

# Africa Calling

A REPORT FROM THE NEAR EAST  
By NELS ANDERSON

It has been several weeks since I have taken the time to write some of the doings of far away Africa. We are still intrigued by the sights and sounds of this weird country and the past few weeks have been most interesting with quite a number of activities including the Foire Internationale (fair), the holidays, etc.

First, I think many of our Morrow County friends would be most interested in the fair. This was a ten day affair. I should say day and night affair for it seemed that the natives never slowed down during this entire time! Interspersed with their Independence Day, visits from neighboring presidents, most elaborate parades, and what have you!

Several days before the fair officially opened tribesmen from the many villages throughout the country began to arrive in Niamey. Since this country is almost twice the size of Texas, there were tribesmen on the road for over two weeks, coming from such places as Zinder in the far eastern part and the Tuaregs from far away Agades in the Saharas in the north part of Niger. Anyway, every time a chief and his followers hit town there were big welcoming receptions and their entry was something to write home about.

When all had arrived by horse and camel caravans it was reported there were 5000 horses and 1000 camels in town. I have some colored slides of the parades which would dwarf the Rose Bowl parade. There is nothing so colorful as an African decked out in his tribal costume as far as bright colors go. We were awakened each morning at 4 a.m. by their bugles and drums as they paraded by our house to the outskirts of town where they assembled for a parade that lasted for as many as five hours on some days. It would be of interest to the many horse lovers of Morrow county to watch 5000 horses (100% stallions) in groups of five stretched out for two miles tall to tail never flinching a muscle only to move on slowly when the parade finally got under way and the military groups finished their maneuvers in the town square.

Following the horsemen were the multi-colored camel men who move along on these quiet animals so smoothly one hardly knows they are there. The Tuaregs with their white and black robes, their head covers that leave only their two eyes peeking out, are something to

see. Of course there are so many different tribes, each with their special customs, that none could be left out. I spent over three hours on one morning with my camera and tape recorder just walking in and out among the tribal groups, recording their chanting, drumming, and otherwise musical contributions they were making to the cause. Each tribe or village was trying to outdo the next and it was quite something! They have an instrument made from a long gourd (the gourd is a standby for the native who uses it for everything from a water canteen to the dishes, spoons, water basins, etc., etc.) full of holes like a ocarina, which sounds like a bagpipe; another one made from hammered copper about six feet long, a tube with a flared end that really puts out a weird sound and aimed at your bedroom window about 4 a.m. brings you out of your bed faster than your house on fire.

There were, in addition to the thousands of horses, and camels, several thousand tribesmen who accompanied the most fortunate, who had horses, on foot. They could be found to be wearing from nothing but a breech cloth to the most elaborate costumes. I could go on for pages describing the many different tribal costumes being displayed but could not do them justice, so will end this here. I hope to have some real good colored slides that will describe them so much better than I can here.

The fair was exceptional even for the States. I thought there was more imagination used than ever is used in the big fairs at home. While most of the countries of Western and Northern Africa had booths of displays, the most interesting was the several dozen booths set up by the villages of this country. They all centered the displays on the products and life of the villages; and did a wonderful job at it. The agricultural crops by varieties for each crop, whether it be peanuts, cotton, millet, sugar cane, sorghum, sesame seed, cowpeas or sweet potatoes, made a good exhibit. Last but not least their crafts not only were fascinating, but provided a chance to pick up some souvenirs of some of the tribes that generally don't come to town or are so far out one seldom gets out to the remote villages to see them. (By the way the November National Geographic carried an interesting article, "I joined A Salt Caravan," that has its setting in Northern Niger at or near Bilma. I haven't been there but have a trip scheduled there for later this month.)

From the beginning to the end, night and day, there was something happening to be seen or heard. Presidents from Tunisia, Ivory Coast, and Togo were given a grand reception under the tightest kind of military guard. It all ended with numerous horse and camel races at the country's race track with some high betting. We were quite pleased with the camel races and surprised with the speed with which they travel—quite speedy from their everyday pace.

**Boys Join Us On Trip**  
We took advantage of the boys being home from school to make our second trip in a

month to Tillaberi and Ayorou where we spent the day giraffe hunting. Don Greenup would like this much better than elk hunting and the meat would pile up much faster. We saw 36 the first trip and we lost track of the numbers on the second trip. Really the shooting season is closed till next fall but it sure is fun to stalk them with a camera.

David sneaked out with the movie camera and soon found his way right into the middle of a dozen or two—I believe he was more surprised than they. It is quite a sight to see a herd of these wild animals out in the brush. The first thing one sees is a long neck bending over eating out of the top of a tree. They are most graceful.

On our second trip they were back and forth across the road, one almost running over the Peugeot! We also had the opportunity to see some wild pigs, lots of monkeys, and took a ride with a native in his pirogue across the Niger river to sneak up on a hippopotamus. I don't know what is the most scary—poling across a muddy river in a hollowed out log or trying to get up close to a snorting, grunting hippo weighing a couple of tons.

Our trip took us also to the big Sunday market at Ayorou conducted by the Tuaregs and Bozoa—neither of whom speak or understand any language but their native tongue. This is one of the big camel and donkey markets, as well as cattle. I was thinking of Ebb Hughes selling his yearlings when I saw the buyers who mill around all afternoon among hundreds of long horned cattle that are just held in bunches of 20 or 30 around the market square while thousands of natives (and curious whites) wind in and out of the bunches of cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, and camels. We got quite a thrill out of seeing the various things that are on the market, from fly-infested fresh meat lying out in the heat all day, fresh fish (?), etc., etc., not to mention the bolts of cloth, dye, handicraft. You should see my boubo (best suit). There are hundreds of bargains of used clothing from Penney's to Arrow shirts; about half have an appropriate back tag with such as Joe's Bar, Bekins, Jack's Outboard Motor Mart, etc.

Before I leave the giraffes altogether it would be worth mentioning to the good Morrow county ranchers who have a fence building job each spring from elk damage that there is one thing worse I have found. Last month, one day a herd of about 15 giraffes went through a six barbed wire fence and just took along with them about five hundred feet of wire, posts and all.

A little about our weather—this winter being a tough one according to the old-timers. We put out our trusty Pendleton-Heppner Freight Line thermometer when it arrived in our freight for a Christmas present December 21 to find it going down to 58 degrees an evening or two. Many of the Africans have contracted pneumonia and all go around like it is 10 below. I was happy to have my Pendleton jacket, though, and have had it on several times. It gets into the 80's and 90's every day, though, and at 9 this evening it is 78. We spent New Years eve at a garden party and was glad to have a long-sleeved shirt. The weather is predicted to get warmer as the month proceeds until we get into our real hot weather in a few months.

**Growing Season is Fast**  
Gardening is at its best now in the cool season. I have a demonstration garden with 64 10x10 foot plots of American,

French and African varieties to compare them and different planting dates. Things grow fast with 18-day radishes from planting to eating. We are enjoying lots of string beans planted just before Thanksgiving and the tomatoes are at their peak now. Fruits here are not too plentiful or at least the kind we enjoy eating. Many bananas, oranges and pineapple come here from the coast in season but the fruit here is such things as grapefruit, guava, lime, lemon, and some other poor imitations of fruit. I hope to get some good fruit started but what we like is not liked by the natives. They are beginning to grow some oranges and bananas now, though. We have guava and mango in our yard and hope to get some other started soon.

Last week I took a trip to Northern Nigeria to take the boys to Kano to catch the plane for Cairo. This is the closest plane that heads any other direction than to Paris going north. I am real proud of myself because everyone told me I couldn't drive the 620 miles in one day. I did it from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. over half of it dirt road, the rest a roller coaster of oil about 10 feet wide just enough for one car at a time.

Northern Nigeria is a beautiful farming country and the Hausa farmers are among the best. Their small fields are well tended and produce well of sugar cane, millet, corn and sorghum. This was my first trip into Eastern Niger also, and I found things much more progressive there. Now I am anxious to get out there and to start some extension projects going. I have just recently been given a new Land Rover pickup that is excellent for getting around in the "bush." Now I don't have an excuse for staying in town any longer. Recently I have had a Peace Corps Volunteer assigned to help me, and I am real happy as I think I got the best one of over 80 assigned to Niger. He is a Californian, and while he is a law graduate of Stanford, his interest and experience in agriculture are excellent. He has been here for 18 months so I won't have too long but will make good use of him while he is here. He will return to get his masters at Columbia in international politics.

Together we are now ordering our demonstration aids for in-service training of several dozen agricultural students as well as setting up a program of work for the whole country.

**Christmas Greetings Appreciated**  
Before I go any further in my ramblings I want to say that the Andersons appreciated the dozens of Christmas cards, most of them with a long letter and this made our first Christmas away from home much more enjoyable. It was nice to know so many were thinking about us

at this holiday season. Most of them specifically mentioned enjoying the Africa Calling column and asked for more, so we will ramble on during the new year unless we get cut off.

Our Christmas tree this year consisted of a Goa tree, the most sticky of the African brush trees but it turned out to be quite an attraction and brought many comments from visitors. Our house boy and night watchman couldn't figure what was going on but we celebrated anyway. By sheer fortune our sea freight shipped from New York on October 23 fooled every one by arriving for Christmas so we had Christmas tree decorations and a lot of things we kept saying we wished we had each day. The special flight was especially good to us, for in addition to bringing home Kit, David and Doug from school, it had nine large wooden boxes of food from the order house in Denmark, about three months earlier than normal as well as a sizable order from the commissary in Lagos. So we ate well for Christmas.

One of the big treats was our slide projector that the good people of Morrow county gave us which had been accidentally sea freighted rather than air freighted as we had intended. We really hadn't had a chance to use it this summer, so we enjoyed looking at slides we have taken since last spring and especially the ones of Africa.

Oh, yes, we were thrilled beyond being able to hardly speak by a phone call from our old New Years gang at Heppner, on New Years—it was only 9:30 a.m. here when they called at 12:30 a.m. "Reception" was quite good and we surely were glad to hear some voices from home. We know now that a call can be made in case need be. We wish everyone a Happy New Year! While things are starting off quite unsettled here with political trouble on every side—Upper Volta to the East has been taken over by the army after the president was jailed for cutting all salaries of his Civil Service workers by 20%; the president of Dahomey to the South has recently been ousted; there are violent riots in Nigeria to the South and East; Algeria is still having trouble and there are those that think our turn is next; we hope to see some accomplishments in agricultural development in the year ahead. Au Revoir till we write again.



ROBERT P. DeKONING, left, of Portland, chairman of the April crusade for the American Cancer Society's Oregon division, discusses plans for the month-long fund-raising and educational program with Actor Gregory Peck, right, national crusade chairman, at meeting in St. Louis, Mo. DeKoning is director of research and corporate planning for Jantzen, Inc.

## LESSONS LEARNED

At Grandma's Knee



Grandma's loving hands teach a lot! They're gentle, wise and kind, opening up a whole new world of adventure.

Grandma's been around a long time, and she knows a lot more than most people.

She knows how important it is to start saving for the future... The sooner the better.

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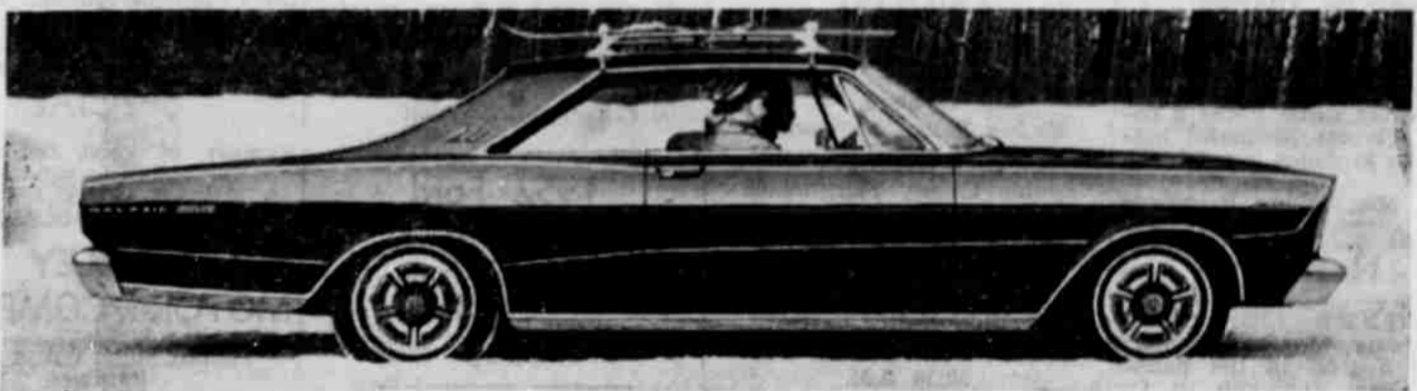
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## TAX NOTICE

This is the  
**Final notice to taxpayers**

before the delinquent personal property tax list is published in the Heppner Gazette-Times.

After the list is published and judgment is taken, the full amount of taxes will then be due and payable. Until February 15, taxpayers may pay one-fourth of the total amount assessed plus interest.

C. J. D. BAUMAN

Sheriff and Tax Collector - Morrow County