

'Changes in Sizes' of Moon Explained by Local Observer

By J. HUGH PRUETT
Astronomer, Extension Division

"Late on Thanksgiving Day, we were almost startled by a charming appearance around Mt. Hood, 70 miles to the east northeast of us. While the sunset pink was still on the snowy slope of the mountain, there was swelling up over the distant horizon along side the left slope of the peak the big, white full moon. It looked enormous!"

Nearly everyone who watches the moon when near the full phase has been surprised at its apparent size when just clearing the eastern sky line. This round face of light almost seems to be smiling benignantly.

Several hours later, however, when our lunar neighbor has ridden high into the sky, it has a comparatively small and insignificant countenance.

The moon is really a little closer

to us at the later hour than when rising, and seemingly should appear larger. When it is nearly overhead, it is about 4000 miles nearer than when on the horizon.

Instruments which accurately measure angular width show that it subtends a somewhat greater angle when high. But who—making naked eye observations only—feels that this is true?

Optical Illusion

The strange apparent change in size must be purely an optical illusion. This is most commonly explained by assuming that of two objects which subtend the same angle at the eye, we unconsciously reason that the more distant is the larger.

The moon high in the heavens seems to be very near compared with the same moon over a distant horizon, where we may compare it with terrestrial objects we know are large. When resting beside Mt. Hood it seems immensely larger than when tangled in the tops of tall firs nearby.

Distance Judging

We have read stories of hunters seeing indistinctly through fog a pack of coyotes which appeared like huge wolves, or deer which resembled moose in size simply because they were judged to be farther away than they actually were.

Recently some psychologists have advanced the theory that objects viewed from the face seem wider than when the eyes have to be turned sharply to see them.

To view the moon high in the sky, a man standing upright rolls his eyes at a high angle. Supposedly if he is lying on his back the moon will seem wider when high than when on the horizon.

Eugene's Electric Rates Found About Half of National Average

A comparison of electric charges in cities throughout the country, just issued by the Federal Power Commission, shows that residents of Eugene pay rates that are among the lowest in the nation.

The survey, covering all cities of 2500 population and over, showed that a typical monthly bill in Eugene—for 25 kilowatt hours of current, the usual amount for small-scale lighting purposes—was 68 cents, as compared with the United States average of \$1.29.

For 100 kilowatt hours, the amount generally used for lighting, small appliances and refrigeration, the monthly bill in Eugene was \$1.80, as against an average of \$3.75 in other cities. In the 250-kilowatt hour class, where cooking is involved in addition, the monthly bill

here was estimated at \$3.30, in contrast with \$6.93 elsewhere.

Supplementing the federal commission's report, Harold King, Eugene Water Board assistant superintendent, Saturday released figures to show that as of Nov. 30 this year, the municipal power system was serving 13,186 residential customers and 1935 commercial users.

These totals reflect a net gain of 1573 residential customers since Nov. 30, 1946, and the addition of 227 industrial users. King stated that the water board has extended service an average of 150 new customers every month during the year now ending.

He added that the water board's customers are also using more power per person, and are thereby further adding to the magnitude of its service problems.

Shedd News

SHEDD—The high school junior senior play "Little Women" was presented Thursday evening before a large audience.

Mrs. Sada McBride, the director, was presented with a pearl necklace and Mrs. Maxine Derlune, music instructor, with a corsage. Music was furnished by the orchestra, glee club and brass quartet. Clarence Townsend and Frank Ponill played instrumental numbers.

At P-TA Monday Mrs. Mary Williams was elected to attend the P-TA council at Lebanon. Mrs. Ruth Melteany led a discussion on consolidating Shedd high school with Harrisburg, Brownsville and Halsey high schools.

An oral vote was taken in which the large majority voted against consolidating.

Mrs. Mary Williams was elected as delegate to attend the council at Lebanon for P-TA presidents and delegates.

About nine pounds of plastic parts are used in a modern passenger automobile.

AT THORNTON CORNERS

THORNTON CORNERS—Chas. Palmer and son, David, have returned from Vale, where they attended the funeral of Palmer's foster father, Ed Palmer. Robert Gierau spent the week-end at Klamath Falls with his grand-

parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Home for a few days.

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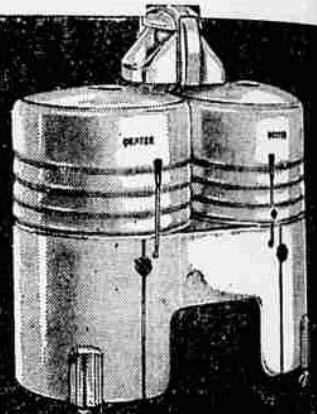


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December 27
On Dec. 27 there will be a fine winter full moon, rising about sunset far toward the northeast, and in middle latitudes remaining above the horizon around 16 hours, like a summer sun.

Perhaps some of us can then test these theories. Many will be surprised to find that a dime held at arm's length before one eye will far more than hide the moon at any phase or height in the sky.

COBURG MEETING
COBURG — Taxpayers of Coburg School District 43 Saturday were urged to participate in a Monday night discussion on the possibility of building an addition to the over-crowded school building. The meeting will be at 8 p. m. in the school gym Monday, Dec. 22.

ODD FELLOWS MEET
COBURG — Odd Fellows meet Tuesday, 8 p. m., at their hall to confer the third degree on a candidate.

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Home Building Plan Attacked

PORTLAND, Ore.—(U.P.)—Inflation will be in full sway in the United States in the next few months if the Federal Home Construction Program continues unchecked, according to E. B. MacNaughton, chairman of the board of the First National Bank of Portland.

MacNaughton told delegates to the Oregon Seed Growers League convention that the Federal Housing Administration apartment construction and the veterans housing programs were "building rackets" and inflation would be here in the next five or six months if curbs were not invoked.

"GI's have been encouraged and persuaded by advertising to buy homes at price levels made attractive by long-term mortgages, based on present incomes. There is nothing short of a racket in the building of these guaranteed loan units," MacNaughton asserted.

MacNaughton said that under the FHA apartment house program the owner to make the housing pay had to charge \$75 to \$100 a month rent on four or five-room apartments. He said he doubted if many working persons could afford to pay that much.

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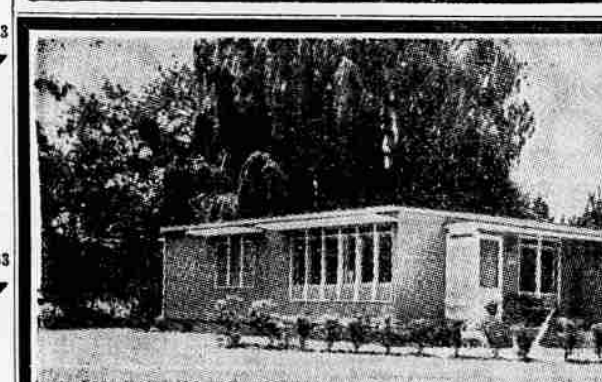


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