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Athena, Oregon, July 27, 1923

BLOCKING PROCESS
 The Bend Bulletin observes that with the filing in Salem of an initiative measure providing for a fifty per cent reduction in motor vehicle license fees, the thing has come to pass that has been feared for many months. True, the measure filed does not make so drastic a cut in license fees as does the so-called \$300 measure, but the loss of income involved is a serious one. True, also, with the lower license fee measure there is an accompanying bill providing for an additional 2 cent gas tax initiated, according to its sponsor, to make up for the loss of revenue created by the lower license fee. There is no assurance, however, that the added revenue from gasoline will be provided and it seems reasonably to be expected that the increased gasoline tax measure will not be adopted.

The great objection to the measures, as to most initiative measures, is the fact that they represent merely the idea of a single individual. No chance has been provided for amendment or possible improvement. There they stand and the voters must take them or leave them as they are. The great danger is that they will approve the measure providing the lower license fees and vote down the increase in the gas tax.

One fact stands out immediately. The commission, having proceeded for some months slowly because of the threat of these initiative measures, must practically suspend new construction activity. Whatever happens to these or other bills that may be filed in November, Oregon has lost one year of progress in highway construction.

ELECTRIC GROWTH IS TREMENDOUS

During 1927 great progress was made in extending the use of electricity. The number of customers served increased by 1,725,000, or 8 1/2 per cent, and 1,200,000 of them were home users. So rapid has been the extension of facilities into smaller communities that at the present time 62 per cent of the homes in this country have electric service and if farms are excluded 80 per cent.

The increase in the use of electricity throughout the United States has far exceeded the increase in population. Since 1912 the latter has risen 23 per cent while in the corresponding period the amount of electricity generated for public consumption has gained 486 per cent and the number of customers 420 per cent. In factory usage we lead the world, the degree of electrification averaging 73 per cent, and in some types of factories reaching 100 per cent.

Nineteen-twenty-seven also saw a great expansion in the use of electricity on farms, and it can be forecast that in the future this service will become general. It has passed out of the theoretical stage and is a proven success.

The foregoing statistics were given in a recent address by Paul S. Clapp, manager of the National Electric Light Association.

With crippled fire fighting facilities caused when the power wires burned out, the entire business district of Freewater was in imminent danger of total destruction, when the Walla Walla fire department answered the call for assistance and rushed apparatus from a distance of 12 miles. And Walla Walla firemen saved the day after the futile efforts of the Milton department had failed to check the flames after two blocks of buildings in that city had been destroyed. And you wager your last dollar that the twin cities are feeling more than neighborly toward Walla Walla for her help at the crucial moment.

In a recent survey made in the most important section of a middle-western state it was found that a person charged with crime risks but one chance in 30 of being punished. Of 12,543 felony cases tried in a great American city in 1926 but 2,449 of the defendants were found guilty and a great many of these were released on parole or appeals or otherwise escaped prison. These are not isolated examples but more or less the general thing throughout the United States.

The water demand has been heavy during the present hot wave, but the city mains have been well supplied mainly by the pumping station. Enlarging the capacity of the city well last season has proved to be a prudent action and a satisfactory investment. In addition to lowering the rates for lawn irrigation purposes, city water is being furnished the new swimming pool at City Park, and so

far there are no restrictions on patrons as to time or period for using water.

Herbert Hoover, republican presidential nominee, and Senator H. Johnson of California had a conference the other day. It is known that Senator Johnson, who is a candidate for re-election to the Senate, is not in accord with Hoover as to all subjects that will be made issues in the coming campaign. Johnson let it be known that he proposes to attack the California power trust in his campaign speeches.

The record of 23 days, 15 hours, 21 minutes and 5 seconds for the round the world trip, just completed, shatters the one held by a couple of newspaper men since last year when they made it by airplane and steamer in 28 days, 14 hours, 36 minutes and 5 seconds. Time surely does fly.

Jimmy Walker, New York's dapper and interesting mayor, was entertained at Portland for a few hours Tuesday. Jimmy was given the keys to the city, figuratively speaking, by Mayor Baker, and the two of 'em had a good time.

The downward trend of the grain market presents anything but a rosy hue to the wheat grower. If the market continues much longer on the toboggan, it will take all of the Umatilla county crop to pay the gas bill.

At the present time the fire hazard is the worst it has been this year. Eternal vigilance is the price of forest protection, and for the most part campers are exercising care in building fires.

North Bend is bidding for the prestige of becoming the colliery center of the Pacific Northwest. A \$1,000,000 coal products plant is to be built there soon.

The ol' swimmin' hole is the proper place for the kiddies, and grownups too, these hot days.

Russia is offering to buy what few horses are left in Oregon.

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J. H. LUCK, Manager

Write: Bingham Springs, Gibbon, Oregon

22 Years Ago

July 27, 1906
 Born, to Mr. and Mrs. Will M. Peterson, July 24, a son.

Fred Kershaw is employed a portion of his time as bookkeeper at the First National Bank.

Mrs. D. B. Jarman and little daughters have returned from a short sojourn at the Hyatt place on Weston mountain.

Wm. Piper, the well known farmer, was in town yesterday, purchasing supplies and in quest of men to work in the harvest field.

Dr. Plamondon has secured a lease on 100 acres of land at the Henry McBain place on the reservation, south of Athena. The doctor is becoming quite a rancher. He now has two pieces of land on the reservation.

Chet. McCollough will go into the harvest field with his threshing outfit tomorrow. He has his engine and separator in first-class condition.

John Bannister will commence threshing on his home place east of town today. Mr. Bannister is raising Dale wheat this season and expects a 40-bushel yield.

In the opinion of the old settlers about this place there has never been such a long spell of warm weather here before. For 22 days the thermometer has registered a temperature from 85 to 105.

Number 99, held by "Andy" McEwen, drew the fine hair bridle which has been on exhibition in this city for some time. The money derived from the sale of the bridle will be sent to its maker, a convict in the Montana penitentiary.

Fort Walla Walla will be a deserted place for the next two months, as the Fourteenth Cavalry entrained at 4 o'clock Monday afternoon for Portland from where the troops will go overland to American Lake, the scene of the summer maneuvers.

In Pendleton Saturday, the market for new wheat opened at 57 cents per bushel. This is the same price at which the market opened last year. It is thought, however, that before many sales are recorded, the price will range around 60 cents.

Swift Water Bill, a horse owned by George Perringer, and being trained at the Walla Walla track, reeled off a mile in 2:12 Monday. The horse is scheduled for two heats Sunday, and Perringer is confident that he can slip them off in 2-minute gait.

R. L. Brittain, father of little Cecil Brittain, who is lost in the mountains, was in Walla Walla Tuesday morning, but returned to the Toolgate in the afternoon. Before leaving the city, Mr. Brittain received a telephone message from his wife stating that nothing new had developed. Mr. Brittain is confident that his son has been kidnapped. "If the boy were dead," said Mr. Brittain, "he surely would have been found."

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