slightly increased levy, and there is little doubt that the levy in what is now the Adrian district would be considerably lower. For the current year Nyssa's levy is \$13.33 per \$1,000 valuation while that of Adrian is \$18.80 per \$1,000, including the I.E.D. levy. However, the consolidation would level the assessed valuation out, and the possibility of increased state aid is good. This is a matter for considerable study, but the overriding benefits of consolidation are a better educational program, not money, although I'm sure economies could be made.

I have purposely timed this proposal for right now, because it fits in a period when nothing can be done about it except to meet and discuss it if the desire is evident, and if the proposal has merit. Both districts are working on their 1971-72 budgets, and this in no way can affect those. Both districts would have 1972-73 budgets to prepare, because elections to consolidate can only be held at general elections, and the next general election would be the Primary Election in May, 1972.

I would suggest that the Nyssa and Adrian school boards discuss this proposal, which as I have indicated before is not mine, nor is it original. Then, if there is merit to the proposal it should be discussed jointly by the two boards. If it still has merit, public meetings should be held, the public should be informed, and finally it must be settled by a vote of the people.

Some of you are not going to like this proposal at first, and others are going to be enthusiastic about it before you really know all about it. My purpose in this editorial is to get it out in the open where it can be discussed, cussed, studied and finally settled where it must be, at the polls. The columns of this newspaper will be available to those who have constructive thoughts on the subject, either for or against.

Most of us have a Nyssa address. We all have a common background for making a living. We share the same churches, lodges, fraternal and social groups. I'm sure we share the same goals for progress and better livability in this community. For this reason I propose the consolidation of the Nyssa-Adrian schools into one school district for what I think will be for the betterment of the community, and for the benefit of our children.

Dirick Nedry

### Oregon Blue Book Will Be Available To Public

The 1971-72 edition of the OREGON BLUE BOOK, featuring a night scene of the Capitol on the color cover, is now coming off the presses, Secretary of State Clay Myers said today.

The first 500 copies of the 20,000-copy edition will be distributed free to state officials, legislators, members of the news media and various government agencies.

The remaining 19,500 copies will be completed around the first of February. They will go on public sale for \$1.50, and will also be distributed without charge to schools, libraries and governmental agencies, boards and commissions.

"The revised format adopted for the 1969-70 edition has been retained," Myers said, "though extensive changes were made in the text to reflect the governmental reorganization measures passed in the 1969 legislative session."

The Smythe-sewn binding was also used again in this edition, Myers said, because of its high durability and because of the favorable response from persons who use the book constantly.

The OREGON BLUE BOOK is compiled and printed under a legislative appropriation to provide a reference aid to state and local government.

Editor of the current edition is Assistant Secretary of State George Bell. Associate editor is Billie Reynolds. The printer is Sweeney, Krist & Dimm, Portland, which won the contract by competitive bid.

Myers said quantities of the OREGON BLUE BOOK will be

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## OBITUARIES

### Joseph Staples



Joseph F. Staples, 76, a resident of Nyssa for the past five years, died January 28. He was born October 15, 1894 in Coalville, Utah.

He married Nellie Mae Moore August 14, 1917 at Salt Lake City. Later the marriage was solemnized in the LDS Temple in Salt Lake. They moved to Nyssa in 1965.

Mr. Staples was active in civic and church affairs. He was President of the Town Board South Weber, Utah for 15 years. At the time of his death he was a member of the High Priest Quorum of the Nyssa First Ward.

He was employed at farming and drove a truck for Weber Central Dairy for many years and was with the company until his retirement.

Survivors include his wife, Nellie Staples, Nyssa; two sisters, Mrs. Nellie Wright, Coalville, and Mrs. Cecilia Gunn, California; and a nephew, Sam L. Moore, Nyssa.

Services were conducted February 1 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Stake House with Bishop Reed Ray officiating. Interment was at Nyssa under direction of Lienkaemper Chapel.

**Clyde J. Gilbert**

Clyde J. Gilbert, 85, Nyssa, died January 26 at Nyssa Memorial Hospital. He was a longtime resident of the Nyssa area and a retired farmer.

Mr. Gilbert was born Aug. 5, 1885, in Missouri. Survivors include one nephew, Frank Wood, Emmett, and one niece, Mrs. Glen Nichols, Emmett.

Services were conducted January 29 at Lienkaemper Chapel by the Rev. Robert Manley of the Nyssa Nazarene Church. Interment was at Owyhee.

### E. L. McEwen

Services for E. L. (Curly) McEwen, 60, Fruitland, who died January 30 at Nyssa Memorial Hospital were conducted February 3 at the New Plymouth Ward, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Bishop Charles Winegar. Interment was at Rosedale Memorial Garden in Payette under the direction of the New Plymouth Shaffer-Jensen Memory Chapel.

He was born at Kimberly, Idaho on June 13, 1910 where he grew up and attended schools. He married Louise Blakeslee at Elko, Nev., on June 9, 1935.

The marriage was later solemnized at the Logan LDS Temple on July 31, 1940.

They farmed at Richfield until 1942 when they moved to Nampa for a year. They moved to Fruitland in 1943. They owned and operated a grocery store in Fruitland, farmed at the Nu-Acres community south of Fruitland.

He was an active member of the LDS Church.

Survivors besides his widow include three sons, Milton, Redondo Beach, Calif.; Harold, New Meadows, Idaho and Roger of Boise; a daughter, Mrs. Orven (Orlene) Poston, Weiser; a stepson, Gene Raymond, Modesto, Calif.; a brother, Arlo McEwen, Kimberly; 11 grandchildren and a great grandson.

He was preceded in death by an infant son, two brothers and three sisters.

**William Tyrrel**

William Henry Tyrrel, 60, Nyssa, died January 24. He was born September 28, 1910 in Oregon.

Survivors include his wife, Minnie, Nyssa; and two sisters, Mrs. Alice Loughton, Reno, and another sister whose name is not available.

Services and interment were at Fallon, Nev., with local arrangements under direction of Lienkaemper Chapel.

**CARD OF THANKS**

We wish to thank everyone for the many acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy extended to our family at the passing of our father. A special thank you to the wives of the Adrian Volunteer Firemen and the Jolly Jane Club.

The family of Howard E. Hatch.

### UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWS

The United Methodist Church of Nyssa will observe National Boy Scout week on Sunday, February 7, at the regular 11 a.m. morning service. The boys of the various units in town will go to the church of their choice, and are urged to wear their uniforms.

Sunday Feb. 7, the United Methodist Church will have a Fellowship Dinner as soon as possible after the morning service. Everyone is invited to attend. Please bring your pot, you luck and your own table service.

Sunday February 7, at 7:30 p.m. the Methodist Men of the Payette United Methodist Church will conduct a special service of Christian Witness at the Nyssa United Methodist Church. Special music, inspiring speakers, inspiring witness, and great fellowship is promised. Again everyone is invited to attend.

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### Jehovah Witnesses Schedule Meeting

Jehovah's Witnesses of Nyssa who associate with the Payette congregation will meet with 15 other congregations from southwest Idaho and eastern Oregon, when they go to Boise for their semi-annual convention at the South Jr. High School, February 19-21.

In announcing the Bible training convention, Charles Dodge, presiding minister, told the congregation of various arrangements being made to care for the delegates needs. About 250 are expected to volunteer for the 18 departments to provide these services.

"Implanting of the Word" based on James 1:21 will be the theme of the gathering scheduled to begin at 6:45 p.m., Friday, February 19.

William Young, district supervisor will be in charge of the convention and serve as principal speaker. This will be Young's first visit to Idaho in his new assignment. He has represented Jehovah's Witnesses in the full time ministry for 24 years, the last 9 years as circuit supervisor. He will be assisted by Douglas Rogers, Idaho Circuit #3 supervisor.

Over 1,000 delegates are expected to attend according to Dodge and the department personnel and program will be announced soon he added. He also noted that all sessions are open to the public with no collections or admission charge.

### CARD OF THANKS

We take this opportunity to thank our friends and relatives for the many acts of kindness expressed in word and deed, following the death of our loved one.

The family of Joseph F. Staples.

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