

Traffic Accident Decline Claimed With Radar Use



SPEEDER NABBED — Well, not exactly in this case. Sheriff Ira C. Byrd plays the role of a driver who has been halted by State Police Officer Charles E. Wright because he has been checked by radar as exceeding the posted speed. When these pictures were taken, the area on Garden Valley Road by Riverside School was being radar-patrolled. (Paul Jenkins photos)

State Officers See Cut In Rate In Danger Areas

By LLOYD ROGERS
News-Review Staff Writer

Nobody likes to get a traffic ticket, but not many argue about those resulting from the electronic tool used by the state police.

Radar, as used in traffic law enforcement, may sound like a dirty word to motorists but it has been effective in reducing accidents. Sgt. Robert J. Keefe, in charge of the local office of the department, says the use of radar has cut accidents in the "high frequency" areas his men cover.

Any doubt that radar is being used in Douglas County these days will be dispelled by a visit to traffic court. A fairly large proportion of the offenders will be carrying their copies of citations for basic rule violation. And many of these will carry the word "radar."

Sgt. Keefe stresses, however, that the reason for using radar is not to fill the courts with traffic ticket defendants. Instead, he points out that the department is endeavoring to reduce accidents.

Desired Effect Obtained
Traffic tickets, coupled with the quick spreading psychological effect of radar in an area have the desired effect, Keefe says. As an example he points to the Nielsen's Market area on Highway 99B where as one where accidents have been markedly reduced.

Although there is considerable grumbling by radar cited drivers, only two have stood trial in efforts to show innocence in the two years radar has been used in this area. Those two trials were held this week before Dist. Judge Warren A. Woodruff and resulted in one conviction and one acquittal.

Radar said Bernard Alfred Saar, 618 NE Jackson St., was driving 47 miles per hour in the 25-mph zone at Nielsen's Market. He was cited at 4:45 p.m. on Jan. 7. It cost him \$15 fine and \$5 court costs when Judge Woodruff found him guilty.

Truck driver Virgil Carl Tramp, Eugene, maintained he was innocent of violating the basic rule when charged with driving his rig 30 miles per hour in a 25-mph zone on Highway 99 north of the Yoncalla junction at 10:15 p.m. Dec. 20. His contention was upheld by the judge and his \$15 bail returned.

Technician Testifies
Testifying in both these trials was Calvin Walter, Medford, state police technician for this district. Walter, an ex-Navy electronics man with five years' service with the state police, was called to explain the workings of the radar equipment which had clocked the defendants.

Walter points out that the radar used by state police differs from the armed services' pulse type which works on a time basis for calculations. The police radar is



SPEED WATCH — Officer Wright, private first class of the Oregon State Police, watches the dial of his radar-equipped car for speeders. When one is noted, he radios ahead to another officer who halts the offender.

based on the Doppler effect, he says.

According to the dictionary, it is named for Christian Doppler, a 19th Century mathematician and physicist. The effect is defined as "the apparent change of frequency of sound waves or light waves, varying with the relative velocity of the source and the observer." If the source and observer are drawing closer together, the frequency is increased.

An example of this, Walter points out, can be readily noticed in the changing sound of a train whistle as it approaches a listener.

In the police radar, using the principle of frequency or phase change is converted into cycles per second. It goes through a series of electronic circuits and is imposed on a meter type visual graph.

Speed Checked Instantly
This electro-magnetic radar speed meter, according to the technician, is a precision instrument used in instantaneously checking the speed of a vehicle on a street or highway.

Walter claims it is superior in accuracy to any speedometer available and says the police equipment is completely checked at least once a month.

The meter used by Oregon state police is graduated in 2-mile-per-hour steps from 0 to 100 mph so an accurate reading can be obtained. When a vehicle is checked, the needle "hangs" at its peak momentarily to enable the officer to get a reading.

The officer operating the radar

unit receives 20 hours of instruction in its use before going out on the road with it.

The mobile unit is moved about the district constantly and has been in use here since Dec. 23. Here is how it is operated:

Two Officers On Scene
The radar car with a plexiglass rear window (radar beams are distorted by glass) is stationed along side the road in one of the accident zones. With the beam aimed at traffic lanes, the operator sits and watches the meter.

If an offender is spotted, the speed is noted and a description of the car is radioed ahead to an officer waiting in a patrol car. This officer halts the car and issues the citation.

The main value of radar is in restricted speed zones, Sgt. Keefe points out. It has been used locally mainly in areas having high accident rates. These include Nielsen's, Garden Valley Junction, the construction zone north of the Yoncalla interchange, Elktion School zone, the restricted speed zone in the Tri-City area and at Douglas High School.

The local office of the state police is scheduled to get a portable radar unit sometime this month or next, according to Keefe. This unit will be more versatile than the mobile one, Keefe says. It can be mounted on a tripod, box or any other location, and can be operated by an officer equipped with a walkie-talkie for alerting patrol cars about speeders.

Calendar Of Regional Events

THURSDAY — Jan. 23

Umpqua Valley Knife and Fork Club, 7 p.m., Hotel Umpqua Gold Room. Speakers: Sartell Prentice, Pythian Sisters, 8 p.m., Knights of Pythias Hall.

Evergreen Grange Home Economics Club, 10:30 a.m., grange hall. Potluck lunch scheduled. Clean up day.

Roseburg High School Girls League meeting, 2:30 p.m., high school auditorium. All mothers of sophomore girls invited.

Geneva Guild Mission Fellowship sewing session, 9 a.m., First Presbyterian Church.

Army Reserve, 8 p.m., 1614 W. Harvard Ave.

Roseburg Country Club women, noon luncheon followed by weekly bridge play, clubhouse.

Roseburg Rotary Club, noon, Hotel Umpqua.

Roseburg Lions Club, 6:30 p.m., Hotel Umpqua.

She-wa Camp Fire Girls, 7 p.m., home of Terry Carter on Buckhorn Road, 4 1/2 miles east of Dixonville.

Grange meeting of all subordinate grange masters, county deputies and wives, 8 p.m., Evergreen Grange, State Grange Master Elmer McClure to speak.

FRIDAY — JAN. 24
Retired Pensioners Unit 55 potluck luncheon, 12:30 p.m., Veterans Memorial Building on Northwest Garden Valley Boulevard.

Ground Observer Corps skating party for all teen-age members, 7:30 p.m., Roletta Rink.

Hayloft Square Dance Club special dance, 9 p.m., at the barn. Bill and Irene Cyphert of Springfield to be guest callers. Ladies bring pies.

Evergreen Grange, 6:30 p.m. potluck followed by third and fourth degree exemplifications and presentation of 25-year pins.

State Grange Master Elmer McClure to be guest. Members are asked to bring a gift for a baby shower.

Central Junior High students' dance lessons, 7:30 p.m., school

auditorium. Parents invited.

Merry Circle coffee, Olivet Presbyterian Church in Glendale. Community invited to take coffee break at the church. Proceeds will go to the building maintenance fund.

Elktion High School assembly, featuring state Game Commission film, 1 p.m., auditorium. Parents invited.

Elktion High School dance sponsored by high school band, following basketball game, gymnasium. Funds to go toward purchase of band jackets. All Elktion alumni invited.

Elks Club duplicate bridge play, 12:30, Elks Club. Open to Elks and invited guests.

Loyal Order of Moose game night, 8 p.m., Moose Hall.

Umpqua Hillbillies Square Dance Club, 8 p.m., Kellios Grange hall. All square dancers invited.

SEEKS RE-ELECTION
S.A.R.E.M. — Justice George Rossman, a Supreme Court judge for 30 years, filed Wednesday for reelection. He has been on the high court the longest of any of the seven justices.

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