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Against Proposal

The undersigned people of Greenough are opposed to the proposed mill levy for the construction of a Missoula County High School unit at Seeley Lake because:

1. We feel it would put an unnecessary burden on the taxpayers of Missoula County due to the following reasons:

a. Uncertain long-term employment at Seeley.

b. It is chiefly a summer resort area.

c. Only one major source of employment, one mill shut down, and the Anaconda Co. logging operations has moved out of that area.

d. It would take three buses with a larger total of mileage than the present bus run to Missoula.

2. We feel it would be a second rate high school because:

a. Even though it would be an accredited high school, there would be no vocational training, which means a great deal to the youth of this community.

If the proposed school is constructed, School District 30 should be included in the Missoula unit of the Missoula County High School and the same bus service continued for us. We would gain very little mileage and no time if we sent our children to Seeley Lake. The road to Seeley from Greenough is the unsafest portion of the present bus run.—Murray Vannoy, Denise A. Vannoy, Rodney Vannoy, G. H. Kreis, Grace I. Kreis, Mildred A. Olyer, Patricia Vannoy, Allene Schiesser, F. J. Schiesser, Gertrude L. Potter, Ruth Hall, Fred B. Morris, Fred Baird, Zella P. Erickson, Jane Stone, John Stone, Gordon Erickson, Bill Potter, Margaret S. Potter, James L. Mason, Oona L. Swanson, Lila A. Morris, Richard T. Oliver, George O. Welch, Vera Praast, Richard F. Woirhaye, Lola Woirhaye, Allen Morris, A. E. Swanson, Henry

Praast, James L. Nelson, Wilma C. J. Nelson, Ruby C. Nelson, Opal Wark, John Wark, Lynn K. Milliron, Wilma M. Milliron, Nathan J. Hayes, Estelle Powell, Merl Decker and Betty Welch, all of Greenough.

Prefers Bus

After reviewing the effects of a \$279,000 satellite high school of Missoula County High School at Seeley Lake, I sincerely believe that each taxpayer should carefully study the problem and the value of such a structure before marking his ballot with a yes or with a no.

What does a high school education actually mean to the young people of today? Is it too much to ask them to ride a bus for a free, adequate high school education?

Seven years ago I was a freshman at Missoula County High School — and, incidentally, a daily passenger of the Seeley Lake high school bus to MCHS in Missoula.

I did not ride the complete 120-mile route; I rode approximately 80 miles a day. I was, however, waiting for the bus by 6 or 6:15 a.m., because my only ride to the highway where the bus stop was left at that time.

I greatly value every day of my high school years and, after a year at college, I feel that the courses offered and the competition present at MCHS are invaluable in the colleges of today. And, after hearing the views of college students from many small, inadequate high schools, I certainly believe that a large, competitive high school with a wide choice of courses is quite important.

I surely do not feel that my high school education was impaired by riding the bus, getting up early, and studying late. This opinion, however, depends completely upon the value one places upon his high school education.

At MCHS I was also able to take part in the school clubs and organizations I wished because nearly all of the regular meetings were held during the noon hour. MCHS has done well in this way to compensate for the bus riders of Missoula County.

With an education as important as it has become, is it too much to ride a bus a few hours a day to receive a good education? Or does it have to be fed to the young people from a "silver spoon"? If I were to do it again, I would choose to ride the bus to be able to attend a large school where there is a variety of courses and where there is competition. — Darlene L. Praast, Greenough, a 1960 MCHS graduate.

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Seeley Lake School

The letter sent by the group of people in the Greenough community has pointed out to us that we still haven't done a very good job of getting out the information concerning the proposed high school attendance center at Seeley Lake. To get this information to the citizens of Greenough, we have sent each signer a copy of our pamphlet titled "Why Not a High School at Seeley Lake," and will try to clarify items not covered in the pamphlet here.

Availability of timber in the area seems to be a big question in the minds of these people. Our pamphlet makes this quite plain, but to attempt to make it even plainer, the Seeley Ranger District alone has set up their timber harvest on a 140-year rotation plan, so that there will be an allowable cut of 23,000,000 feet per year forever. The Condon Ranger District just over the divide has established a similar plan that will allow a cut of about half that amount. Added to this is that timber that will be available from time to time on private land and adjoining ranger districts, so that availability of timber is assured.

Apparently there is some doubt as to the permanence of businesses established for recreational facilities. A short study of those areas that have been developed for this purpose, such as Sun Valley, Idaho, or Lake Tahoe, show the permanence of this development.

As far as any division of area for the schools is concerned, it was unanimously agreed at the meeting of the Missoula County H

School Board, and the Seeley Lake group, that the bus for Missoula, and the bus for Seeley Lake, should meet somewhere in the Greenough area, so that residents of that community could send their children to the school of their choice, since residents of the area have indicated a desire to send their children to both schools. In this manner, children could transfer from one bus to the other depending on which school they wished to attend, as it is done in many other parts of the state.

The idea that this school would take more bus mileage is absurd. Since it is against Montana state law to operate two school buses over the same road, the present grade school buses that run north and south from Seeley Lake would have to extend their routes to include the high school students, and the cost divided between the grade school and the high school, as is done in many places in eastern Montana. The Ovando area would have to establish a small bus to meet the Seeley Lake bus at the Clearwater Junction, if they wished to attend.

Since there are over 75 children of high school age in the Seeley Lake-Swan Valley area alone, the need for high school facilities here is evident, based on these children. We have no intent or desire to force anyone to send a child to Seeley Lake who doesn't wish to come, although we would welcome those who do. Our desire is to establish high school facilities in the area, and give these children the equal opportunity for education that we feel they deserve.—C. B. Rich, Double Arrow Ranch, Seeley Lake.

Seeley Lake School ^{3/27}

We want to congratulate the people of Greenough community on their unanimous stand against their being included with those who are expected to attend the proposed Seeley Lake high school.

We want to know who designated what areas were to be affected?

If it was the MCHS Board of Trustees why do they represent some of the people of the county without regard for the other tax-paying people of the same county?

Yes, we have read and studied the statistics which have been compiled but statistics do not always tell the truth. And figures can lie.

But the thing that stays the same is the fact that taxpayers have to pay the taxes that are voted upon them through levies and so forth. Have you told the people of Missoula County that each and every taxpayer will have to pay their share, not only the first year but each ensuing year as all other schools require levies each year? Also how does one know that the same thing that happened to the Potomac high school will not happen to the proposed one in Seeley Lake?

Do you mean to tell us that the taxpayers of the whole Missoula County have to build a high school in Seeley Lake just so the employers can obtain better men? (See the article in the REA paper.)

Maybe the people of other communities, who by the way have been served by bus much longer than Seeley Lake, would like to have a high school to promote their community.

Why must the other communities pay for a promotion idea for Seeley Lake? Just because a few would like to better their businesses. We do not feel sorry for the parents of the students that ride the Seeley Lake bus nor the students either as we believe any healthy boy or girl of high school age can overcome all obstacles which they might encounter on the bus trip without any difficulty. But we do say the bus driver is an exception and has done a whale of a good job. It is not a crime to arise at 5 o'clock in the morning to begin the day's work even in this modern age. Also if the students' time were used advantageously they would not have to do so much home work.

In conclusion we wish to state that we believe each and every child should be entitled to an education. But we do not believe it is right to promote Seeley Lake, under the cloak of education and sympathy for children, with the taxpayers money. — Henry and Gladys Allen, Bonner.

School Organization

It is unlawful to transport high school students from Seeley Lake to Missoula County High School. The law states that high school students shall not be transported more than one hour under normal road conditions.

The really costly factor in this situation is to the children in the Seeley Lake area, who will not have the curriculum offering of MHS if a school is established at Seeley Lake.

Food for thought might be a full fledged junior high school to serve the eastern portion of Missoula County. This would serve Seeley, Potomac, Greenough, Swan Valley, Clinton and Bonner. It would alleviate some crowding at MHS as well as the existing elementary schools.

The senior high students could then continue with the curriculum advantage of MHS for their final two years. This would assist them either academically or in terminal education.

The true measure of school district reorganization is in the final product: the child ready to compete in college exams or vocationally.—Mrs. William D. Dratz, Polson.



Opinions of Readers

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Seeley Lake School

I appreciate the concern of Mrs. William D. Dratz of Polson for the high school students from the Seeley Lake area who are transported daily to Missoula County High School. Until about a year ago, Mrs. Dratz was a resident of Missoula County and it is apparent from her letter that she has not lost her concern for Missoula County schools.

Although I appreciate her concern, I feel that there are valuable considerations which she has overlooked. It cannot be said that the curriculum offering of a Missoula County High School unit placed at Seeley Lake will be inferior to that offered in the already existing units, because any additions to MCHS—whether located in the city of Missoula or at some distance from the city center—will be administered by the same MCHS Board of Trustees which is responsible for curriculum and all other phases of the school program of the MCHS units.

the MCHS board has decided that the need to locate a unit at Seeley Lake has become apparent. The Board of Trustees is now asking the qualified electors in the area served by Missoula County High School whether or not they will approve of another unit of Missoula County High School.—**Marshall Gray, chairman of subcommittee for MCHS Seeley Lake unit appointed by MCHS Board of Trustees.**

'Our Situation'

I shall have to write a personal letter to Mrs. William D. Dratz, Polson, in reply to hers on "School Organization" in Opinions Feb. 13, but I feel it is necessary to air my opinions here in the event others share her feelings on the Seeley Lake high school situation.

Mrs. Dratz said that a high school at Seeley Lake would not have a curriculum of Missoula County High School. As an attendance center or branch of MCHS, we would be assured of the same curriculum taught at MCHS. It would be a necessity for MCHS to retain its accreditation. Naturally, Seeley Lake doesn't expect the duplication in full of courses and facilities now offered at MCHS. We will have to work grad-

This does not say that all curriculum will necessarily be identical, but can it be said that because it will not be identical that it will be inferior?

Students from Seeley Lake cannot even now take full advantage of curriculum offerings because of the long daily bus ride (average riding time is five hours a day). Of itself, it excludes those students from taking part in many activities—athletics, cultural, social scholastic pursuits — which are available and valuable. In an effort to have more participation in school affairs, some students board and room in town (Missoula, Kalispell, Deer Lodge, etc.) but this arrangement has the decided disadvantage of excluding these young people from their home environment and influence. Either way, there is denial.

As I see it, district reorganization plays no part in this consideration. It seems easy for people to realize that the city school board decides upon the location of new schools according to attendance centers as well as other factors, and so Missoula residents have accepted the judgment of the elementary board in locating within School District 1 boundaries, the new buildings it has had to build, for example, in the ever-expanding south and southwest sections of Missoula.

Somehow it seems more difficult to realize that the Board of Trustees of MCHS has just the same responsibility for buildings within its boundaries. It seems that people tend to think that to build a high school unit in other than the city of Missoula is reorganization or splitting up into districts, when actually, all that it means is that

attendance warrants.

But to operate a junior high school and continue to send our juniors and seniors to MCHS would not be a satisfactory solution. We would still be operating a bus from Seeley Lake to Missoula each day, and in addition, would have the cost of a building and a teaching staff in Seeley Lake.

Then how would we be helping the Swan Valley and other portions of Missoula County toward a high school education? We are confident that we will have an attendance of 100 high school students when the door opens.

We have counted and recounted noses in the area so often in the past two years that we have an accurate figure on our numbers. We know our children aren't getting a fair shake as things are—neither would they if they had to ride the bus to Missoula in their junior and senior years.

These children invest 12 hours daily riding the bus and attending school—plus the hours spent on homework. It is impossible for them to enter any after-school or extra-curricular activities including band, sports or socials. Our terrible school attendance drop-out attests to how disillusioned our high school students become. The parents almost lose heart driving them to it.

I can't help but feel admiration for Mrs. Dratz of Polson, and all the other people like her who have taken time out of their daily lives to ponder someone else's troubles and to be concerned enough to offer in sincerity a possible solution. With people like them left in this world, things are sure to come out all right.—Bernard T. Wold, Box 84, Seeley Lake.

Seeley School

Vote Awaits

Attorney General

The proposed Seeley Lake branch unit of Missoula County High School has moved a step forward but it is still not officially on the ballot in a special millage vote.

County Attorney Jack Pinso-neault has given a legal opinion that the so-called satellite high school unit could be established at Seeley Lake. It could be legally financed by a one-year special mill vote on a county-wide basis, he says. The high school board, however, is going to wait for a confirming opinion from State Attorney General Forrest Anderson before setting the vote.

Marshall Gray, board member from Seeley, said the citizens in that area are preparing to ask the federal housing and home finance agency for a grant to pay for architectural planning for the unit.

Edwin Briggs thinks the project should be delayed until Congress decided on a school construction bill.

In other action the board appointed George Hayes, superintendent of Schools at Scobey for the past 16 years, as the new MCHS Controller, succeeding Don Marshall who has resigned to enter private business.

The high school board said it could take no action on its preliminary budget for the next year until the legislature decides on proposals to revise the state aid foundation program.