

LA GRANDE OBSERVER

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PRACTICING—Baritone, John DeMerchant along with his accompanist, Mrs. Irma Puls rehearse for his forthcoming concert Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. in the LDS tabernacle DeMerchant will also be in La Grande to direct the production of "Ten Thousand Miles", July 10, in the High School auditorium.

MARRIED LOVE ON A CITY BUS

COVENTRY, England (UPI)—City transport officials announced themselves firmly in favor of married love on a city bus. Wherever possible, they said, women bus conductors are assigned to the same bus as their husband bus drivers, because: the driver is more careful when his wife is watching; the conductor is happier with her husband around, and husbands and wives just naturally work well together.

Russians Express Optimism

MOSCOW (UPI)—The Soviet Union is expressing optimism that the East-West foreign ministers will reach agreement next time they meet and make possible a conference of heads of state.

Moscow Radio reported the foreign ministers narrowed three gaps before recessing Friday and said, "therefore it becomes clear that there are good grounds for reaching agreement."

The three points centered around reduction of troops and banning of rocket bases in Berlin, a cut in subversive activities there and establishment of an all-German group to review the country's future.

Diplomatic observers also were attaching new importance to the forthcoming exchange visits of Vice President Richard M. Nixon and Russia's First Deputy Premier Frol R. Kozlov.

May Enliven Conference
Western sources said the visits may generate new energy to the reconvened foreign ministers conference. Nixon was expected to see Premier Nikita Khrushchev when he comes here to open an American exhibition; Kozlov was expected to see President Eisenhower when he goes to the United States to open a Russian exhibition.

Diplomatic observers in Moscow said the Soviet Union had scored major gains at Geneva by getting Western leaders to discuss the Berlin issue as a separate item from the German problem as a whole and by getting Communist East Germany seated in the conference room.

The observers said the Russians apparently decided that an East-West summit meeting would be held without the Soviet Union paying too high a price. The bare bones of negotiations made it unnecessary for the Communist leaders to take one-sided action in Berlin.

Door Open
Khrushchev's speech Friday was regarded here as leaving the door open for continued negotiation and East-West compromises despite his assertion that continuation of the occupation troops in Berlin was unacceptable.

Diplomatic observers here believed the Soviet use of the calendar was taken too literally, abroad and that the Western powers appeared too prone to use the word "ultimatum" whenever the Russians mentioned a time limit for agreement.

The observers said it appeared here that the Russians mentioned certain dates just to get negotiations started and to spark Western counter-proposals.

Car-Truck Crash At Intersection

A 1956 pickup driven by a La Grande resident collided with a sedan at the intersection of fourth and Washington late Saturday afternoon.

Ernest Thickstun, Orchard Trailer court, 2208 Adams Ave., was traveling west on Washington when he stopped for a sign. He started to turn north onto Fourth and ran into the right rear fender of a car driven by Edith Bernice Snyder, Colville, Wash., police said.

Damage to Mrs. Snyder's car was estimated by police at \$75. The estimated damage to the pickup was \$25.

Firemen Answer House Fire Call

City firemen were called to put out a fire in a davenport at 1012 Adams Ave., Saturday morning. Eighteen firemen answered the 5 a.m. summons to the residence of F. A. Ebling.

Firemen carried the davenport down the steps and into the yard where it was doused with water. A cigarette dropped into the davenport and started the blaze according to the fire department.

WEATHER

Mostly sunny with variable clouds Tuesday; high Tuesday 78-83; low tonight 43-48.

Ghost Town Of Pondsosa Left In Charred Ruins By Flames

OLD LUMBER TOWN RAVAGED BY BLAZE

By BILL BEBOUT
Observer Staff Writer

PONDOSA (Special)—Fire levelled nearly half of the buildings in this once thriving and prosperous timber country town Saturday afternoon. All that remained today was a few buildings and smoldering ruins.

Now a ghost town, Pondsosa is located approximately 38 miles southeast of La Grande.

Flames broke out in the deserted mill town at 2 p.m. Saturday and within an hour had taken firm hold on about half of the town's 53 houses, a machine shop and a planer mill.

A strong wind from the West fanned the flames which spread from the northeast end of the box factory to the planer mill. From there the wind-whipped blaze gutted dwelling houses until brought under control by fire fighters at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Lone Pumper
A lone water pumper stood guard Sunday afternoon in case fire burst from the ashes, State Police Sgt. R. C. White, of Baker, said.

The fire was reported by Ned Foy of Medical Springs. As the telephone report was being completed, telephone lines between Medical Springs and Baker melted and fell to the ground, cutting off all communication until State Police arrived on the scene.

Baker fire department and fire fighting crews from the U. S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management joined in the fight to contain the flames throughout the afternoon.

By 5 p.m. there were 200 people in the ghost town and the Salvation Army had arrived from Baker to feed them.

Saves Belongings
The town's only residents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schrock, lost their house in the fire. Schrock is the night watchman for Northwest Machinery Co. of Roseburg, which bought most of Pondsosa when the town and mill were sold by auction May 5.

Schrock managed to load the family belongings into pickup trucks before flames claimed his house which was located 500 feet from where the fire broke out.

Fire fighters worked in 90-degree heat with Big Creek as the only source of water. Sgt. Baker said that a bulldozer was used to dam the little creek, which runs through the heart of the town, to enable the pumper to get water on the wind-whipped flames.

Baker said that silt in the pumper prevented the fire fighters from saving more of the buildings.

Crew at Work
Robert Ridgeway, an employee of the Northwest Machinery Co., was in the town with a crew of four men when the fire started. They were dismantling the equipment in the mill buildings. Ridgeway, police reported, had just returned from lunch when the fire was discovered.

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FIRE STRIKES GHOST TOWN

Fire fighting crews pour water on the charred remains of one of the 15 houses which were gutted by wind-whipped flames at Pondsosa Saturday afternoon. The fire was reported to State Police from Medical Springs shortly before telephone lines melted and fell to the ground. (Observer Photo)

13th Annual Elgin Stampede Gets Underway With Kickoff

By MAXINE NURMI
Observer Staff Writer

ELGIN (Special)—The 13th annual Elgin Stampede got underway here Saturday night with a kickoff banquet and dance sponsored by the Stampede Association.

Highlight of the evening event was the introduction of the royal court for the 1959 Stampede.

Four petit young ladies were presented to the large crowd which assembled in the Stampede Hall. They are Miss Ella Mae Denton, Union; Miss Wanda Schaures, La Grande; Miss Jordyce Tameris and Miss Celia Colclasure, both of Elgin.

One of these girls will be chosen queen by the number of tickets sold between now and the Coronation Ball, set for July 18. At that time the queen will be revealed.

The stampede will be held July 25-26 at the grounds in Elgin. The various chairmen have planned a full schedule of events and entertainment to fill both days. Special events will include a comedy trampoline act, starring the Lane sisters and Homer.

Maurice Beck, Stampede president, called the meeting to order and gave the welcome address.

Following the introduction of the candidates, a quartet of girls danced a folk dance. Two dressed in centennial dresses and two in old fashioned male attire.

The queen mother, Mildred Harwood was introduced. Casey Keefer spoke briefly and introduced the press in attendance.

Miss Shirley Miller sang two vocals, "Suddenly There's a Valley" and "Red River Valley", accompanied at the piano by Mrs. McCa'l. Beck then introduced the

junior past queen, Miss Arlene Weatherspoon who spoke to the candidates and gave a brief resume on the 12 past queens and introduced the ones in attendance.

Ken Lillard sang "Bless This House" and an encore "Irish Lullaby" accompanied at the piano by Miss Elizabeth Eastley.

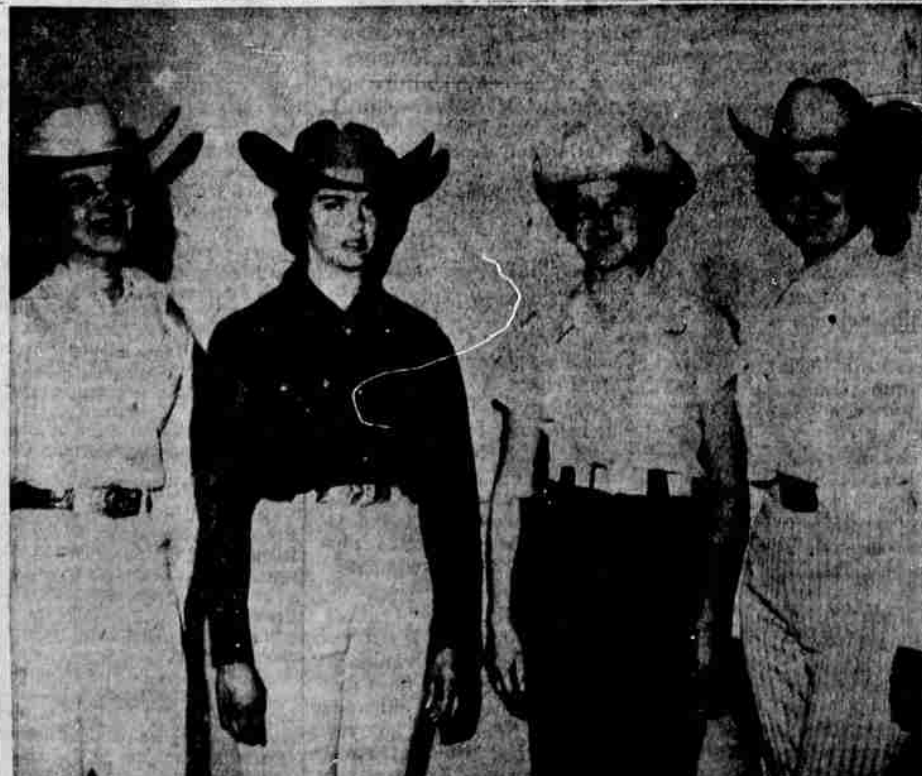
The business session came to a close with announcement by Beck of the ticket sale and a Stampede work day, to ready the ground for the Junior Rodeo.

Co-chairmen for the 1959 Rodeo are Maurice Beck, Casey Keefer and Larry Follett.

The group was dismissed and went to the Elgin KP hall where tickets were counted out and pictures taken by various photographers. The ticket sale will be held until prior to the Coronation Ball set for July 18 at the Stampede hall.



LAST MINUTE PREPARATION
Wilma Cason and Hazel Moore Fill Platter for Banquet



A ROYAL COURT FOR THE ELGIN STAMPEDE
Celia Colclasure, Jordyce Tameris, Ella Mae Denton, and Wanda Schaures

Secretary Will Talk To Nation

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Secretary of State Christian A. Herter announced after an hour-long conference with President Eisenhower today that he will make a television report to the American people Tuesday night on the deadlocked Geneva Conference.

Herter met with Eisenhower and Undersecretary C. Douglas Dillon at a White House breakfast meeting. He said his first hand report to Eisenhower was couched "in general terms" and included an evaluation of "where we are" in the deadlocked foreign ministers negotiations at Geneva.

The secretary said he would make a detailed public report by television Tuesday night. Details of the Herter broadcast will be announced later.

Reporters asked Herter what he thought of prospects for a summit meeting this summer.

Summit Not Discussed
The secretary declined to hazard an estimate, but said a summit conference was not discussed with the Russians at all during the Geneva talks.

This was in line with Eisenhower's repeated public position that there must be some measurable progress at the foreign ministers' conference as a preliminary to any top level meeting of the major powers.

It was understood that Herter gave Eisenhower an expert on-the-scene evaluation of current Russian tactics as reflected in Geneva.

Residents Asked To Cut Water Use

Residents were reminded not to use water for washing cars and watering lawns today.

The small reservoir south of town is being filled today and water for these purposes will be available tomorrow. The cleaning of city reservoirs will be a yearly project according to Fred Young, city manager.

While the reservoir was being cleaned the city also placed tile pipes in the area to drain a nearby "swampy condition." State Sanitary authorities requested the area be drained before it becomes a sanitation problem.

There is no water shortage in the city. Officials merely wanted to insure an adequate water supply in case of emergencies.

Young wanted to "thank people for their fine cooperation in slackening off on water usage over the weekend."

Shepard Dog Picked Up By City Police Today

A large, yellow and white shepherd dog was picked up by city police in the 1600 block on E ave. this morning at 4:40.

The dog was impounded and notice posted in accordance with city ordinance No. 1R29.

Bulletins

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The Supreme Court today denied a hearing to Charles Starkweather, condemned murderer who terrorized the midwest a year and a half ago with a series of 11 slayings.

Today's brief order leaves Nebraska free to carry out the execution.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.—(UPI)—A Vanguard rocket hurled a satellite toward space today in the latest of man's efforts to find out how heat in the atmosphere causes the earth weather conditions.

John De Merchant Presents Concert Here On Wednesday

By VIRGINIA ANDERSON
Observer Staff Writer

Taking time out from his New York studio, John DeMerchant, will appear Wednesday at 8 p.m. in the LDS Tabernacle to present a recital.

DeMerchant was a visitor in La Grande during several summers when he directed the production of the "Lowland Sea," and "Down in the Valley."

Attending the University of Washington, DeMerchant majored in music composition and sang in the college glee club there.

He has toured in concerts and opera in both the United States and

South America; but for the past three to five years, aside from 20-25 major oratorio and concert appearances, he has concentrated more specifically on his New York studio. DeMerchant works with professional singers and his students have toured both in America and Europe.

His concert program Wednesday night will include "Songs and Dances of Death" by Moussorgsky. This number will be done in a new translation which was written by Marion Farquhar. Significantly, this work was formerly almost impossible to do because of the difficulties encountered in translating it from the original Russian.

Another selection from the program is a rarely done song cycle entitled, "Eiland" by A. Von Fielitz. The theme of the work takes place near a remote lake in the German Alps, and is the story of a count's daughter who becomes a nun. A monk who sees the young nun, falls in love with her and writes love songs to her.

DeMerchant will direct the production of "Ten Thousand Miles" here July 10. The opera, which he wrote himself in connection with the centennial is the first work of this kind the singer has ever written.

Following the completion of his production here, DeMerchant plans to vacation in Maine before returning to his studio in New York this fall.

Life Sentences Meted Youths

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., (UPI)—Four white youths convicted of the rape of a Negro college co-ed were sentenced today to life imprisonment.

The youths, ranging in age from 16 to 23, were convicted of taking the girl from her Negro date on the night of her college spring formal dance and raping her seven times. The jury recommended mercy, without which the judge would have been required to give them the death penalty.

Under terms of the life imprisonment statute, the imprisoned men could apply for parole as early as six months after sentence begins. But in such cases it is extremely rare for any consideration to be given the request in under ten years.

Circuit Judge W. May Walker pronounced sentence at 9:44 a.m. and the youths were immediately whisked off to the state prison at Raiford.

They are Patrick Scarborough, 23, Wilton T. Collinsworth, 23, Ollie Stoutamire, 16, and David Beagles, 18.

Boy Scout Dies In Avalanche; Companions Hurt

PORTLAND (UPI)—A 15-year-old Explorer Scout was fatally injured and four companions were hurt Saturday when an avalanche of slushy snow knocked them into a 25-foot crevasse near the summit of Mt. Hood.

Dead was David Draper, Vancouver, Wash. Others hit by the snow were two adults, Edward W. Smith, Oregon City, and Don Berger, Cornelius, and Explorer Scouts Bill Holling, 16, and Tom McCune, 14, both of Vancouver.

Smith was treated for multiple bruises and shock at St. Vincent hospital here and was to be released today, according to attendants. McCune was released Sunday from a Vancouver hospital and Holling was treated at the hospital late Saturday as an outpatient. Berger was not hospitalized.

The group was rescued by the Mountain Rescue Council and members of their own party of 40 climbers.