

BROOKINGS-HARBOR PILOT

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The Issue on the Highway

Since the time we first began commenting on the opposition of a few landowners in the Gold Beach area to a limited access highway for Curry County, we have received two opposing letters from landowners there, one of which is printed in this issue.

No one ever likes to admit that the other fellow has a point, including me. But I'm going to have to say that Mr. Knox of Wedderburn does have one.

The only trouble with it is that it is a point clear off the main argument.

Mr. Knox cites the need in this county for secondary state system of roads in this county broadened to include access to the valley, and to permit greater access to the interior. Most especially, we'd like to see one up the Chetco river.

So we have no argument there. Nor do we disagree with the position that the state maintain the present location of 101 for a secondary state highway. That, too is vitally necessary to give access to lands that lie along it now, as well as to channel access into 101 at the proper points.

But when Mr. Knox says that Judge Forsyth's trip to Portland was to plead for such secondary roads, he has an advantage on us because, as far as we know, he is the only man on record as crediting the Judge with those motives. Certainly the Portland papers were of the opinion that the Judge was there to protest access and location provisions of 101, and the Highway Commission seemed to have the same opinion. We're not sure what the Judge's opinion is, since we see him rarely in this end of the county.

But even if we were to grant the motives that Mr. Knox gives the Judge, we'd still question the necessity of the trip, since Mr. Baldock of the State Highway Department assured local residents at the Gold Beach hearing that he would recommend the maintenance of the existing road as a state highway. And, if the Judge was pleading for additional secondary roads, we see no point in the uproar . . . since that wouldn't be related to the question of controlled access on 101.

We're afraid that we've come right back to the same old point: Should the State Highway Commission, in rerouting 101, build an open access highway along the coast or not? Mr. Knox and others with commercially suitable property along the right-of-way think they should. We don't.

We don't think so because such a highway would be a death trap with modern traffic conditions. Unrestricted access would make driving this highway a hazard which would drive tourists from this county just as surley as the present curves do.

Such a highway is already outmoded. And to line it with commercial establishments would only destroy the one outstanding asset we have . . . our scenery.

I may, as Mr. Knox says, be prejudiced. I'm very fond of this county, and I'd like to see it grow and prosper. To do so we must conquer our main obstacle . . . our difficult transportation problem.

And I think I understand Mr. Knox's views. Certainly if I owned property along the highway which I hoped to develop commercially, I'd also be prejudiced, the other way. But the cost of developing that property by an open access highway would be too great in lives, in property damage, and in lost opportunity for this county to pay.

Outdoor Lights For Christmas

We're heartily in favor of the Azalea Garden Club's announced plans for a campaign to have local citizens decorate their homes with outside lights for Christmas.

Nothing could do more to add to the attractiveness of our city, during the coming Christmas season. With the existing beauty that surrounds our homes, the Christmas lights would be a final, perfect setting for our holidays.

The Garden Club has temporarily lost their sparkplug, Mrs. Glayds Lindskoug, who has been ill. But she'll be back before Christmas, and we're sure that she and the remainder of the club will succeed in their objective: to make Brookings the most beautiful city on the coast this Christmas.

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LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I must write in defense of our County Judge Guy Forsythe, and the people of central Curry in the matter of highway location, and the unfair criticism of them. After carefully reading your front page report on protests made at the last meeting of the highway commission and your earlier critical editorial about "losing sleep," I am convinced your judgment is based on limited information or misinformation. Remember the old adage: "A man's judgment is no better than his information?" Please seek to get all of the facts before "jumping to conclusions."

In the first place I have heard no one express any objection to a modern highway or any serious objection to a "limited access" road providing it does not prevent development of our resources. The location of a limited access road cannot help but have tremendous impact on the economy of an area such as ours. It has been our contention that some consideration should be given to a total economy of the community, the county, and the state as a whole, as well as to engineering expediency alone.

In the second place, our judge appeared before the commission to get their commitment on maintaining necessary, abandoned road sections as secondary roads, so that maintenance would not become an impossible drain on county finance. Do you know that the highway department had formally advised the county commissioners that they should prepare their budgets to take over the maintenance of abandoned sections, such as the one over the hill on the Coast Hills ranch? Do you know that the state now maintains less than eight miles of secondary roads in Curry county? Now, don't you think, out of all fairness you should "give the devil his dues" and at least give the judge credit for getting a promise out of the commission to maintain a few more miles of secondary roads in Curry county?

The biggest problem, however, is the normal and maximum development of residential, recreational and industrial potential that may be facilitated or inhibited by unwise location of a limited access road. The development of tax base to meet the increasing demand for tax expenditures and many other problems should get complete consideration. At one time, in the late thirties the state planning commission sponsored a project to make a "primitive area" of the whole county, make a state park of the area outside the national forest, and "freeze" all development. This was opposed by the Curry county people, but the highway commission can still accomplish almost the same results through the limited access road law, and the purchase of land for state parks. The people in the county and the areas affected, have had no voice in developing policy in this very important land use problem.

This is the viewpoint we have tried to place before the commission, and certainly does not justify the criticism and prejudice expressed in your paper. I hope you will find room in the next issue to bring this correction to the attention of your readers, and to correct an injustice that many feel has been done.

Yours very truly,

ROBERT M. KNOX,
Wedderburn, Ore.

To the Editor of the Pilot:

LET'S FACE IT—all the best people I have talked to, in regard to the Brookings cemetery, agree that the upkeep of the cemetery has been vastly neglected in days

gone by.

As we all know, many of the graves have become so badly grown up with weeds that to say they are objects of pity would be putting it mildly. Some of the grave stones have fallen over and most of the stakes which once marked the plots have long since been misplaced or destroyed, making it almost impossible to tell where to select a plot. Wonder what could be the cause for all this? Could it be that the people have been too busy rounding up their \$\$\$?

I surmise that the cemetery board of directors have worried about the deplorable situation until they are about to give up in disgust, due to lack of co-operation and appreciation plus insufficient funds to get on with the work according to plans. After all we should bear in mind that the directors have work to do also.

It seems to me that if the churches, clubs and other good people in Brookings and vicinity really wanted to do something on the constructive side they would refrain from griping and complaining about trivial matters long enough to sponsor a movement to "redeem" the Brookings Cemetery

County Library Committee Named

Ten people to serve on the Curry County Area Library Committee of the Oregon Library Association were appointed last week by Charles F. Doane, Gold Beach, chairman of the committee.

Two members were chosen from the Brookings-Harbor area: Rose Poole, and Wm. G. Phelps. Others appointed were: Donna Churchill, Langlois, Doris Olson, Port Orford, A. F. Nieman, Port Orford, Ann Ryan, Ophir, Wickes Shaw, Gold Beach, Lucille Monroe, Gold Beach, Grover Rasch, Pistol River.

—in other words clean up the grounds of the cemetery ship shape smack to the property line on 1, 2, 3, 4 sides and restake the plots. This would certainly be a long step in the right direction toward bettering our community and surely a God-send to everyone.

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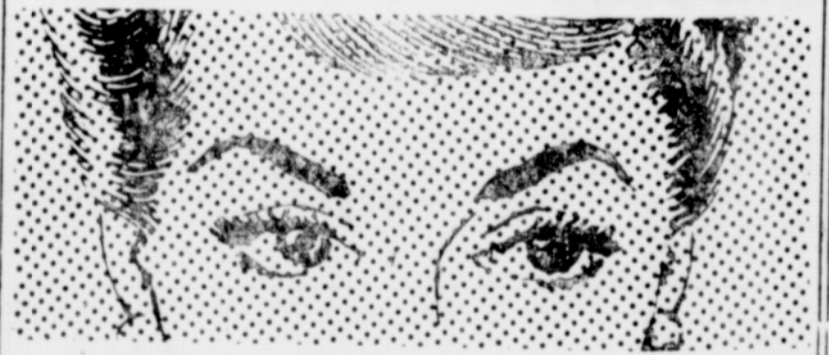
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