

State Police Investigate, Prevent Wrecks



Police Patrols Use System in Eyeing Traffic

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Why does a state policeman drive an exasperating middle speed on the open highway? It is not to coax you into passing so he can give you a ticket for speeding. In fact he'd rather you passed.

Oregon's highway patrolmen, once known as "knights of the road" have reasons in back of just about everything they do, most of them listed in a sort of standard operating procedure which is the Bible for the blue-clad officers.

Experience has established that 40 miles an hour is the best speed for a cruising patrolman to watch both passing and oncoming traffic. At that rate he can get a pretty good look at license plates for instance, faces too and possibly faulty autos or trucks.

And if you are a timid soul of the Milquetoast variety, reluctant to pass an airtight car with the "Oregon State Police" sign, the driver may well pull on to the shoulder to give you the dusting treatment. Backed up traffic is dangerous and the patrolman knows it. He figures you'll pass rather than eat dust.

Checks Reports

To find out why police did such things The Oregon Statesman went along on a day in the life of a highway patrolman. He is at the patrol office a few minutes prior to the beginning of his shift to check over reports before moving out on the highway.

Salem's patrol office, covering Marion and Polk counties, assigns four regular patrols—South, East, North and West—sticking to the main highways except for special assignments elsewhere. North patrol, for instance, travels one of the state's busiest highways between Salem and Aurora.

In a normal eight-hour shift a patrolman on this route will see thousands of cars and trucks, issue only half a dozen warning slips and make possibly as many arrests.

99E "Clean Traffic"

In the police vernacular, 99E between Salem and Portland is "clean traffic." In other words, few people who drive it lack license, driver or auto, because they know it is well patrolled. That accounts for the lack of arrests. Recently in a four-hour check of all south-bound traffic on the route, only 32 persons were arrested; 33 were issued warnings. A similar check on the Santiam highway would have higher counts in both departments on only a small percentage of the total vehicles.

But because of the heavy burden of traffic, police are doubly alert on 99E for what they call road rule violations. Those are the violations such as passing with insufficient clearance, excessive speed, etc., which cause most of the serious mishaps.

Fail to Renew

They are on the lookout too, for the automobile owners who fail to renew their auto licenses or driver's licenses. Patrolmen are still complaining about the new license policy in Oregon which changes only year tabs instead of whole plates. Not only are the tabs small



Investigating accidents and attempting to prevent them are probably the two biggest jobs of a State Police patrolman. An officer takes information, (top) following a collision south of Salem. Patrolman Walter A. Karau, 450 S. 14th St., questions a driver (bottom) preliminary to checking the automobile for brakes, lights and windshield wipers in a recent check of all cars traveling south on 99E toward Salem. (Statesman Photos.)

to read but the differences in colors when viewed from a distance are barely discernible. Most of them say if they can't read it it is the yellow "53" tab, much harder to see than last year's red ones.

In Hurry to Get Home

In a routine day a patrolman will make stops like this: (1) A car speeds through the intersection at Brooks, highly dangerous because of the number of vehicles leaving and moving onto the highway at that point. Driver in a hurry to get home.

(2) Woman driver with expired license plates. She'd had them in her purse for a week but "didn't have time to put them on."

(3) A college student whose ancient auto displayed no license plate at all. He had it on the floorboard to keep out a draft where a piece of the floor was missing.

(4) License plates expired over a month. Driver blamed ownership of two vehicles for lack of plates;

said he had remembered to renew license on other car.

In addition to traffic control duties, the patrolman is always on the alert for other crimes. A clean license plate on a dirty car or a dirty license plate on a clean car have tripped up many an auto thief who thought he was brains ahead of the law.

Accidents are frequent and investigation of fatal mishaps practically routine. A patrolman with much time on north patrol for instance will recall a dozen or more fatal accidents.

Crime, death and reckless drivers—anything can happen and occasionally does in the life of a highway patrolman. But for the most part it's just another job.

Lighting experts say that if a white light is placed some distance away and a yellow light where people wish to congregate, the bugs will tend to congregate around the where the people assemble.

Congressmen Told of Timber Grab System

PORTLAND (U) — Congressmen were told Tuesday that timber grabbers had tied up thousands of acres of Oregon forests through the device of filing mining claims.

These accusations were made at a hearing by a House subcommittee, headed by Rep. Lloyd M. Bentsen, Texas.

County courts, lumber interests, stockmen and sportsmen groups were represented at the session on whether mining laws should be changed.

One speaker estimated 300,000 acres of timber were staked off as mining claims, although no mineral value ever had been proved. Another said that in the Detroit district of the Willamette National Forest more than 300 million feet of timber is blocked off in mining claims, and the Forest Service must have permits to pass over the tracts.

"The present mining laws encourage fraud in securing title, not to minerals but to timber," said W. F. McCulloch, acting dean of the School of Forestry at Oregon State College.

He suggested amending the laws to give title only to minerals. He said a claim holder should be required to pay for all timber not used underground, that nothing more than a lease should be given, and that the land should revert to the U. S. once mining operations cease.

The testimony is to be considered later by a House committee in Washington, D. C.

TRACTOR OPERATOR KILLED
EUGENE (U) — A falling tree killed Robert Beldo, 32, a tractor operator, at the Lookout Point Dam project Tuesday.

More Youth Participation in Governor's Conference Sought

A group of young people attending the governor's conference on children and youth at the statehouse Tuesday offered a seven-point plan which called for greater youth participation in the conference. The seven-point plan, offered at the last meeting of the two-day session, was signed by 15 youths who represented 100 other conference registrants.

Declaring "we would all come again if we had a chance," the group suggested mainly that youth should have a bigger part in the conference. They stated that more young people should attend and that they should be represented on all committees. They also felt that the governor's committee's executive board should ask school authorities all over the state to give school time for young committee workers to carry on their part of the program.

A special orientation meeting should be held for younger delegates before a general conference session is held, the plan suggested, and a lower registration rate set for them. Suggestion was also made for one discussion group composed alone of young people to discuss their particular problems. The last proposal was that youth representatives on the governor's committee be present on the platform at the opening ceremony of the conference.

The workshop group that had studied the school phase of child and youth welfare seconded these proposals. They recommended that representative youth throughout the state be issued invitations to the next conference.

The school group also recommended that passage be opposed on the 6-mill limitation measure which will appear on the November election ballot.

All teachers should be given training in child personality development and should have some practical experience in dealing with family problems as they affect children, was the recommendation of the Family Life workshop group. Recommendations were submitted by others of the eight workshop groups that held special meetings during the conference. They mostly reaffirmed previous "priority recommendation" adopted by the governor's committee and its executive board.

Addressing the closing session were Mrs. William Keltner, an executive of the Oregon chapter, American Cancer Society; Dr. Herbert E. Chamberlain, Sacramento Psychiatrist and Dr. W. L. Van Loan, Corvallis school superintendent.

The club, which moved out during State Fair, has drills on Monday and Wednesday and games on horses Friday. As many as 50 riders are participating.

The sessions are at 8 p.m. in the horse show stadium, and visitors should use the Silverton Road gate.

Saddle Club to Resume Drill

Salem Saddle Club this week resumed its drill and fun nights at the State Fairgrounds, and officers pointed out that the public is welcome to watch without charge.

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MORE KOREA CASUALTIES
WASHINGTON (U) — The Defense Department identified 122 battle casualties Tuesday in a new Korean war list No. 660 that included 17 killed, 103 wounded, one missing and one injured.

The Statesman, Salem, Ore., Wednesday, October 1, 1952—9

School Officials Arrive For Portland Convention

PORTLAND (U) — School officials from 44 states began arriving here Tuesday for the annual meeting of the Association of Governing Boards of State Universities and Allied Institutions.

Educational television is expected to be among the topics discussed after the meeting opens Wednesday. It will continue through Saturday.

Aurora Boy Recovers From Polio Attack

A 14-year-old Aurora boy was reported Tuesday to be recovering from a poliomyelitis attack in a Portland hospital. He is Ronald Wirth.

Other new cases of communicable diseases reported last week to Marion County health department were two of whooping cough, one each of dysentery, meningitis, ringworm and scarlet fever.

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