

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
Kimberly Nelson, advertising representative911 is top notch;
locals contributed

Some people may not appreciate the magnitude of recent news stories about the county-wide "enhanced 911" emergency dispatching system.

Thera Bradshaw, 911 coordinator, and the 911 user commission, formed in 1980, have cut across the boundaries of 11 telephone companies, 10 law enforcement agencies, 28 fire districts and a variety of public and private ambulance service territories to set up the first system of its kind in Oregon.

The system went on-line July 1. Sandy, Hoodland and Boring are among the areas with the "enhanced" 911 system. Calls are automatically routed to one of six "public safety answering points." There, communications specialists field the calls with a computer terminal instantly showing the caller's telephone number, address and telephone subscriber's name. The appropriate police, fire and medical providers for that address are also identified.

What this means is that very young children can be taught to use the system, and adults in the midst of an emergency will get some help if they aren't thinking clearly. If one can even dial the number, help will be on its way.

The system will buy time in critical situations, and we expect to eventually hear some of the 154,000 residents served by the system to be singing its praises. The county is still working to offer the enhanced system to the county's other 95,000 residents.

Officials touting the system can already forgo stories about how the system has worked in California or Washington. In the Orient area last week a woman with a baby who had been burned called 911 and was frantic, according to Bradshaw. The 911 operator simply confirmed the address and the proper agency was immediately dispatched.

Before July 1, people with a 663 prefix (in Orient) did not even have "basic 911."

With basic 911, one reaches an operator without having to look up the desired agency's telephone number. However, the caller's address is not displayed on the screen.

Bradshaw estimates that three minutes are saved when a person doesn't have to look up the number of the appropriate public agency. Another minute to a minute and a half is saved by having the information immediately available on the screen, such as is the case with enhanced 911.

There are probably a couple of reasons Clackamas County is the first in the state to have enhanced 911. First of all, when the 911 user commission, which included Sandy, Mount Hood and Boring residents, first began receiving funds for the system, they invested it wisely, according to Bradshaw. (The money comes from a state-mandated tax on telephone bills.)

Just as importantly, members of "public safety agencies" — again, local people, including past and present fire chiefs, Sandy Police Chief Fred Punzel and others — listed enhanced 911 as their number one goal.

Perhaps it was the tangled geographic boundaries of the county that made them realize the importance of the system. Maybe they just knew it would save time, and therefore save lives and reduce property losses.

Regardless of how it came to pass, the important thing is that Clackamas County has — and is continuing to develop — a state of the art system.

In a different sense

What not to do
at Mountain Days

by HANK EMRICH

All too often the fun can be left out of a festivity if common sense guidelines are ignored. Keeping this in mind, a few guidelines to enjoying the Sandy Mountain Festival have been prepared.

Never send one person to buy "elephant ears" for the entire family. Juggling more than two of these delightful confections is a skill requiring years of study. There is only one thing more unnerving than the sight of a honey and butter covered "elephant ear" lying face down on the pathways before even being sampled.

Never go barefoot in the park as some "elephant ears" land face up. This is the one thing more unnerving. Never offer Mastercard International to a counter-culture salesperson. This immediately identifies you as upper class and therefore deserving of scornful glances and subtle comments such as, "Have you heard they are still starving in Biafra?"

Never ask Dan Stevens (the potter at No. 28, Barlow Bend) to give you unicycle lessons. In fact, don't ask anyone to give you unicycle lessons. You can only defy the laws of physics so long without falling or getting arrested by the physics police.

Don't try to make it all the way from the restroom on the south end of the park to the north end because you think the line there will be shorter.

Do not try to swim in No Name Creek. The water is only one foot deep and doing the crawl stroke will only dig you deeper into the mud.

Don't tell yourself, "I could make one of those." You can't.

Don't expect to park your motor home a block from the park. After passing the shuttle parking area, the next available motor home parking is Warm Springs.

Don't spend all day looking for the Navy ships. This isn't the Rose Festival. Besides, there would be no place to park the ships except the shuttle parking area.

There are no food booths along the course of the fun run, so if you expect to get hungry during the six-mile jaunt, pack a lunch.

Despite rumors to the contrary, the people in the green vests are not members of the Irish Republican Army. They are workers with the festival committee and will be glad to assist you any way they can (provided they can still stand after working since last July to put this festival together).

Above all remember the festival is for fun. Don't let anything interfere with that.

No, not even the indigestion from sampling the wares of 21 different food booths — not even breaking the bottom of the bag which held your just-purchased, glazed in Mount St. Helens-ash pottery ash tray — not even your car keys clearly visible on the car seat inside the locked car that you ran all the way up the hill and four blocks through town to reach to beat the traffic at closing time of the festival.

Hank Emrich, formerly a reporter for the Sandy Post, wrote this column in 1983 for the Mountain Festival special section. Emrich currently is a field representative in the Bureau of Licenses, city of Portland.



Gorge bill blends federal, local control

by GOV. VIC ATIYEH

I remember taking a train East a number of years ago. As a high school student, I had gone to a Hi-Y meeting and stayed with an uncle.

As vividly as any of it, though, I remember the last leg of my train ride home. It was early morning, and I got up excitedly, raised the shade, and watched as we passed through the incredible beauty of the Columbia River Gorge.

Even when I was a teen-ager, the Gorge commanded my respect for its examples of God's perfect creation, of my nation's proud heritage, and of man's ingenious handiwork.

Recently, I flew to Washington, D.C., where I testified before a U.S. Senate subcommittee on behalf of protection and orderly development of the gorge.

For me, it is hard to imagine welcoming visitors to Oregon without taking them to see the gorge. When we go through old family albums, we see relatives at Beacon Rock — a mammoth formation second in size only to the Rock of Gibraltar.

The gorge gives us a unique blend of worldwide commercial activity, of regional energy generation, of American history, and of wondrous natural beauty.

As a section of the nation's second-largest waterway, it carries wheat and other products to the rest of the world. Its Bonneville and other dams make it an efficient electricity-producing powerhouse. It is a part of the historic route of Lewis and Clark. It still contains stretches of a magnificent engineering feat known as the Columbia River Highway.

It also is an immense canvas onto which nature has splashed dramatic

color, unusual grandeur and endless variety.

Theodore Roosevelt said "for scenic grandeur (it) is not equalled anywhere."

The gorge extends east from Portland to Maryhill, Wash., and is home to 40,000 people living in or near 17 towns. Remaining sections of the old highway, the Northwest's first to be paved, were added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.

Even as you read this, Oregon continues to acquire small parcels of land to preserve open spaces, to protect lands near the old highway, and to promote public access to scenic vistas in the gorge.

But these parcels are small, our land-acquisition budget is modest, and we are working only the Oregon side of the river.

The gorge is not an Oregon or a Washington resource, but instead a unique national treasure whose destiny now is determined by 50-plus federal, state and local jurisdictions.

Senate Bill 2055, favored by both states' governors and U.S. senators, would establish a national scenic area and give the gorge a common-sense blend of local and national control.

Unlike the cameras that shoot photographs of the gorge, this bill does not propose — and I do not favor — freezing the gorge in time. Instead, this bill promotes the gorge's orderly development.

That will preserve numerous species of animals, birds and plant life even as it protects memorable scenic vistas of beautiful geologic creations such as Multnomah Falls.

I began my personal crusade to protect the magnificence of the gorge in 1979, my first year as governor.

When I urge gorge protection, it is with a commitment as personal as the awe of a boy marveling at the gorge from the window of his Pullman car.

I want future generations to learn their love of the gorge not from coffee

table books or from oldtimers who can tell them how it once was.

Instead, I want them to learn their love of the gorge from the thrill of their own senses that will tell them our generation acted today to preserve it for them.

Letter to the editor

Remarks in story unfair

I think the remarks by the Multnomah County law enforcement officer in "Legacy of Tragedy" were unfair. He has a right to his opinion, but his insinuation that a lack of common sense and drinking cause most accidents is unfair. There are also innocent victims who had not been drinking or taking unnecessary chances.

The Sandy River is treacherous and is also capable of claiming the lives of good swimmers.

In honor of our son, Michael Reed Wiebe, who died May 31 of this year near the Troutdale bridge, my wife and I have started the "Michael Foundation" to identify dangerous spots on the river. People who want more information are welcome to call us at 665-2518. It is our hope that we can avert similar tragedies in the future.

Robert A. Fink
Troutdale

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