

Valsetz Feels Full Impact of Lumber Strike



VALSETZ — Peeling chittum bark from trees has provided modest income for a few of the 500 Valsetz men idled since lumber strike started June 21. Above, Don Teal, a millworker, shows bark to daughter, Sandra. Dry bark brings 18c per pound.



VALSETZ — The Valsetz Lumber Co. store has extended \$15 weekly credit for duration of strike to families who were regular patrons of store. Above, Lewis Howard, store manager, looks over The charge-account rack.

Many Workers Leave Town For 'Duration'

By CHARLES IRELAND
Valley Editor, The Statesman
VALSETZ — The lumber strike has hit this isolated town with the impact of a tornado.
But the damage is economic instead of physical.
One could stand in the center of Main Street this week and hear the rain drip onto the wooden walk in front of the company-owned store.
The town feels as deserted as a vacant Army post.
Estimates are that half of the nominal population of 1,200 has moved away for the "duration".
More than 500 workers are on strike in this company town. The bulk of them work for Valsetz Lumber Co. which pretty much owns every lock, stock and barrel in the community.

No Pickets Posted

It's a remarkably friendly strike.
Striking workmen have posted no pickets, and the management has extended a \$15 per week credit at the company store to families who had been trading there.
The company has also deferred rent and power bills for the duration.

Even so, a good many families have left town. Some are taking vacations, a few are living with relatives elsewhere and some have just gone fishing.
Practically all of the many single men have left town. The bunk and cook houses are closed.
The company-owned recreation hall — social center of the community — is closed, too, and diversion is limited mostly to newspapers, radio and television. TV reception is fairly good and many homes have a set.

16 Miles to Town

The nearest cluster of stores is at Falls City — 16 miles away over a tortuous mountain road that requires nearly an hour of travel. The nearest movie is at Dallas — another 10 miles to the East.
The economic plight of Valsetz has spread to Falls City where several merchants opined that business was off "maybe half".
Dallas, too, has undoubtedly felt the pinch of the Valsetz strike as well as its own Willamette Valley Lumber mill strike.

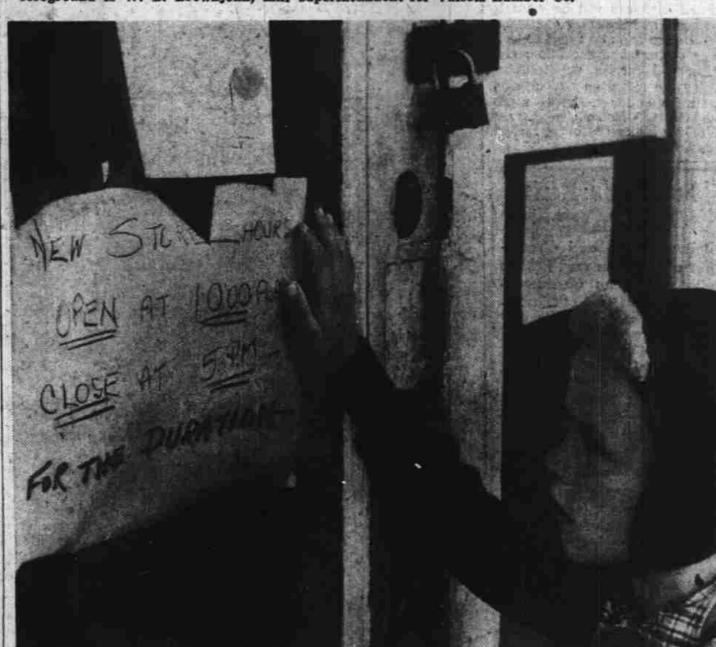
Total number of millworkers and loggers on strike in Polk County is estimated at 1,000. That is roughly one person of every 25 in the county.
So far, however, the young strike has worked no apparent hardships on the townfolk of Valsetz.

Mostly Cash Sales

The company store — the only one in town — reports an increase in cash sales since the strike started. Few, as yet, are taking advantage of the proffered \$15 a week credit.
Some of the idle workers have gone "over the mountain" to the outside world to pick berries. Others have peeled bark from chittum trees that abound in the area. But most that have remained in Valsetz are just sitting it out.
How long will it last?
A lot of workmen think it will end "right after the Fourth". Others say, "not 'till the first of August". Nobody at Valsetz seems to think it will last much longer.
Like other Pacific Northwest lumberworkers who struck, the men want a 12 1/2-cent hourly increase in pay. The present average hourly pay, including overtime, is \$2.85 for loggers and \$2.18



VALSETZ — Cold smokestacks loom above the strikebound Valsetz Lumber Co. mill which normally bustles with activities of 260 workmen. Another 90 are employed by company as loggers while some 200 other men log for Western and other logging companies in this area. All are on strike. In foreground is W. B. Brownjohn, mill superintendent for Valsetz Lumber Co.



VALSETZ — The Valsetz company store has new hours "for the duration," a phrase that is new to young Dennis Weaver (above), who can't remember World War II days. Another bulletin on door asks householders to conserve electricity during strike, and a note from Statesman carrier asks people to contact him if they are leaving town. (All Statesman Photos).

Combustion Fires Fertilizer Heap

Statesman News Service
FOUR CORNERS—An outdoor fertilizer heap caught fire at the West Mushroom plant, 4949 State St., Thursday, sending four corner volunteer firemen into action at 5:15 a. m.
Firemen attributed the blaze to spontaneous combustion and said for millhands, according to Bert Thomas, general manager of Valsetz Lumber Co. Lowball mill jobs pay about \$1.85 per hour.
Thomas says his company can't afford a pay raise because "it's a buyer's market. A year ago we could pass along increased prices. We can't do it now."
The workmen obviously feel differently. The millworkers voted 153 to 42 to authorize the strike.
And Valsetz will be one of the dearest towns in the world until it's over.

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Rebekah Conclave Due at Mill City

Statesman News Service
MILL CITY—Mrs. Lee Bassett, chairman of the Rebekah Convention to be held in Mill City on August 14, called a meeting of officers recently to discuss plans for the convention which will include lodge members from Stayton, Seio, Turner, Jefferson, Lyons, and Mill City.
Mrs. Burrell Drury of Coburg, president of the Rebekah Assembly of Oregon, will pay a visit here at that time.
Elective officers include Mrs. Giles Wagner, Lyons, vice-chairman, and Mrs. Melburne Rambo, Mill City, secretary.

Jersey Cows Make Record

Statesman News Service
MT. ANGEL—In recognition of having produced over a ton of butterfat during a four-year period on Herd Improvement Registry Test, three registered Jersey cows owned by Rex Ross have been awarded Ton of Gold certificate by the American Jersey Cattle Club.
The cows in the Ross herd that won the award were Come Son Jr., Rose Bud, 37,600 pounds of milk with 2,331 pounds of butterfat; Standard Come Dolores, with 41,976 pounds of milk with 2,544 pounds of butterfat, and Standard Loretta Iris, with 35,450 pounds of milk and 2,030 pounds of butterfat.
HURT ON VACATION
MILL CITY—Stephen Todd, son of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Todd, broke his arm in two places in a fall at Laramie, Wyo., where the Todd family is spending several weeks, according to Mrs. W. W. Allen, the boy's grandmother.
More than 500 different species of insects are found as pests in human homes.

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