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MORROW COUNTY'S NEWSPAPER

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President Bob Jepsen Addresses Oregon Wheat League

Following is the text of President Bob Jepsen's address given at the opening session of the annual convention of the Oregon Wheat League at the Sheraton Hotel, Portland, last Thursday:

The 40th annual meeting of the O.W.G.L. is now underway and will soon be past history. I am hoping we will write this meeting in the history books as one to be well-remembered.

At this time I would like to say that it has been a great privilege and honor for me to serve as president of this fine organization. This opportunity has been, without ceasing, a challenging one all during the year. Looking back over the year, I can say it was not as difficult as I had anticipated. I believe the reason for this is because of all the fine help I have had along the way. I owe a great deal of thanks to our executive vice-president, John Welbes, his office staff, Ivon and Wilma, all of our league officers, our standing committee chairman, our county presidents, the commission members, and of course, all the membership of the Oregon Wheat Growers

League. The founders of the Eastern Oregon Wheat League back in 1926 had many, many problems. We find today that we still have many of the same problems. In 1926 the Eastern Oregon Wheat League had five standing committees; they were farm management, finances, production, wheat handling, and world supply and demand. When I started working with the Wheat League we had six standing committees. A seventh committee, public relations, was soon added, and I served as a charter member of that committee. Then last year, upon recommendation from the marketing and transportation committee, we split that committee because there was too much material to be considered by one committee. By changing to two committees, a marketing committee and a transportation committee, we find we now number eight in standing committees.

This first meeting in 1926 of the wheat growers was well attended as they all gathered together to wrestle with the problem of "What can we do to help ourselves?" Today we find that our problems have gained in number and are much more complex than those of our founders. One of our more complex problems today is that of lobbying. Today lobbying is big business. There are over 1000 associations, such as our National Association of Wheat Growers, that have offices in Washington, D. C. Each of these associations are constantly looking after its special interests as our office does for us. We have exactly the same situation here in our capital city of Salem. There are many, many special interest groups that have men employed to keep a watchful eye for any legislation that will affect its group. This year, for the first time, the OWGL has such a man employed as a special counsel in Salem to keep us continually informed as to what is going on that will affect us as wheat growers, and also to keep the legislators informed on the needs of the OWGL. I am happy to say that this year, for the first time, our legislators were better educated as to the needs of the OWGL, and our wheat growers were better informed as to legislation under discussion than ever before in our history, because of our man in Salem, George Dewey.

So our basic approach to our problems today are the same as it was to our founders, and that is "what can we do to help ourselves?" We know we can't personally spend much time in Washington, D. C., keeping a watchful eye on congress, we know we can't personally spend much time in Salem keeping tabs on legislative action there. Nor do we have time to wade through all of the vast amount of material that is printed pertaining to legislation. We don't have time for these things because our farm work takes up the biggest percentage of our time. Then what can we do to help ourselves in this area? Who will do this work for us? The answer is in our voluntary contribution of 3c per allotted acre. This is your money working for you in legislative action. As most of you know, taxes collected by the Wheat Commission cannot be used for this purpose, so the money must come direct from the farmer. So take comfort in the knowledge that while you are out working on the tractor, you are also working in Washington, D. C., and in Salem through your 3c per allotted acre.

Now let's talk about the growth of our organization. Our organization is gaining in number each year, and just this year three counties in the Willamette Valley have joined us, and we are very happy to have Yamhill, Polk, and Marion counties as new members in the OWGL. This year "The Valley" will be competing with the rest of our counties for the best cake baker, and for the Conservation Man of the Year award. Again we welcome you new members and our thanks go out to all of those hard working people who made this achievement possible.

The next few thoughts I would like to share with you pertain to a trip taken by our first vice-president, Bill Hulse, and by our secretary, Washington, D. C. Bill and I were representing you, the Oregon wheat growers, in attendance at many meetings with the USDA. We also attended an executive session of the NAWG while there and we joined with wheat growers from other states at a breakfast for the congressmen from these states. It is important that we send our wheat league officers, including the executive vice-president, to Washington, D. C. annually to attend these functions. They are vitally important to the wheat industry.

Let's take a look now at our 1967 state legislature. They have been making history themselves as this year they rolled up the most number of days ever in session by the Oregon legislature. And then they had to turn around and come back for a special session a few weeks ago called by Gov. McCall. These are hard working men, and this has been a busy year for them. Many of the resolutions that were adopted at our annual convention last year have been brought to fruition by our state legislature in the area of plant pathology, we were able to retain pari-mutual funds for fairs and special shows, we passed a land-use tax statute, we were instrumental in holding down development of new community colleges until our present colleges "get on their feet," and we protected the highway users fund.

Our problem of inheritance tax is now before the permanent tax study committee, and you may be sure that George is keeping track of what is going on there. Many of our trips to Salem this year have been to deal with legislative problems. But we have also made trips to Salem to meet with the state workmen's compensation executives. I think we are all painfully aware that any farmer having an annual payroll of \$1,500.00 or more, is required by law to have workmen's compensation coverage by Jan. 1, 1968. Our league members have studied many plans presented by various state and private companies, and I feel the one we adopted at the fall workshop will serve as the best interests at this time. This one is called the group divided plan, and it is underwritten by the Oregon State Workmen's Compensation Insurance. Each grower will actually get his own experience rating and will be grouped together only for receiving dividends. Dividends are paid on

the amount of premiums paid in—the larger premium paid—the larger that dividend. It is just that simple.

And now, I would like for all of you to think with me for a few minutes about the one item that is of most importance to all of us. And this, of course, is the price—the low price—that we are receiving for our grain. Last year, at this time, our surplus was down to a minimum so we got a 15% increase in allotted acres. An additional 15% increase in allotments was issued later, very much against our recommendation. The USDA asked those wheat growers who could grow wheat profitably on these additional acres, to do so because it was urgently needed to feed starving people in many countries. So we grew more wheat and the farmer is now saying to you, Mr. Secretary of Agriculture, "This has been hard work, and costly to produce this extra wheat. Now that we have done so, please see that the hungry people of the world get fed."

This brings up another subject, and that is the subject of effective bargaining power for the wheat producer. I understand that Secretary Freeman is afraid the farmer might quote "gouge the public," unquote, if they were given this bargaining power. You and I know that this is not what would happen. All we are asking for is that the wheat grower be given a fair return for his product.

On July 1, this year, a fair return price was established by the USDA for wheat at \$2.61 per bushel. I can assure you that if the wheat producer were getting this price on all of his production he wouldn't be asking for any more—he wouldn't be gouging the public. The price of wheat could increase 70c per bushel before it would effect the loaf of bread one cent. Let's turn this idea around. When the wheat farmer is getting anything less than a fair return, isn't the public then gouging the wheat farmer?

On September 30, of this year, Orville Freeman, said in Portland at the dedication of the new agricultural wing at OMSI that the farmers were subsidizing the government overseas food aid program. The secretary knows it is true, and no one knows it better than you and I, the wheat growers. I have always said that the wheat grower should have an export certificate on all of the wheat that is shipped overseas. I believe a reasonable and fair amount for this certificate would be the difference between \$2.61 and the going market price of wheat today. This would give the producer a fair return for his product. A farmer must participate on the present farm allotment program before he would be eligible. Agriculture means business for Oregon.

This is the message the newly formed Agri-Business Council of Oregon is a statewide public relations firm for all of Oregon's agriculture. The Oregon Wheat Growers League has given the Agri-Business Council of Oregon our whole hearted support in the past, and we will be very proud to continue this support in the future.

I would like to impress upon you the urgent need for each wheat grower to be aware and very much concerned with what the future will hold for you. On July 1, 1969, the present certificate farm program expires. Many people are working hard to do away with your domestic certificates. Twenty-one bills are pending in the House to abolish the wheat and feed grain programs. What steps are you taking now to help keep

or to help improve our program? Don't sit back and wait for someone else to do it—get in and do your part now.

In closing I would like to say that you can all be very proud of your Oregon Wheat League and your Oregon Wheat Commission. It has been very gratifying as I have traveled about the state in your behalf to see the respect that our legislators and politicians have for our organization. We have a reputation for making careful, thoughtful, wise decisions in the past years, and I know we are determined to carry on this policy. So my fellow wheat growers, I urge your continued, active participation, and careful deliberation as you go into your committee meetings. They are vital to the welfare of the Oregon Wheat League. Again I thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your president.

Guests for Thanksgiving holidays at the home of Mrs. Mary Johnson were her two daughters. Coming from Toledo were Mr. and Mrs. Hank Robertson, and from Portland was another daughter, Mrs. Agnes Sperry. They returned to their homes on Sunday, November 26.

He Faced a Tough Job

There are few who would like to be in the shoes of an Oregon legislator right now in view of the stalemates of the long regular session and the ill-fated special session. Who would like to come home to face constituents after the thwarting and frustrating experiences of these long, wearisome and so-called "fruitless" sessions?

It would be similar to a wife mustering courage to tell her husband she has smashed the car, or a salesman coming in to tell the boss that he had failed to sell a single item.

It brings out that it takes people with tough hides to be in politics today, and they must be admired for the fortitude they develop.

When Irvin Mann came to the Chamber of Commerce Monday, he appeared in no sense apologetic for the failure of the legislature to accomplish its primary objective. He had the appearance of a man who had done his best.

But he still had some constructive thoughts on what might be done. He sincerely believes that the 1 1/2% limitation threatens the state with economic chaos if it is passed, and right now is trying to rally his fellow legislators for some stop-gap legislation to forestall this possibility.

The legislature and its members have taken all kinds of ridicule, taunts and jibes. But who among us would step up to say "I could have done better?" The very fact that their deliberations resulted in a deadlock would tend to indicate that each was sincere and acted on conviction.

The public gave them a mandate—but to do what? Cut taxes way down and still give all the services that everyone wants? At the same time, the public made it pretty clear that it would accept no other tax proposals.

The legislators deserve credit for trying—and trying hard—to do a near impossible task. Their frustration is greater than those of the bystanders, for they fought the battle. Theirs is the greater concern for they bear the responsibility delegated by the voters.

Such were thoughts in watching and listening to Rep. Mann Monday. There is no doubt that he worked most diligently and conscientiously on the property tax problems, which he feels so keenly, and he deserves commendation of his 28th district constituents for the effort.

Congratulations, Louis and Bob!

Morrow county's Conservation Man of the Year, Louis Carlson, is now Oregon's Conservation Man of the Year, and it makes us mighty proud to hear it. He was announced as state winner at the Oregon Wheat League meeting in Portland last week, and thus, his good work, supported by wife Betty, brings honors to all of Morrow county.

Reports from the annual meeting indicate that it was one of the most successful in league history and probably the best attended. This is due at least in part to the fine president of the organization, Bob Jepsen of Ione, who was in charge of the meeting.

Congratulations, Bob! Congratulations, Louis! These are the sort of fine young men who comprise the corps of Morrow county farmers.

Chaff and Chatter

Wes Sherman

"I WAS SURPRISED to see a swan going to school," said Bert Corbin. He had been at the high school checking on his police rounds Sunday, and in driving down the hill met a big white bird groggily walking up the road.

He stopped the car and pursued the bird, managing to catch it after some effort. It had come flying to town like an airplane with an engine shot out. Adele LaTrace reported that it just about crashed into a window at the LaTrace home, but bounced to a landing nearby after clearing the house.

Glen Ward later identified it as a whistling swan—a young one—and it is a rather rare bird. Where it came from no one knows, but it surely was off course in coming to Heppner.

Examination showed that it had been shot in the breast, but the wound wasn't bad. Apparently some misguided hunter had fired at it from some distance away.

Pete McMurry took a picture of the bird with Officer Corbin, and it was then taken with kindly hands to a pond at the Marcel Jones place to convalesce. There it is finding plenty of feed, and it has a happy home for as long as it wishes to stay. Marcel is hoping that it will choose to remain in this sanctuary, but chances are that once it has its "engine" repaired, it will yield to the irresistible call of the wild and wing away with a fond adieu to those who gave it succor and refuge.

WE of the Gazette-Times staff were saddened today when word was received from Mrs. Louis (Jean) Gilliam of Condon that Sgt. Tommy Erwin, formerly of the Condon Air Force Station, had died of natural causes in October, apparently at his present assignment in New Mexico.

Perhaps not too many in the Heppner area knew Tommy, but he became acquainted with quite a number during the two or three years that he worked with the Condon station's paper, "The Scope," which the G-T prints.

Tommy developed an interest in rockhounding and greatly admired the collection of Indian artifacts of Bruce Bothwell. He was a huge man, both in size and in spirit. He was as friendly and congenial as he was big, and the staff here enjoyed it every time he came over.

Sgt. Erwin came back on a visit during the summer and said that he was going to put in for a transfer back to Condon as soon as he could because he liked this area so well. We looked forward to that time, and we are deeply sorry that he will not be returning.

His death was apparently from a heart ailment. Loss of Tommy is the second from the Air Force who have become good friends. Sgt. Jim Chauncey, who was pretty well known among the business people here and who also previously worked with The Scope, died about



BERT CORBIN and new friend, a whistling swan.

a year earlier from natural causes on Okinawa. He, too, had planned to return and liked the newspaper business so well that he was considering entering the field after his discharge from the service.

WE'RE BREATHLESSLY awaiting someone to announce the ultimate Christmas gift—an electric button pusher. That's about all there is left to invent. This year they are coming out with electric hair brushes, electric combs, and electric clothes brushes. Out for some time have been electric toothbrushes, electric can openers and electric knives. It's getting so that it will be considered a major effort to pick them up or to push the buttons to start them, and so something has to be designed to rescue the over-burdened citizenry.

Maybe some day they will invent an electric spoon, so that all a person has to do to eat is to sit at the table with his mouth open. And it could be that they will develop an attachment to hook on to the mouth to eliminate the labor of chewing.

ONE PORTLAND department store announces in a profession of advertising, "An old-fashioned Christmas," and fills the ads with "mod" dresses, baby doll games, and all sorts of the electric gadgets mentioned above.

That's an "old-fashioned" Christmas like grandmother never heard of!

W. S. Caverhill in his Pioneer Ponderings column on this page describes the "real" old-fashioned observance of Christmas, which didn't include turning on the commercial pressure as early as Thanksgiving or prior.

We note in the last issue of the Industrial News Review this definition: "An old-fashioned Christmas was one when people paid cash for the gifts they bought."

That would take us back a bit, wouldn't it?

Pioneer



Ponderings

By W. S. CAVERHILL

Christmas

Christmas is coming soon. For me it will be my 81st. As I recall the observance of the day over that span of years, I cannot decide whether the true spirit of Christmas has lost or gained. Certainly the commercial side of it has expanded and time extended.

Perhaps a picture of a small town's observance sixty years ago will provide a comparison. The event was always on Christmas eve, not the day before or the day after. A large tree was put up in the church. The decorations were mostly homemade. Strips of popcorn and popcorn balls were numerous and later eaten. Varied colored candles clamped to the branches provided the light.

Santa Claus was the center of attraction and distributed gifts for every youngster in the community. He always arrived a little late. (Not a month before!) Many of the gifts were homemade—socks, mittens, sweaters, etc. Hams and fruit cakes appeared for those in need. We waited impatiently for the day to come, but we waited. No thought was given to changing it for convenience. Santa Claus was seen once—on Christmas eve.

Recent Thanksgiving holiday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Carpenter and family were his parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. L. Carpenter of Eugene and Bill Peters of St. Paul, who is a brother of Mrs. Carpenter.

Church Youth Sing Carols for Missions

A group of junior missionary volunteers of the Seventh-day Adventist church, accompanied by some of their senior sponsors, will circulate throughout the Heppner residential area, starting Thursday evening, singing many of the familiar Christmas carols.

The public is invited to share in their world service work by making monetary contributions. The funds will be used for uplift and welfare services, both to needy families in this area and in other parts of the world, according to H. E. Preston, pastor of the Heppner church.

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