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Traffic backup creates mountain 'madhouse'

by MICHAEL P. JONES
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One of the worst traffic jams in the history of the Mt. Hood corridor greeted motorists Sunday as vehicles slowed to a crawl because of icy conditions and improper traction devices.

Bumper-to-bumper traffic awaited holiday skiers who flocked to the mountain's resorts after more than two feet of snow fell between Friday and Sunday morning. At one time, cars stretched from Brightwood to the Highway 35 cutoff, east of Government Camp.

Capt. Jim Phillips, of the Oregon State Police, blamed the clogged highways on the heavy snowfall and

motorists traveling without chains or studded tires.

"The situation which occurred this last Sunday was something we had no control over once it all got started," said Phillips. "Motorists were warned to use chains, but they obviously didn't."

Sgt. Dan Wolf, of the OSP Government Camp post, said a series of blockages eventually forced the closure of Highway 26 from Rhododendron to the Highway 35 cutoff between 5 and 8 p.m. The only vehicles allowed to venture up the mountain were four-wheel drive units equipped with chains.

Wolf said at times as many as four vehicles were lined up across the highway at the bottom of Laurel Hill,

unable to proceed any farther.

"It was just like 'pick up sticks,'" Wolf said. "You'd move them up one by one and hope for the best."

Some traffic was rerouted through Tygh Valley in order to prevent additional congestion.

"It was a good example of too many cars on too small a road, with a good portion of them without the proper traction device," Wolf said.

At 5 p.m., traffic flowing down the mountain from ski areas stopped. Some people reportedly abandoned their cars at Government Camp and cross-country skied down Highway 26.

Randy Hilton, of Alpine Ambulance, said the Sunday driving was "like driving through downtown Portland during rush-hour traffic."

Hilton and Don Whittle were transporting an injured cross-country skier to Gresham Community Hospital when they found themselves "in the middle of a real mess."

"We had no choice," said Hilton, "so we took the only available route we could—Highway 26."

"We used about 10 times as much caution as we normally would have and drove super-defensively," he said. "No sense taking any unnecessary chances."

Tow truck driver J.J. Fox called the scene "a madhouse."

"They'd spin around trying to go up the mountain, then they'd give up and try to come back down," he said. "They'd slide all over, 'fish-tail' and

eventually end up across the road in a ditch."

"People who were in the ditch were getting pulled out, not by tow trucks, but by four-wheelers with winches," said Fox. "Generally, it took two four-wheel drives and they ended up blocking the traveling lane to get them out."

Capt. Phillips agreed, but added that even the commercial tow trucks helped create some of the problems. He noted that they, too, blocked the road to pull vehicles from the ditch.

"The shame of the matter is, those people who had on the proper traction devices were stuck along with everyone else who didn't," Phillips said.

Sunday's snarl was the real test of the state's new traction law which re-

quires chains or studded tires between Rhododendron and Warm Springs junction and in a 20-mile corridor down the summit of the Cascade Mountain Range.

"There is a lot of confusion over it now," Phillips said. "People either aren't aware or don't fully understand the law. From here after, it'll be strict enforcement. That'll be the only way to avoid similar traffic snarls in the mountains."

The new law will likely undergo some changes, Phillips said, but only for "improving on it and strengthening it."

He added, "You have to give this one a fair chance. One winter won't cut it. You have to give it at least two to really evaluate it and get the kinks out."



Sandy firefighters spray down the remains of a travel trailer which burned Monday when a propane tank ignited. The trailer was being renovated in anticipation of its first trip.

Photo by Dan Dillon

Woman struck in dispute over parking space

A Government Camp area woman was treated and released at Gresham Community Hospital Sunday night after she was deliberately struck by a motorist.

Barbara E. Smaling, 50, of Camp Creek, was struck about 9:20 p.m. as she was shoveling snow out of a parking space in front of the Huckleberry Inn in Government Camp.

According to Barbara Secrist, radio dispatcher for the Oregon State Police, while Smaling was cleaning snow from the space Robert Marshall, of Government Camp, drove up. She said Smaling and Marshall began arguing.

Marshall then reportedly warned Smaling to get out of the way or he'd run over her.

Smaling refused to move and was run over by Marshall, who went into the Huckleberry Inn where he had reportedly been earlier in the day.

Secrist said the state police received three separate reports of the incident shortly after it happened.

OSP Sgt. Dan Wolf and Trooper John Rizzo arrested Marshall inside the bar at the Huckleberry Inn and impounded his car at the scene.

Smaling was unconscious when Hoodland Fire District emergency medical technicians arrived at the scene. She was taken to the hospital by Alpine Ambulance where she was treated for minor injuries and released.

Steps begun to present 'tight' budget

The city of Sandy will present voters with a "fiscally tight" budget at the March 30 special election.

Monday night, the city Budget Committee told City Manager Roger Jordan that the new budget should continue the basic level of service, but include no expanded programs.

Because the revenue coming into the city is lower than was expected, Jordan said Tuesday that city departments are already cutting their current budgets in order that the city might have a greater cash carryover next year.

Those monies are important because they tide the city over from July to November before tax revenues start to come in. Without the carryover, the city would not be able to provide some basic services during that period, he said.

"If it's a dire need—like a police car—then we'll get it," Jordan said. "If it's not, we probably will wait."

The committee will meet Jan. 11 to consider spending state and federal revenue sharing money.

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Fire district ahead of last year after busy week

A Monday afternoon blaze destroyed a travel trailer as its owner was busy readying it for its first time out on the road.

Archie Stotts, 36731 SE Hauglum Road, was removing a propane refrigerator in the 1972 Fireball trailer when it ignited. Stotts fought the fire with a garden hose and thought it was extinguished.

However, approximately 10 minutes later, he discovered the

trailer was burning again and notified the Sandy Fire District.

When firefighters arrived at the scene, flames were shooting out of the windows of the trailer. Sandy Fire Marshal Jim Gallagher said the trailer was a total loss. He estimated damage at approximately \$5,000.

Stotts, who was burned when the fire began, was taken by Alpine Ambulance to Gresham Community Hospital where he was treated for

first-degree burns on his hand and minor burns on his face.

According to Gallagher, the Stotts' had recently purchased the trailer and were outfitting it for use in the near future.

Gallagher said the trailer might have been saved, if the fire district had been notified promptly.

He said that whenever a Sandy Fire District resident discovers a fire, they are basic steps that should

be followed. "Number one, you should insure your own safety," he said. "Number two, call the fire department immediately—no delays."

"If they attempt to fight the fire, they should have a fire extinguisher in good, working condition and know how to use it," Gallagher said, "and they should have a safe emergency exit."

Sandy Fire District responded to 25 alarms during the period from Dec.

20 to Dec. 29, moving it ahead of last year's pace, discounting the snow storm when approximately 150 calls were received in one week.

The district answered nine first-aid calls; eight automobile accidents, including two accidents last Tuesday which claimed the lives of two Sandy residents; five chimney fires; two false alarms, and one fire.

The district has now responded to 864 alarms during 1981.

Forest Service seeks sewer service at Zigzag site

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

The U.S. Forest Service has asked Clackamas County to expand the boundaries of the Hoodland Service District so that the Zigzag Ranger Station can have sewer service.

In a November letter to Larry Cato, of the county Planning Division, Dick Hoffman of the Forest Service asked that the district's main compound at Zigzag be studied for

"the possible inclusion or annexation into the existing District," bordering on the District's eastern boundaries.

County Planning Director Dominic Mancini said he knows nothing about the study referred to in Hoffman's letter.

Dave Abraham, director of the Utility Division which oversees the operation of the service district, also said there is no such study. But, he believes, the Forest Service was referring to a request they had made

to his office nearly two years ago.

"I had a conversation with a former Forest Service ranger a while back," said Abraham, "who wanted the compound serviced by the new sewer. But it (the request) was being made when we couldn't even start talking about such an issue. We were still preoccupied in putting together the assessment district."

Abraham said he felt the Forest Service's renewed interest in hooking up to the new sewer system came

about as a result of the Land Conservation and Development Commission's (LCDC) ruling on the Clackamas County comprehensive plan as it relates to the Mt. Hood area.

At that Oct. 30 hearing, LCDC requested that the county conduct further study of the Cedar Ridge area that it had already committed to development and had annexed into the Hoodland Service District in 1979. The area is still undeveloped at this

time.

An attorney for 1,000 Friends of Oregon argued that the area should never have been included in the service area for the new sewer because it was comprised of wetlands and winter feeding grounds for wildlife.

LCDC requested that the county re-examine the wetlands, as well as rezone the areas outside of the service district's boundaries, to either agriculture or forest uses.

"This is what the Forest Service meant by reference to the study," said Abraham. "We are still looking at the area to satisfy the LCDC request, and if the Forest Service wants the Zigzag compound to be included for sewer service now is the best time to look at it."

Abraham sees no reason why the Ranger Station could not be serviced by the sewer because it is located directly next door to a restaurant that would be hooked up to the system, the Zigzag Inn. He feels the station would not have to be annexed, but the Metropolitan Boundary Commission could be petitioned to have the district's boundaries expanded.

The new sewer system for the Mt. Hood area will be operational sometime in 1982. It is estimated to cost, at its completion, over \$5 million. The county has already committed \$4.5 million in local funds and private parties have contributed \$375,000.

Two more enter race for commission

Two more candidates tossed their hats in the race for Clackamas County Commission Position 2, which opens when Stan Skoko's term expires in 1982.

Vince R. Ferrante, of Oregon City, and Duane Bock, of Milwaukie, have announced their intent to run in the May primary for the post.

Bock, 49, is a Democrat. He has served as an information assistant for the Clackamas County commission in 1980 and as an assistant for Portland City Commissioner Mildred Schwab in 1974.

He has spent 25 years of his life as a television news reporter, anchorman and news director. He started with KPTV in Portland, where he worked

for two years. Then he spent 11 years working for KOIN. Most recently he has been KPBS's anchorman for the 1981 legislative coverage.

"I feel the county needs someone who is pro-Clackamas County," Bock said. "Someone who can think in terms of government support of business. The lack of jobs is the key issue in the county."

Bock said Skoko has voted against business developments such as Clackamas Town Center and the Clackamas Industrial Park.

"Clackamas County is going to be faced with a lot of problems," he said. "These stem from the cutbacks in federal and state funding as well as from the recession. County

government will have to do its very best."

The county will need strong innovative leadership in order to make it through the rough times ahead, he said.

Ferrante, 56, also is a Democrat. He has been involved in the Beaver Creek Telephone Company Cooperative Board of Directors for seven years. He also has served on the Clairmont Water District commission for one year.

He is an account manager for Lever Brothers, a detergent and food sales company which has an office in Clackamas. Ferrante has worked for that firm for almost 30 years.

"I travel to all four corners of the county regularly," Ferrante said.

"I'm going to have a grass roots type campaign. I won't put a lot of money into it."

"I have nothing against Skoko," he said. "But he's been in there for 16 years. And I think the county needs a change."

Ferrante, who filed for the election on Dec. 17, said he hasn't prepared his platforms yet. One goal he has set is to bring unity to the board.

Scott Taylor, a community corrections administrator for the county, and Bev Henderson, a Lake Oswego council member, have filed their intent to run for the position with the county. Skoko hasn't filed yet, but he told the Outlook recently that he will run for a sixth term.