

# Teacher Asks Paid Time Off for Tournament

by Keith Klingenberg

Latest grievance has been filed by a District 6 school teacher because he was not allowed to leave classroom duties to watch the Class A Divisional Basketball Tournament in Kalispell last Thursday and Friday afternoon.

Fifth grade teacher Gerald Olson filed the grievance after elementary principal Rey Wendt refused to grant him personal leave for both afternoons to attend the games.

Olson said the purpose of filing this grievance was to clarify the definition of personal leave, as set forth in the teachers' 33 page master contract.

He claims the granting of personal leave to teachers is presently highly discriminatory with some teachers being granted leave and others being refused leave.

This occurred in the case of the basketball tournament with junior high teacher Richard Trinastich being granted leave by principal Dennis Kimzey to referee in the tournament.

Kimzey said tournament officials had requested that Trinastich referee; he had done so in

the past and so leave was granted.

The \$25 per day substitute pay was deducted from Trinastich's wages but he received the rest of his school pay for those days, amounting to approximately \$50 per day, plus any money earned as a referee.

Olson agreed the question of granting leave for the tournament is moot now that it is over, but he said, "There is discrimination and I want to point out the need to clarify that part of the agreement."

All the teacher's master contract states is, "Personal, bereavement and professional leave at full salary with no loss of sick leave shall be provided each teacher after approval of the teacher's principal."

Supt. Robert J. Souhrada said he will be holding meetings with the parties involved with the grievance as set forth in the Level II grievance procedure. He will then issue his decision.

In defending his grievance filing, Olson said in past years school has always been dismissed for the tournament and he had made arrangements to be with relatives for the tournament.

"The original school calendar and the student handbook said these afternoons would be time off. We were informed only one week before the tournament we would not get time off," Olson said.

Olson provided the Hungry Horse News with a copy of his grievance.

In it Wendt turned down the request for leave saying he had decided that under the contract, personal leave means "something that a teacher can not handle during the course of the teaching day, such as attorney appointments, tax and license problems, public service or organizations responsibilities and family crisis situations."

"That's it, the teachers can't decide what personal leave is, the principal is the one who decides," said Olson.

"It is bad for the district because there is no limit on this leave. Some teachers use it a lot, some hardly at all," he continued.

Olson stated on his grievance that "since the professional agreement does not specifically spell out what is meant by personal leave, it can then only be defined as any private matter which affects me and not what someone thinks the intent of the (contract) article may be."

Judy Bergstrom, District 6 Education Association president, said it is the right of any teacher to file a grievance.

She said she was continuing efforts to arrange for an arbitrator for the "four days" grievance. In that complaint, teachers ask to be paid for the four days school was closed in September.

## Drug Charge

Donald O. Erie, pled guilty Tuesday to a felony charge of possession of dangerous drugs.

He entered the plea after the state moved to reduce the charge from a felony sale of dangerous drugs to the possession charge.

Erie was released on his own recognizance pending sentencing March 22.

Jean (Connie) Heckathorn, chairman, and Samuel Arthur Citron, and Ben R. Cohen and Dale Duane Pennecard. Unopposed for the one year term is incumbent Ruth A. Satterlee.

## Return From Trip

Returning Monday from a six week trip to California, Arizona and New Mexico were Ed and Jeanne Reed, Columbia Falls.

Mrs. Reed, owner of Jeanne's Beauty Shop, said they visited her sister and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Arch Farrell, in San Francisco and friends, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sparks, Aguila, Az.

Surprise for the couple was meeting Hank and Grace Larkin, Columbia Falls, in Tombstone, Az. On the drive back to the Flathead through Colorado and Wyoming, Mrs. Reed said no streams were flowing until they drove through Wyoming.

## Gambling Trial Underway

The Montana Supreme Court has refused to interfere with the "Somers 11" gambling case.

Defendants had asked the Supreme Court to order District Court Judge James M. Salansky to explain why he would not suppress evidence allegedly taken without a search warrant during the Dec. 2 raid at an upper room at the Stagecoach Inn, Somers.

Trial began today (Thursday) in the 11th District Court. Defendants' request was denied by the high court without explanation.

The defendants are Jimmy Richard Robey, Somers; Pat Casey, David Peterman and Kathryn Peterman, all of Whitefish; and Leo Rieben, William Pilgrim, Dee Wimple, Joan Tuten, William Carpenter, Ernasto Gurero and Bruce Molberg, all of Kalispell.