

The Highlander

By MICHAEL D. BENGE
Ban Me Thuot, Viet Nam

The provinces of Darlac, Tuy-en-Duc, Lam Dong, Pleiku, Kontum, Phu Yen and Quang-Duc comprise the area called the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Formerly this area contained very few Vietnamese due to the fear of the Evil Spirits and the Burning Fever (malaria). Even though the lands border the mountains, the soil would be unfertile in contrast with the mountain lands, and there would be over population and starvation if no migration took place.

Until the French came, this area was only populated by many mountain tribes of people of migratory nature. The largest of these are the Djarai, Rhade and Koho. The climate is varied but the area is renowned for the wind and cool nights. The season is divided into a six-month rainy season (rain usually between 12 and 3 in the afternoon and 8 to 10 at night) and a six-month dry season. Ban Me Thuot is a red clay area and there is a constant dust during the dry season.

Until the recent resettlement program, the area was sparsely populated only by the tribal people. Now resettlement villages of Vietnamese dot the surrounding landscape. One finds thousands of perfectly aligned rubber coffee, tea and tak wood trees on the many French plantations abounding here. As one moves to the virgin hardwood forests, jungle and tall grasses, he may find the mammoth elephant, sleek tiger, fleet deer, stately peacock or colorful wild chicken hiding from civilization.

The Montagnard people of the highlands are thought to be of Malayan, Aborigine or Polynesian descent and for this reason they speak many dialects. Their language is spelled and spoken phonetically (similar to the Philippines) and has no similarity to the Vietnamese language. Typical of all tribes is the traditional long house, built up on five foot pillars (sometimes on the ground) made of hardwood tatch and bamboo with grass-straw roofs peaked at a very high angle. These houses are quite similar to those found throughout Malaysia and the South Sea Islands and many times house as many as forty people. Domestic animals may be found in the houses and beneath them to protect them from the jungle prowlers.

The diet of these people is composed mainly of rice and legumes, grown by the slash-burn type of farming and fields will be moved every two or three years due to loss of fertility. This cleared land is soon recaptured by the surrounding jungle. Their diet at times may be varied by the addition of wild fruit or game, or an occasional sacrifice of a domestic animal.

Domestic cattle are raised as a measure of wealth, not for means of economy or food, and are used in the primitive sacrifice ceremony which is part of the religion and past heritage of these nomadic people. The animals killed in the ceremony are readily eaten by the family and until the next sacrifice no meat is eaten unless it is wild game. So one sees that their sacrifice is a way of supplementing their diet also.

Clothing made of black hand-

woven cloth provides a simple sarong type skirt for the women and a loin cloth for the men.

Weapons are a small powerful crossbow with tiny split bamboo arrows used to kill food only, for these people are not too warlike.

Until the government began moving these people into strategic hamlets for self defense, economics was unimportant and unknown to them, but a few were employed by the local plantations and the rest lived off the land.

The Montagnards are an intelligent and hard working people, but until they are educated in better methods of agriculture, animal husbandry, and hygiene and realize that the modern world will not let them remain free, nomadic and primitive, they will find many difficulties adjusting to a growing and economic society.

Division Manager Pays Surprise Visit To Jim Farley Here

Jim Farley of Farley Motor Company wouldn't have been more surprised if President Lyndon Johnson had suddenly dropped in Saturday!

Arriving for an unannounced visit at his business Saturday morning was Edward D. Rollert, general manager of the Buick Motor Division, of Flint, Mich.

Accompanying Rollert were his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Harold Beach of Hermiston. Beach and Rollert were fraternity brothers and roommates at Purdue University, and the Rollerts had been visiting with the Beach family. At Beach's suggestion, the four drove to Heppner to pay the surprise call on the Farleys.

The group remained here a half hour. Farley was thrilled with the visit and enjoyed talking with Rollert. He had seen the executive before when he went back to Flint with hundreds of other Buick dealers and had met him at that time but had no opportunity to talk with him.

What kind of a car was he driving? A Buick, of course—the top model in the line.

Ken Wright Gets Farmer Degree

Ken Wright, Heppner High school senior, was awarded the State Farmer degree at the Oregon convention of Future Farmers at Klamath Falls last Wednesday through Saturday. He was one of 84 FFA members in the state to achieve the honor.

Wright also will receive a \$200 Union Pacific scholarship.

Six from the Heppner chapter attended the convention, including Wright, Dean Robinson, Tony Doherty, John Wagenblast, Frank Osmin, and Bill Weatherford. Jerry Jonasson, chapter advisor, also made the trip.

Wagenblast received a first place in the state with his advanced record book and received a banner as an award. Wright served on the convention's national awards committee and Wagenblast was on the farm mechanics proficiency awards committee. All members participated in business of the convention.

See us for envelopes of all kinds. The Gazette-Times.

HOSPITAL NEWS

Patients admitted to Pioneer Memorial hospital for medical care during the past week include the following: Thomas Perry, Lonerock; R. G. Watkins, Heppner; Wayne Wilson, Heppner; Barton Bonney, Condon; Shirley Blake, Heppner; Hubert Asher, Spray, and Elsa Gibson, Heppner.

Those dismissed during this same period were: Timothy Crawford, Portland; Richard Borman, Heppner; Robert Adams, Kinzua; Anita Asher, Spray, and Sadie Sigsbee, Heppner.

Loss is Less Severe

Closer check of valuable taken from the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Stefani in Ione by burglars last week shows that loss is not as heavy as was indicated in first reports. Investigation is still being made to apprehend the burglars, however.

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Gov. Rockefeller To Visit Pendleton

Governor Nelson Rockefeller, who will be in Oregon Monday and Tuesday for a fast and exhausting tour of the state, will visit in Pendleton Monday, March 30, Don Turner, GOP Central committee chairman in Morrow county, announces.

The Republican presidential candidate will speak at Vert Auditorium, Pendleton, at 12:30. There will be no luncheon in connection with the visit.

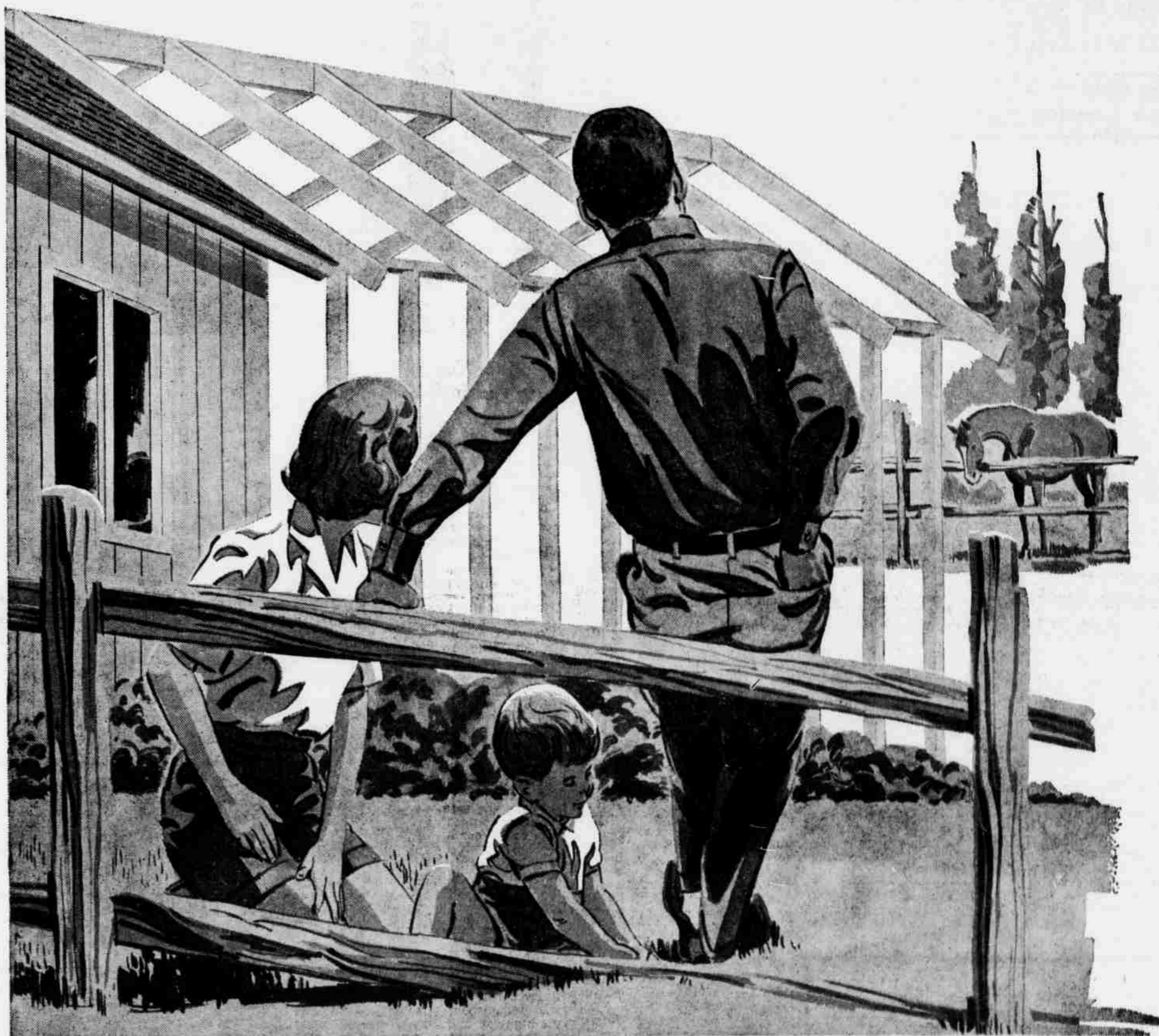
He is due to speak in The Dalles at 2:45 and prior to arriving at Pendleton will speak at La Grande at 10 a.m.

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Judge Aspirants Speak at Chamber

Six of seven candidates for Morrow county judge appeared at the Heppner-Morrow County Chamber of Commerce meeting Monday and gave short talks regarding their backgrounds and candidacy.

Oliver Creswick, a Republican candidate, could not be present.

Bert Akers, Republican, said that he believes Morrow county can make substantial growth with all organizations and "pressure groups" working with the county government for its progress.

Bill Weatherford, Democrat, restricted his remarks to an outline of the duties and responsibilities of the county judge, telling of his part on the county court, as juvenile judge and in probate work.

Frank Hamlin, Democrat, spoke of the need to provide more work opportunities here for young people. He said that if elected, he would give his whole time to what he considers a fulltime job.

Ambrose Chapin, Republican, pointed out that he has lived here 35 years and knows the county well. He emphasized his slogan, "Economic, fair and impartial treatment."

Paul Jones, Democrat, spoke of the importance of growth development. The Boeing development, John Day dam, Willow Creek dam, maximum use of recreation potential, tax equalization and long range road program were emphasized in his talk.

Haskell Sharrard, Democrat, stressed the need to utilize the county's natural resources fully with a possibility of development "never dreamed possible." He emphasized his slogan, "Progress through Unity."

President Al Lamb was in charge of the meeting. Each speaker was allowed five minutes, but none went to the limit.

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