

The Sandy Post

Editorial & Opinion

Scott Newton, editor
Karinda Hedlund, advertising representative

Housing needed for farm workers

Opposition to the expansion of a migrant labor camp in Sandy is symptomatic of a problem occurring throughout Oregon and the United States.

People empathize with migrant laborers, who are the latest wave of immigrants in our 200-year-old history. We rely on them to do the back-breaking labor that is essential to many local, agricultural-based businesses.

But when it comes to finding a place for them to live, we tell them that Sandy — Trubel Road in particular — is not the right place.

That was the underlying message of a meeting sponsored by Firwood Neighbors last week. Firwood Neighbors, a citizens planning organization for Clackamas County, was asked to give the Clackamas County board of commissioners a recommendation on whether to allow an expansion of Toney Wickersham's labor camp from 61 people to 175.

From the testimony, it seemed that most of the people in attendance were farmers. Because of that, it was somewhat surprising that the vote was 61 to 7 in opposition to the expansion.

Much of the area is zoned for "exclusive farm use," which means local property owners probably favored the designation when the area's comprehensive plan was developed.

With the importance of migrant workers to the berry and nursery industry, it seems a contradiction to oppose the building of housing for workers.

According to Clackamas County's legal counsel, the issue probably will be decided on whether Wickersham can prove he needs the workers.

And he has a good chance of proving that he does need them. Wickersham farms 250 acres in an operation that is labor intensive.

Conflicting opinions have been offered as to whether there was a shortage of migrant labor last spring during the strawberry harvest. Wickersham said there was not a lack of labor, but a lack of places for the workers to stay. He said he left strawberries in the field last year because he had no place for workers to stay and thus could not get the help he needed.

Farmers at the Firwood Neighbors meeting said Wickersham does not need the workers because he is able to "loan" them out to other farmers.

Wickersham does not argue that he can keep the workers busy from May to October, the months he would like to keep his camp open. But he said he needs 300 to 400 workers during harvest.

He said he needs 175 people in the labor camp as "insurance" that he will have enough workers during peak times.

Wickersham does not have a flawless record. The state Accident Prevention Division has cited Wickersham for violations of migrant housing standards in the past.

But it appears now that Wickersham is trying to work within the system. The improvements that have been made to his camp in the past year are impressive.

Because the Firwood area is agricultural in nature, it would make sense for the Clackamas County board to approve the expansion of Wickersham's camp.



Recliners are plastic seats of power

Everybody has one. Go into any house in the neighborhood and you'll find it lurking in a corner — the recliner chair.

It is usually covered in Naugahyde, skinned, no doubt, from the backs of countless naugas. It is often olive green, though sometimes brown. (My guess is that the male nauga is the green one.) More often than not it will have little saddle bags on the side, as though the person seated in it was going somewhere and needed to pack for the trip. And there is a bitty gear shift, though I have never seen a recliner in any mode but Park.

In a way, the chair does move. One minute it just there and the next it reclines and awful things happen. A big chair under the best of circumstances, a recliner reclined flat out can grow to the size of an aircraft carrier flight deck. It will swallow half the room, causing dogs and small children to flee. Like an astronaut in a nose cone, the occu-

pant of the chair peers out between his toes. An ugly sight, indeed.

The sad thing is that recliners divide the sexes. On the day men and women are truly equal and half the Supreme Court carries purses to work, this truth will still exist: Men love recliners; women hate them.

My friend Betty was muttering about hers the other day. How it had to go. How she was so ashamed of it.

"It's olive green," she whispered. "Can you believe it?" I nodded knowingly. Betty believes she is alone in the world with her olive-green recliner. Like incest, spouse abuse and our exact weight, recliner chairs are something we just don't talk about in polite society.

At lunch yesterday, two women at the next table spoke in confidential tones, unaware of how their voices carried.

"It's got to go. It's HUGE," said the first. "Well," said the second, "I do like mine when I'm sick."

"But that's no reason to keep it," she hurriedly amended. "I'm not sick THAT often."

I wanted to jump from my seat and tell those two that they had friends everywhere. Sisters. Sisters of the chair. Chairwomen, if you will.

My mother was a sister of the chair. It happened when Dad went to Montgomery Wards in the 1950s and bought what was then heralded as the contour chair. There was no subterfuge in a contour chair. About the size of an Oldsmobile, it was always stretched flat out. The rest of the furniture was forced to cower in the far corner.

Since it occupied the main spot in the room, much like a throne, others of the family used to sneak into it.

His first words on entering the room were, "Get out of my chair."

On the day he died, I knew before Mom told me. She was sitting in his chair.

My hubby, on the other hand, only appears to have died in his chair.

We have argued about his seating arrangements for years. In the halcyon days after the honeymoon, we were much too poor to buy a recliner so he used the couch. I sold the couch out from under his sleeping body and he got his first recliner.

Today he has a brown one that he regards as sort of a Naugahyde womb. He climbs into it, kicks it to flat out and peers at the television between his slippers feet. Should something rouse him from between the arms of this padded temptress, he and the chair both groan loudly in protest.

I never knew the answer to the problem until Sunday when I spotted a green recliner crumpled at the side of the freeway like a stranded whale. While I have certain reservations about littering the roadside with unwanted recliners, I still wonder how fast he was driving when she sneaked back and kicked that chair out of the truck.

Letters to the editor

Task force seeks opinions

I am writing as a member of the mayor's task force. We are now in the process of prioritizing things for the city, which will affect you (the taxpayer's) pocketbook for years to come. We need your ideas and opinions.

As far as I am concerned the necessities come first, then the luxuries, but that means different things to different people. How do you feel?

If the city continues to grow as projected, our present sewer system will be outgrown by about 1991. Shall we start taxing for that now, or let it go as is, try to keep our town small, and try not to encourage new business and growth?

Do you think Sandy is a livable town now? Maybe you would rather see your tax dollars go for increasing community services, such as a larger library, or a community center building that would house senior citizen facilities, community activities, a possible teen center, pioneer museum, auditorium for plays and other public usage.

Also, our police force is doing a great job in spite of having outgrown

their facilities and being crowded to the point of it being dangerous at times. Would this be your first priority?

Many of our roads are in bad shape, and it is very costly even to keep them maintained to standard.

These are some of the things the task force must soon prioritize and send to the City Council for them to decide.

Many of us, myself included, complain about what "the government" has done after it is too late to do anything about it. Now is your chance to help decide. It is your money — your government — it should be your wishes!

Please call. I would like to hear any and all ideas on this and would hope that the other task force members would feel the same.

Task for members and their telephone numbers are: Marilyn Rowell, 668-6598; Howard Berger, 668-4723; Bill Wardy, 668-7126; Phil Jonsrud, 668-4995; Ken Hallgren, 668-6038; Ginny Kallen, 668-7149; Linda Hanna, 668-6818; Beth Scarth, 668-9580; Bill Tickner, 668-6566; Ruth Loundree, 668-4024; Jeff Jaqua, 668-6966; Roger Brons, 668-7402; and Rick Fry, 668-9376.

Marilyn Rowell
Sandy

Yesteryear in Sandy

History group plans meeting Sunday

by MILES AUBIN
Special for The Post

The Sandy Pioneer and Historical Association will hold its quarterly meeting on Sunday, Oct. 25, at the Mel Haneberg Community Center. This will be a potluck meeting with dinner at 1 p.m. and a short business meeting to follow.

People should take their own table service.

The entertainment that follows the business meeting will feature Willie Fisher, an accordion player, Roman Scott, local artist, and Jerry Lind Meyers Newcomb, who will present a musical number.

The Sandy Pioneer Association is now in the process of producing a book of pictures related to the early history of the area. The temporary use of any pertinent pictures would be appreciated.

The association would also appreciate donations of artifacts, newspaper articles or personal writings of events of early years of this area.

In the early years, local writers contributed articles to local newspapers. A by-line was seldom

present. Following are itmes taken from the Oregon City Enterprise.

Boring, Sept. 30, 1897 — Ole Amisegger has erected a hall on the corner of Richey Avenue and Dog Fennel Avenue. (This was probably the first dance hall in the Boring area and was very near the present farm of Alvin Richey.) Music was provided by the Fern Hill String Band and Mr. Welch.

Boring, April 2, 1898 — William Welch of Salmon River was in Boring bidding his friends goodbye before leaving for Copper River, Alaska.

Dover, May 20, 1898 — Joe DeShazer had a barn raising the other day.

Damascus, June 20, 1898 — Damascus can now boast of having a doctor, W.E. Hempstead, M.D., late of Ohio. He is locating here if people give him their patronage. His recommendations are enough to convince the most skeptical of his skill.

The best dance of the season was at Boon Johnson's barn Saturday night. It was a nice civil crowd.

Dover, July 11, 1898 — The Dover Sunday School celebrated the Fourth of July at Joe DeShazer's Park. The exercises were conducted in a pleas-

ing manner.

Damascus, Sept. 6, 1898 — So many people are hop picking that very little is transpiring.

Evidently the patronage of the people of Damascus has been well received. Dr. Hempstead has decided to stay.

Sandy, Aug. 14, 1898 — Mr. and Mrs. Jones had an interesting experience with a bull. While taking a short cut through Strowbridge's pasture, the bull took out after them and chased them up a tree, and kept them there until early the next morning when the bull became discouraged and relieved them of their lofty position.

Boring, Aug. 21, 1899 — School commences Sept. 4 with Miss Rose Bowerman of Sunnyside at the helm.

Boring, Oct. 3, 1899 — Mr. Ole Amisegger made a flying trip to Sandy on business. One young man's mind seems to be preoccupied lately, while threshing, he was sent o the house for a bucket of water and returned without it. There must be some attraction at the house, Orville.

Boring, Oct. 30, 1899 — Mr. Ole Amisegger made a flying trip to

Douglas Ridge recently. Boys, we will get to ring our cowbells and cans in the near future.

One young man in the community has been thinking of going to school and taking up botany, his favorite specimen being the "Rose."

Boring, Aug. 7, 1900 — Ole Amisegger has settled down to married life and is showing a responsibility of being the head of his family.

Of late there has been a new colony of settlers in Boring. They seem to come from the South and are known as the "Cut worm" family. They are sweeping the fields as they go, taking everything green. They climb the trees and eat the green shells of the nuts. They even stripped some of Mr. Hickey's nice tobacco plants, and word has been received that they are now rolling and smoking cigarets.

Sandy, March 21, 1901 — Casper Junker has purchased the Berder place and has pruned the orchard. This is one of the oldest orchards in Sandy.

The booming reports of oil have greatly excited some of our people. Many think that oil can be found here in Sandy, probly in the large tank at Meinig's store.

by Adam Kraft

Bobcats



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