

# La Grande Evening Observer

Established 1896

WEATHER

Cloudy today; partly cloudy tonight and Wednesday; highs 44-50; low tonight 20-25.

Daily except Sunday

LA GRANDE, OREGON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1958

Price 5 Cents

## Chicago School Fire Kills 90

### U.S. Stand Aids Vote Campaign

BERLIN (UPI)—Renewed American pledges to fight an all out war if necessary to maintain the U.S. position in West Berlin have boosted the chances of Mayor Willy Brandt to win a smashing victory in Sunday's city elections.

On Sunday West Berlin's 1,650,000 electorate goes to the polls to elect a new 127-seat city parliament which in turn will elect a mayor. Brandt's Social Democrat Party has ruled since 1954 and his strong position in Berlin and Western support were raising his stock.

He was helped late Monday when informed sources passed the word in the city that the United States would support its garrison against any military attack by the Communists against West Berlin. West Berlin newspapers accepted it as the strongest pledge yet.

It followed a declaration Sunday by Gen. Henry I. Hodes, American Army commander in Europe, that the United States would consider an attack against the American garrison as an attack against the United States.

Sound trucks toured the streets of West Berlin today urging the citizens to get out and vote on Sunday. From the trees of Berlin's once-elegant boulevards, posters carried huge pictures of the mayor and the slogan "Berlin needs Willy Brandt."

Brandt's Social Democrat Party has held 64 seats in the city parliament since 1954 as against 44 for the Christian Democrats of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and 19 for the Free Democrats (Liberals). The Communists are not represented.

### Mrs. O. Lentz Enters Contest

Mrs. Orville Lentz of Island City will replace Mrs. Elsie Komma as the Union county representative in the Oregon Wheat Growers Association cake bake-off at the state meeting of the association in Portland this weekend Wren Case, Alico, president of the county association here, said yesterday.

Case said Mrs. Komma will not be able to make the trip due to illness in the family. She won the county title at the county fair here in September. Mrs. Lentz was runnerup.

The 31st annual meeting of the wheat association is being held this Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the Multnomah hotel in Portland. At the meeting representatives from over the state will draft resolutions and study various programs concerning the state wheat growing industry. Case said he and other association members from Union county would attend.

### U.S. A-Plane Delay Told

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Chairman Melvin Price (D-Ill.) of the joint congressional atomic research subcommittee disclosed today U.S. scientists have reached "a critical stage" in development of a nuclear-powered plane.

He said the United States is in a position "to push forward vigorously to a successful conclusion" of the program.

He added that "the nation can ill afford further delay and indecision" on the multi-million dollar project. Such delay, he declared, would mean forfeiting "once again our technological leadership."

Simultaneously Rep. August E. Johansen (R-Mich.) called on the House manpower utilization subcommittee to look into the possible need for extra scientific manpower in the light of reports that Russia has developed an atomic plane ahead of this country.

Price blamed "bureaucratic snafus in Washington" for America's failure so far to develop a nuclear-powered plane. He said in an angry statement the administration has consistently pulled the rug from under scientists working on the project.

Defense Department officials continued to take a skeptical attitude of a published report that Russia already is flight-testing the world's first atomic plane. Their comments echoed the view of Defense Secretary Neil H. McElroy who doubted the report and conceded only that Russia "may have a slight lead over the United States in this area."

### Local Man Cited After Wreck

A car driven by Glenn G. Wagner of La Grande was completely demolished in a wreck and by fire near the Glover overhead about 3:30 p.m. yesterday. State Police reported this morning.

Wagner, traveling east on Highway 30 at the time of the accident, was not injured. The car careened off the highway, over an embankment and landed in a creek. The car then burst into flames.

Wagner was cited for violation of the basic rule.

### Boycott Ties Up 'Runaway' Ships

NEW YORK (UPI)—About 75 "flags of convenience" ships in American ports were tied up today in a boycott called Monday by two maritime unions.

Teamsters and longshoremen failed to cross picket lines set up by seamen in most U.S. ports and in some foreign ports.

The National Maritime Union, one of the unions involved, said the first day's action in the United States "indicates an effective blow has been dealt the runaway ship operators."

NMU members picketed at least six ships in New York and three in Portland, Ore. In Europe, some ships were boycotted at most major ports but not always with success. The boycott was termed "effective" in most British ports.

Target of the boycott were vessels flying the Liberian, Panamanian, Honduran and Costa Rican flags. The Seafarers' International Union was a co-sponsor of the demonstrations in the United States but the worldwide boycott, planned to last through Thursday, was called by the International Transport Workers Federation.

Checks cashed in La Grande and Elgin totaled \$345, Anderson reported. The worthless checks were cashed in taverns and service stations.

### T. B. Salmon Re-elected Cemetery Director

T. B. Salmon, whose term expires as a director for the La Grande Cemetery Maintenance District, was re-elected for another three-year term yesterday.

Salmon was the only candidate who had entered a petition. Salmon received 29 votes. Weldon O. Marshall received one write-in vote.

### Money Missing; Man Held

LOS ANGELES (UPI)—A mild-mannered bank vice president today was held in jail on federal charges of embezzling more than \$800,000 from the Sun Valley National Bank.

John E. Petersen, 49, father of two children, was arrested Monday by FBI agents at his home in nearby Van Nuys on a complaint issued by U.S. Commissioner Theodore Hoeke charging him with a false entry in the bank records.

Total bank shortages might amount to more than one million dollars, D.K. Brown, special agent in charge of the FBI Los Angeles office, said. Auditing of the books continued today.

Petersen, who said he got his start in the banking business in Omaha, Neb., before coming here in 1937, said after he was ordered held in lieu of \$35,000 bail:

"I don't have any of this money. I'd like to know where it is."

The Sun Valley National Bank was sold Saturday to the Security First National Bank which is the nation's sixth largest banking chain.

### Phone Group OK's Strike

SEATTLE (UPI)—Employees of West Coast Telephone Co. Monday authorized the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to take strike action if necessary to obtain their demands.

The union is seeking wage increases and improvements in vacation and sick leave benefits for about 1,400 hourly workers in Washington, Oregon and southern California.

W. L. Vinson, chairman of the Northwest Communications Council, said the employees authorized the strike in a ballot vote, the results of which were made known Monday.

The union's working agreement with West Coast expired Nov. 30. Meetings with federal conciliators Monday ended in a deadlock.

The two parties were to meet again today and the company was expected to make a revised proposal to the union.

The company has offered a four-to-seven-cent hourly raise to employees but the union is after an increase which would amount to 16 cents an hour in some cases.

### Police Quiz Students; Check On Arson Angle

CHICAGO (UPI)—Police fanned out through a grief-stricken West Side neighborhood today to question students in the belief one of them accidentally caused a fire which killed 87 students and three nuns in a Roman Catholic school.

Police headquarters assigned 35 officers from the Austin Police Station to the arson squad to assist in questioning boys whose job it was to carry trash to bins near a basement stairwell where the fire apparently started.

### Airlines Strike Situation Eases

United Press International

The airlines strike situation brightened today with the prospects of an early settlement of the Trans World Airlines walkout and continued service by Pan American World Airways for at least three months.

Leverett Edwards, chairman of the National Mediation Board, said in Kansas City that a quick settlement of the TWA dispute could be expected as soon as negotiators decided whether mechanics promoted to foremen should continue to accumulate seniority rights.

Pan American's contract with the Transport Workers Union, representing 8,025 mechanics and flight service personnel, expired at midnight Monday night without a strike. The union pledged Monday in state Supreme Court that it would not conduct a strike or slowdown until the mediation procedures of the Railway Labor Act are exhausted — perhaps not for three months or more.

Prospects were not so bright in the nine-day-old Eastern Air Lines strike. The Flight Engineers International Union, representing 550 striking engineers, turned down a company arbitration offer in Miami, Fla., Monday.

American Airlines, threatened by a strike of 1,500 pilots, got another reprieve Monday when U. S. District Court Judge Frederick van Pelt Bryan decided in New York to continue his hearing of the company's complaint against the Air Line Pilots Association.

### Sputnik III's Rocket To Fall

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (UPI)—The rocket of Russia's third Sputnik will probably plunge toward earth in flames Wednesday morning, according to the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

Dr. Luigi G. Jacchia said the carrier probably would complete about 2,800 trips around the world before falling into the earth's atmosphere about 4 a.m. p.s.t. Wednesday.

The rocket, which went into orbit around the earth with its satellite May 15, will probably disintegrate in flames when it comes in contact with the earth's atmosphere.

The physicist said it could not yet be accurately predicted over what section of the world the object would plunge earthward.

Authorities theorized that a pupil might have tossed a lighted cigarette into the trash, setting off Chicago's worst fire in 55 years. The disaster brought condolences from Pope John XXIII.

The blaze swept Our Lady of Angels Parochial School Monday less than a half hour before classes were to be dismissed at 3 p.m.

The searing heat and suffocating smoke killed 53 girls, 34 boys and three nuns. The children ranged in age from 9 to 15. Nearly 100 others were injured.

Coroner Walter McCarron deferred a "blue ribbon jury" investigation of the fire in order to select "the top men, the best I can find" to serve on the panel.

"In the face of such grim tragedy it is imperative that we move slowly and with firm determination to learn the basic cause of this tragedy," he said.

The coroner said he would call an inquest into the fire sometime next week.

Of the injured, 82 remained hospitalized today. Four were near death.

Many of the children leaped from windows on the upper floor of the two-story building, their clothing and hair afire. Bystanders and firemen caught or broke the fall of many of them. Others smashed to the frozen ground and were killed. Still others never left their classroom desks and were found suffocated, seated in front of their open books.

About 1,300 pupils were in the section of the school that burned and another 400 students were in an unaffected section. The large building, which sustained most of the fire damage, was built in 1910. The annex was constructed within the last five years.

At the Vatican, Pope John XXIII cabled his condolences to the Chicago Catholic Archdiocese, and offered his "apostolic blessing" to the sorrowing parents, relatives and families of the victims.

"We have been deeply anguished in learning of the grave disaster which has struck the Archdiocese of Chicago," the pontiff said.

Chief of Detectives Patrick Deely ordered the arson squad to "try to enlarge" on the theory that a hastily discarded cigarette might have touched off the tragedy.

Driver learns To Park, Hard Way

A driver with a training permit license learned to park the hard way last night, according to a city police record this morning.



DALE CASE HONORED—Oregon's 4-H tractor winner, Dale Case of Alicel, as a guest at the current national 4-H conference in Chicago, Ill., is shown as he received a crown as Oregon Tractor winner from conference Queen Geraldine Gajewski. Leon M. McNair, left, presents Dale with a plaque at the 37th annual club congress. McNair represents the 4-H national committee on boys and girls club work. David Schaud of La Grande is with Case at the convention.

## Dale Case Honored At Chicago 4-H Meet

CHICAGO—Dale Case, Alicel, program in Oregon and five other states. The program is directed nationally by the Extension Service in cooperation with the National Committee.

He won the state tractor crown on the basis of his outstanding record of activity and leadership in the 4-H tractor program and was awarded an all expense paid trip to the Club Congress underway this week in Chicago.

Dale is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Homer Case, and is a member of the Alicel Grease Monkeys. He is a junior of La Grande High school and plans to enroll in college when he is graduated.

In 1954, Dale won the junior tractor contest at the county level. In 1958, he won the senior champion tractor driving contest and at the state fair took third place. Dale has served as club president for three years and as junior leader for two.

Union County Extension Agent, James R. Huber says, "Dale has been the top boy in our 4-H tractor program for the last five years." Dale states, "My experience in tractor maintenance during six years of 4-H has saved wear on the tractor and equipment and costly repair expenses."

### Water Supply Study To Be Aired At Meet

Roy Taylor, a consulting engineer from a Boise, Idaho firm, will meet with the city planning commission and other city officials at 7:30 p.m. today to discuss details of a complete La Grande water supply study.

City Manager Fred Young arranged the meeting to discuss the possible future water needs of La Grande.

## Utah Home Fire Fatal To Four

SNYDERVILLE, Utah (UPI)—Four children burned to death early today when fire swept their two-story frame farm home in this tiny community three miles north-west of Park City in the northeast section of Utah.

The victims were Christine, 8, Paul, 6, Marl, 4, and Rex, about 2, sons and daughters of Dale and Betty Durrant.

The fire apparently started from a small space heating stove in the kitchen of the home. The house was heated by a coal furnace in the basement but it was not believed to be the cause of the fire.

Durrant, 28, a farmer, had made the fire before beginning his morning milking chores. Mrs. Durrant, 25, was still in her bedroom when she smelled smoke.

She said the doorway leading to the rest of the house was blocked by flames by the time she reached the kitchen. She then ran outside in her nightclothes to find her husband.

Both parents ran back into the house but were unable to reach the ground floor bedroom where two of the children had been sleeping and could not climb the stairway to the upstairs bedroom where two other children perished.

### 'Package' Power Reactor Dedicated

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho (UPI)—A portable "package" power plant reactor, which could provide electricity and heat continuously at isolated military posts without refueling for three years, was dedicated today on the lava bed desert of Eastern Idaho.

The dedication ceremony took place at the Argonne National Laboratory's Idaho site at the Atomic Energy Commission's National Reactor Testing Station near here on the 16th anniversary of the birth of atomic energy.

It was in this same area that the propulsion unit was developed for America's atomic submarines and where work is now proceeding on nuclear aircraft propulsion.

CALLING ALL KIDS . . . time for

The LITTLE PEOPLE'S Christmas COLORING CONTEST

COLORING CONTEST—Starting tomorrow the La Grande Evening Observer will run a Christmas sketch for coloring by youngsters 10 years old or under. Four sketches will appear, one each day, Wednesday through Saturday. The Observer will have 33 entries selected as local winners, with the winner to get cash prizes and show tickets. The entries will also be sent to Cleveland, Ohio to compete for national winners. Top prize locally will be \$5 cash, with second and third place winners to get \$3 and \$2 respectively, and 30 additional winners to get two show tickets each. A full set of colored sketches are to be turned in at the Observer office, as soon as possible after the final sketch appears Saturday. The top national contestant will receive a \$100 U. S. Savings Bond or set of Encyclopedia Britannica Junior.

### Justice Frankfurter Makes 'Good Recovery'

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter sat up in bed Monday and is making a good recovery from his heart ailment, his office reported.

Frankfurter was hospitalized last Monday. There is still no word as to when he may return to the bench.

The court is in recess this week. It meets again Dec. 8.

### CHECK ARTIST AT WORK

A warrant is being issued today by District Attorney George Anderson Jr. in connection with a number of worthless checks passed in this area Sunday and Monday.

Checks cashed in La Grande and Elgin totaled \$345, Anderson reported. The worthless checks were cashed in taverns and service stations.

IKES VACATION ENDS

PORTLAND (UPI)—Sen. Richard L. Neuberger (D-Ore) will be keynote speaker at the Oregon Wheat Growers League meeting here Thursday through Saturday.

### EC 'MESSIAH' SOLOISTS

Featured in the Eastern Oregon College presentation of Handel's "Messiah" will be (pictured from left) accompanists Ardyce Garrett, pianist, Baker; and Patsy Carpenter, organist, La Grande; and soloists Bob Barrett, Yakima, Wash.; Evadne

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Kelsoe, La Grande; Janis Robertson, Forest Grove; and Howard Anderson, La Grande. The program is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 7, at 3 p.m. in the College coliseum, and is under the direction of Neil E. Wilson. (EC Photo)



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