

Editorial and Opinion

No Fear; the paper will come through strike

The Post advises its readers that we will continue to publish and distribute throughout any possible postal strike nationally. While the possibility of mail slowdown in the Sandy area appears remote, the fact remains that 80 percent of all Post readers get their copies in the mail.

However, Sandy's rural route carriers will not be affected by any union decision to strike, since they are locally contracted labor and not members of any postal crafts group. Sandy postal customers live on rural routes, so losing the in-town services of letter carriers (we never had) will have no adverse effects on delivery of The Post or the city.

Should Sandy postal clerks who sort the mail locally go on strike in the next week or so, the local post office could pull through with temporary help and management personnel. The mail might be delayed by a day or a half-day, but the mail will go out.

Post readers in Boring, Eagle

Creek and other postal areas could find the delay more troubling, so The Post will provide bundles of free papers at local markets in the event of a postal strike. In Boring, copies would be available at the two supermarkets, while Eagle Creek readers would find copies at the Eagle Creek grocery store next to the post office.

These free copies would be available to Post subscribers on an honor system. If you subscribe but find difficulty in receiving your weekly paper, please feel free to take a copy.

Should delivery of The Post become unduly delayed in Sandy, additional free copies will be made available at the main office of Clackamas County Bank and at Oregon Trail Savings & Loan.

We apologize for whatever inconvenience these alternate delivery plans may cause our readers and ask our subscribers to bear with us in the event of a postal strike. (VB)

Is 'coffee clutch' a postal alternative?

The impending postal strike is reminiscent of a curious situation in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where housewives help to move the mail in a coffee-clutch atmosphere.

Two women there decided two years ago to open their own version of a local post office. There is no home delivery or pick-up of letters, and the women leave packages to Uncle Sam and United Parcel to handle. The women simply open 8:30 to 5 p.m. and provide a will-call counter where individuals and businesses can pick up or drop off mail.

When the intended recipient shows up, the letter is there waiting. Can't beat the price, either. It costs just five cents to "mail" a letter, and businesses get special quotes on prices to send out monthly statements in bulk.

Naturally, the service is adequate only for in-town use when a person is willing to come to the

station to pick up his mail. But then many rural postal customers there must drive miles, anyway, simply to pick up or deposit mail. Residents near Yellowstone Park generally drive to colorful Moose, Wyoming, to check their rental boxes at the post office.

Maybe the ladies in Wyoming have a good idea with their no-frills mail service. They provide a place where neighbors get together mornings to talk over the weather or the latest sale. But they show good business sense, too, in locating just across the street from the U.S. post office, where they can keep an eye on traffic flow enjoyed by the "competition."

We recall, too, that the ladies weren't opposed to walking up and down the streets to drum up business for their mail service. Wonder if Jimmy Carter dropped in their shop to mail a letter on his recent visit to Jackson Hole...? (VB)

Chamber ready to assume public leadership?

The Sandy Chamber of Commerce deserves to be commended for its recent stand on possible passage of the revised city budget Sept. 12. It's about time that the chamber begins taking public stands on crucial civic issues, and hopefully this indicates a renewed leadership role for this group.

The chamber indicated at its recent general meeting that members favor establishment of a citizens' action committee for budget passage, to be named by the chamber's board of directors. As one member stated, voter concern

and response requires more kindling than words of support and notices on upcoming elections in the newspaper. Concerned citizens must organize and campaign for issues they feel are important for the community.

Sandy sits at a crossroad of change coupled with confusion, and someone must lead the parade. Growth, political discord and budget problems stagger the city. We commend the Chamber of Commerce for its visible involvement and hope that it's indicative of things to come. (VB)



Commentary:

House to consider civil service reforms

By DAVID COHEN

Immediately after Labor Day, the House will face its first key test on whether it has learned any lessons from California's Proposition 13 vote. The outcome of civil service reform will tell us whether Congress is ready to respond to citizens' frustration and anger toward government by insisting on competent performance by our public servants.

The Carter Administration's legislation builds on the concept that citizens will receive effective government service only if it is impartially administered, provides incentives and rewards for outstanding performance, permits managers to manage, and provides employees with protection against political abuse.

Government employees' unions and veterans' groups are working overtime in the halls of Congress to maintain the present inflexible civil service. In candid moments, employees, managers and civil service experts acknowledge that the federal government is a bureaucratic maze which stifles the initiative of dedicated government employees while often failing to protect their rights. The accumulation of laws and regulations serves as a shield for non-performance.

Entrance into the Service would be voluntary for persons now at high levels. Those who enter the Service would be eligible for bonuses for superior performance and would be removed for poor performance. The opponents of change are trying to block it with a proposal to limit the SES to three departments on a two-year trial basis.

(2) Add protections for whistleblowers. An independent counsel would be authorized to investigate allegations of improper reprisals against those who blow the whistle on wrongdoing within the government. This properly reverses past practice when government employees who revealed the existence of unlawful and improper behavior by their agencies too often became targets of agency reprisals.

(3) Modify veterans' preference. The effect of modifying veterans' preference will be to open greater opportunities to qualified women, minorities, and young people while assisting those veterans most in need of help — the Vietnam era and the disabled veteran.

(4) Oppose changing the Hatch Act. The Hatch Act is an essential protection against partisan political interference with the civil service. In a system based on performance, it becomes extraordinarily important to protect civil servants against such political interference. The most aggressive opponents of civil service reform are at the same time trying to promote changes in the Hatch Act. These are unwise and irresponsible.

The choice for the House is: will it be responsible in remedying many of the problems facing our civil service system and show that it is paying attention to voter dissatisfaction with government performance, or will it continue to cave in to the intense pressures from veterans' groups and government employees' unions who have a stake in a status quo that results in poor government performance? Cohen is president of Common Cause.

Letters to the editor

Some Memories

To the Editor: Recent letters to The Post have explored vignettes of Alder Creek. May I dip my oar into the discussion since I am not exactly wearing three-corner pants and can dredge up memories?

I recall the forest fire in 1926, the loggers had just begun to cut away trees at the edge of the forest and it was a hot summer day. My father had an acre of ground with a creek frontage which he purchased for \$400. He built a two story house with lumber which only set him back \$150 at the time. Since the fire was close to summer home sites, we were called and advised to remove anything of value from the cabin.

Our neighbor, a deeply religious man, joined us in the journey, but first he called his practitioner and asked to pray for rain after a long hot summer when the woods were parched. When we arrived, the woods, barely a quarter of a mile from the highway, had become a seething inferno. Birds were screaming and it was a horrible sight. But before dawn the woods, were drenched with a heavy downpour which gave the firefighters relief.

Tracks were then laid through the wilderness to haul the logs out of the forest. They were hauled to a mill three miles away. On the hill overlooking the west slope of Alder Creek canyon one might often hear the toot of a steam whistle from a logging locomotive. Some years ago I found the rotting ties left after the rails were removed. Patches of alder had grown up on the right-of-way. But

today all these scars have been removed by the passage of time.

At the time the road from Sandy was gravel. It was often oiled to cut down the dust and motorists would swear when they heard the tar-like concoction coating their fenders. They would return home and scrape it off. In our brave new world they will pay to have a chassis undercoated.

Sincerely,
William Fenner
(Willie of Welches)
Welches

Sharon's food King, Carlson's Chevrolet, Willaim's Thriftway, Glos Ford; Decker's Department Store; Paola's Pizza Barn; Sandy Dairy Queen.

Their contributions enabled us to enter two teams in the Columbia Summer Basketball League. In addition, these sponsors provided awards at our two very successful summer development camps.

I would like to include a special thanks to Jim Wolf of Oregon Athletic Equipment and Charlie Driggers of Frank Bashor Athletic Supply for providing additional awards for the summer camps.

Your interest in basketball and young athletes is greatly appreciated.

Dennis Warren
Head Basketball Coach
Sandy High School

Thank You

To the Editor: On behalf of the Sandy High School Boy's Basketball Program I would sincerely like to thank the following Sandy businesses for their financial support:

From other editors:

RV fuel plea has selfish ring

Testimony reported from a hearing in Portland on the possibility of gasoline rationing was hard to believe. How can people be so dense!

The Department of Energy was sponsoring the hearing on a contingency plan for gasoline rationing. The plan could cut off fuel for "recreational vehicles." That presumably includes everything from motor homes to dune buggies and snowmobiles.

Because it is required by law, the government has

been working up a stand-by program for gasoline rationing even though no one in the administration, as far as is known, is actually contemplating putting such a plan into effect. The plan is intended as something to fall back on in case of a severe gasoline shortage of the kind that might be caused by a renewed war in the Middle East.

Tourism and travel industry representatives were reported to have told the hearing that no matter what, a rationing plan should not cut off fuel for RV's. One spokesman said the plan was unfair because it would hit the travel industry harder than any other. And he worried that the disruption of the travel industry because of lack of fuel would have a disastrous effect on Oregon. Another spokesman denied that "recreational travel" was a luxury. Instead, he said, it's an "integral part of American life."

What do these people think would happen to the rest of the economy and the rest of the country if we had a fuel shortage of such dimensions that rationing had to be started as a last resort? It takes a singular kind of blindness to talk of damage to the travel industry or of travel as a way of life in circumstances that surely would involve dramatic and disastrous changes throughout the country.

The proposed gas rationing plan, of course, wouldn't prevent people from using

their allocated fuel for RV travel. People could use their individual gas allocations for anything they wanted. If, however, they wanted to use up their allocation on a weekend of racing motorboats, they might not be able to drive to work the following Monday.

It's a sign of our selfish times that representatives of one special interest would dare go before a public hearing and say, in effect, "We don't care what happens to the rest of the country in a gasoline emergency as long as we get ours." Albany Democrat Herald

From other editors:

EPA sees some progress with cars

EPA Administrator Douglas Costle explained the change this way: "Dropping the highway and combined ratings removes that irresistible but human urge to accept the highest numbers available in buying a car. Publishing only the lowest number should help make customer expectations more realistic."

The Environmental Protection Agency is going to issue only one mileage rating for 1979 cars instead of one each for highway and city driving and a combined average of the two, as in the past. The new miles-per-gallon quotation will be based only on city driving.

This is progress, but not enough.

"This is not a final

solution. This single rating is a temporary step. It's the most immediate action we can take to make the 1979 ratings more accurately reflect consumer experience. We are continuing to consider possible changes in the program that will make the ratings more representative of actual driving conditions." It's the latter point that people care about. Most drivers get much worse mileage than predicted in the EPA estimates.

The announced change represents progress in the sense of reducing the number of fictional figures EPA will be posting on the window sticker. But the important thing is to try to make what is printed come closer to real-life "consumer experience." Eugene Register-Guard



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