

One can still cut own tree in Zigzag district

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

Christmas is near and today's commercial Christmas tree farms are busily harvesting trees round the clock with helicopters and mechanized bailers, to be sold on the commercial market anywhere from \$7.50 to \$35.

But to some people, it wouldn't be Christmas if they didn't cut their own tree from the slopes of Mt. Hood.

Cutting your own Christmas tree has been a tradition for the last five years in the Zigzag Ranger District,

ever since the special area was established in the Lolo Pass area near the Bonneville Power Administration transmission lines.

Last year, out of the 9,694 Christmas trees cut in the Mt. Hood National Forest, 7,000 of them were taken from the Lolo Pass area. Even more trees are expected to be cut this year.

The Zigzag area is the most popular area for Christmas tree cutting, according to the district's information officer, Herb Evans. The cost is \$2 for a permit, a few hours of time, and, of course, the required spirit of

Christmas.

Evans said that the reason the Zigzag area is more popular than other areas in the National Forest is that it is better publicized and has easier access.

Last weekend alone, over 500 persons inquired about getting a Christmas tree permit, and 200 of them already have gone out and cut a tree.

The tree cutting area is located at the top Lolo Pass at the 3,500-foot level, which means the weather could be either "rain or snow." Evans said that last Sunday cutters were greeted

by both snow and rain. He advised that all vehicles going into the area be equipped with chains or other traction devices.

Evans also warned tree cutters that under no circumstances should they attempt to travel the powerline road. Past experience has shown that too many unsuspecting persons, attempting to drive closer to their tree, found that getting stuck just wasn't worth the time or the tow fee required to get out before nightfall.

"People should play it safe and stay on the roads," said Evans. "The access up there is narrow and turn-

around points are rare."

Evans said that cutters should bring their own cutting tools, dress adequately for the weather, and be sure to take along a rope to tie the tree down. In addition, he recommends that those trees being transported on the tops of cars or in the open bed of a pickup, where the tree will be exposed to wind, bring a blanket or tarp to cover it.

"Trees get windburn," said Evans. "When this happens, the needles dry out more quickly and fall off."

At the top of the Lolo Pass cutting area Evans says cutters can select

from Noble fir and some Silver fir. At the bottom of the area is Douglas fir or Hemlock.

The Forest Service is recommending that people cut Douglas or Noble fir. The Silver fir is difficult to find and the Hemlock is not recommended because it will last only three days in a house before the needles start falling off.

This next weekend, Christmas tree cutting will be done on a reservation system only. Evans said that on these two weekends they will allow 150 to 200 persons into the area during the

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Pictured above is Kid Kaddoodle, the host of the Kid Kaddoodle Use Your Noodle Super Safety Show, which was presented to Firwood Grade School students last week. The players are members of

Storefront Theater in Portland. Good Citizen awards were also given. See page five.

Photo by Scott Newton

Top trainer in Boring for weekend

by GWEN BOGH
Post Correspondent

A professional trainer from California who conducts clinics for advanced riders was at Windfall Stables in Boring recently.

Tommy Lowe, recognized as one of the top trainers in the United States, spent last Saturday and Sunday training 25 students ranging from 8 to 60 years, the techniques of horsemanship.

Two months ago Connie Tore, owner of Windfall Stables, arranged to have Lowe come here to teach for a weekend. She had learned about Lowe at the Oregon State Fair last summer. Lowe judged the "Hunter Jumper" division at the fair.

Tore was so impressed by Lowe's abilities she decided that he should come to her stables. With Lowe being in the "public eye" she didn't have to worry about his qualifications. He is highly recommended.

"When you're hiring someone you want to be sure it's worth their (the riders') time," said Tore.

At Windfall Stables, Lowe trained three groups. These groups were trained in two-hour sessions. Students were pleased as well as impressed by this man's talents.

Tore said that Lowe was "really sharp about picking out the problem areas of students and pointing out areas they needed improvement on." She also said he had very good rapport with everyone.

Several prominent personalities have been trained by Lowe, including Mohammed Ali and Charles Bronson. Some of his students have become Medal Finalists in the American Horseman Show Association.

Forest will close to wood cutters December 31

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The Mt. Hood National Forest officially closes for firewood cutting on Dec. 31, and with only a few weeks left, people are scrambling to get enough fuel in for the winter.

Zigzag and Hood River are open for cutting but persons must have, in their possession, a current wood permit and a map of designated cutting areas. Barlow, Bear Springs, Estacada, Clackamas, and Columbia Gorge Ranger Districts are closed for the rest of the season.

Herb Evans, information officer at the Zigzag Ranger Station, stressed

that although the area is still open for firewood cutting, that wood is scarce and difficult to find, in spite of the estimated 30 million board feet of timber that blew down during the last wind storm.

But neither the scarcity of wood, rain and even snow has stopped the flow of wood being taken down off the mountain. The ranger station is still being swamped with telephone calls about woodcutting.

"We gave out, in the course of the season, 18,000 maps to the Zigzag District," said Evans. "We figure that's plenty of wood for this district for one year."

Evans said that firewood patrols

are still in effect in not only the Zigzag and Hood River Districts, but also in the other closed areas, due to timber thefts. He said that until the areas "get a good snow or the roads get too wet," that people will be out in the woods cutting firewood, legally or illegally.

Forest Service officials maintain that the scarcity of wood in such districts as Zigzag, has created many problems related to timber thefts and illegally cutting firewood. Zigzag is primarily an area where wood can only be found by scavenging. Often times, the wood is too far from access roads and has to be hand-carried to the individual's vehicles, making the

already strenuous job even more backbreaking.

Some people, however, both commercial cutters and those cutting for their own personal use, attempt to make the job easier by falling snags near the road. If apprehended, they can look forward to a stiff fine and even jail time.

Evans questions whether people know what kind of wood they can get from the forest this time of year. He said that the wood is extremely wet, and dry wood is very rare. He said that people should think about the money they will put out for gas, traffic problems, the time and the work involved, before they come up to get

wet wood.

"If someone is out there cutting firewood to burn this year, they will have a problem," said Evans. "It's gonna be soaked."

The season will reopen April of next year, but there is speculation that the firewood permits will no longer be free. Forest Service officials in Washington, D.C., are proposing that a new policy be implemented which would require permits to be purchased for either \$5 or \$10.

Officials say that this would help pay the costs of administering the program.

SUHS buses keep rolling, traveled 240,000 miles last year

by SCOTT NEWTON

It would drive some people nuts to be responsible for a large school bus and forty or fifty energetic high school students every school day.

It doesn't seem to bother Bob Marshall. "I love it," he said. "I like being around the kids."

This is the first year he's driven for the Sandy Union High School district, although he's had his chauffeur's license for eight years.

He drives the Government Camp route, the district's longest. He covers right at 100 miles a day in the two trips, the first of which begins at 5:45 a.m.

Marshall's days begin between 4 to 4:30 a.m., when he drives from his home in the Brightwood area to the district's bus barn, where he takes an older, smaller bus up the mountain.

Friday he took this reporter on his route. On the way up the mountain Marshall talked about his other avocation, making jewelry.

Business isn't bad, he said,

although it isn't booming either. Unicorns, butterflies and frogs are the most popular items.

Frogs are especially popular this season, he said, with mothers buying them for daughters, who aren't to take them off until they've kissed a prince.

Marshall married Anita Singleton Tuesday, and for their honeymoon they plan on going to Newport, where they'll spend at least part of their time in a booth selling.

Talking about his job, Marshall said that the thing that bothers him most is the way people whiz by when the bus is stopped and the red lights are on. He is surprised that the public is not more aware, as the law requiring traffic to stop for school buses with lights on has been in effect several years.

At about 6:30 the first students got on the bus, with one young man slipping on the ice as he left the house.

As more students get on the bus, and become aware that The Post is doing a story on Marshall and the bus

system, they begin pointing out Marshall's past errors, and fabricate a few for good measure.

Marshall responds by promising to hand-deliver copies of the article to their parents, especially to the parents of the one that is so handy with rubber bands.

If the students are a little rowdy, it's worth considering that some of them will have been on the bus nearly an hour and a half before school even starts.

At Welches Marshall leaves the older, smaller bus for a larger, newer one. It is cold, but it does have a radio, which Marshall turns on, although not as loudly as is requested.

All in all, buses in the school district traveled 240,000 miles last year, which includes trips to activities as well as the bus routes.

Marshall takes the smaller bus up the mountain, in part, to save money on gasoline.

The district spent a total of \$53,125 on gas last year, and another \$8,600 on tires.

The district spent \$269,418 for transportation, which included salaries, repairs, fuel and a replacement bus.

The district receives basic school support from the state of about 50 percent for transportation, excluding bus replacement value, which is depreciated.

The district is making the change from gasoline to diesel buses, which will save money, but it takes time to change over. The district has one diesel bus, another is due in March, and the board of education approved the ordering of another in October.

At that October board meeting Joan Hay, business manager, said that five buses in the fleet have traveled over 100,000 miles, and that two more were rapidly approaching that mark.

Still, Jim Hoffmeister, shop foreman, feels that the fleet is in good shape.

He said that the state inspectors have been out, viewed his files, and were happy.

He keeps a binder that he can take to board meetings, if necessary, to show expenses on each individual

bus.

Two permanent employees, including Hoffmeister, work in the shop. Also, a CETA employee works there.

The fleet is comprised of buses made by General Motors, except for three Fords, and an International that will be retired soon. One of the reasons behind having a fleet comprised of buses of the same make is more efficient and less costly maintenance requirements.

There are 18 buses in the fleet, if one counts the one that is in town but not yet in the possession of the district.

The busy season is just beginning for Hoffmeister. He said that they'll be down at four in the morning or earlier chaining up the buses before the drivers leave.

And, they'll be nights, he reports, when he'll be up at midnight checking roads.

Hoffmeister apparently takes his job seriously. He said, "I can't check each individual one. There's no way you can keep track of everything. But I get quite uptight if I find something that should have been checked that

wasn't.

"If something goes out unsafe and something happens, it's my neck."

Donna Stahlnecker, who is the district's dispatcher and is in charge of hiring, routing and training, also feels that the district's system is in good condition. They'll have to meet the state's standardization requirements in March.

"I think we should come out really well. I've got to study over the material and see just what areas, if any, that we need to rectify."

"Hopefully, we'll come out 100 percent good."

Stahlnecker has been working for the district as a driver since February of 1970, and started as dispatcher about a year and a half ago.

All bus drivers in the state must have not only a chauffeur's license, but an Oregon school bus license, which includes 10 hours of behind-the-wheel training, and 10 hours of classroom training on responsibilities, maintaining discipline and basic mechanics, among other things. Also, all drivers must carry a current first aid card.

Stahlnecker is certified with the state Department of Education to teach the bus drivers course. The only thing she doesn't teach is first aid.

Stahlnecker drives the McCabe route, which goes up Firwood, onto Music Camp, down "that horrible hill on Keisecker," out Pugh to McCabe and onto the freeway.

"I've gone down that steep hill sideways," she said. "I just left tracks all the way down. And I thought, 'Mmm, got to keep the front end ahead of the back.'"

"And the kids say, 'Oh, let's do this again.'"

There are 13 full-time drivers working for the district. Eleven drive regular routes, one drives a wheelchair van and another drives activities buses regularly.

Dorothy Marschman, a driver in the Bull Run area, has been working for the school district the longest. She's been employed here since 1968.

Stahlnecker said that a lot of people could drive a bus, but that getting along with students and keeping discipline is something else.

"That takes a certain kind of person," she said.



Bob Marshall



Some of the students on the Government Camp bus route will ride for about an hour and a half before and after school.

Staff photos