

Merl Cantin . . .

# MISTER TELEPHONE



JEAN BENNETT, Heppner, gets a look inside a telephone as Merl Cantin, Pacific Northwest Bell telephone man in Heppner, explains

what makes it work. Jean is the wife of Don Bennett, Mr. Cantin's neighbor northeast of town.

"Who the heck wants to move to Heppner?" Merl Cantin asked his boss that question a couple of years ago. After working 24 years for Pacific Northwest Bell in Portland, Merl was offered the telephone job at Heppner. "I took the offer home and threw it out on the kitchen table," Merl says, "for my wife, Inella and two daughters, Sharon and Pamela to consider. Why not try it? We did. We're glad. I want to retire here."



MR. TELEPHONE, MERL CANTIN

Merl is the only telephone man in town. His territory runs from five miles south of the Columbia River to Tupper Guard Station 45 miles south of Heppner and east of Heppner 30 miles to Franklin Hill and west of town 30 miles to Rock Creek.

He takes care of home, business and coin phones, teletypes, company switchboards and whatever other telephone chores crop up. He is backed up by telephone crews in Pendleton, and Hermiston.

"I'm a believer in diversification in a job," says Merl. "I couldn't have it any better. I've got to do a good job for customers. It's ME who has to come back if I don't. I'm on call 24 hours a day."

Merl is settled at his 13-acre "mini-ranch" 9 miles northeast of town where he raises a few farm animals. Being a hunter and fisherman, he considers himself in a paradise.

"Where else," he asks, "can a guy walk four miles from his back door and get his elk?"

He is president of the Heppner Bowling Association, member of the Chamber of Commerce, works in 4-H and with the Civil Defense People.

But, not long after his move to Heppner, he may have had second thoughts.

He was riding in his pickup when he crossed a faulty cattle guard which flipped the vehicle over several times. His fastened seat belt kept him in the cab protected, but the side of his head was cut severely, leaving him bleeding and nearly unconscious. The truck was demolished.

He managed to walk four miles to a farmer telephone line, climbed the pole and called for help. When help

came, Merl was still clinging to the pole. "I heard myself called by a new nickname after the accident," he says. "I had with me in the cab a note pad I bought at Knox's Variety Store, which has since burned down. The note pad was stained and covered all over with blood. In fun, I took the pad back to the store and asked if it was insured."

He got back a new note pad and a card which read, "To the Ding-a-Ling telephone man, from Knox's Variety Girls."

Leaving city life and moving to a small town might seem a backward step to many people. But Merl sees it differently.

"You've got to be a certain kind of person. Your whole family has to be that kind of person," he says. "You've got to like what mother nature put here for us to enjoy. Makes one feel really alive."

"And I enjoy something you see less and less in our other cities. In Heppner, everybody waves."

G-T WANT ADS PAY

## County 4 H's to State Fair

A round-up of 4-H horsemen and women from throughout the State will take place at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem for nearly five days during the annual State 4-H Horse Show, one of the largest such events in Oregon, reports Don Stangel, Morrow County Extension Agent.

Morrow County 4-H Horse club members, Mary Abrams, Mary Healy, Dawn Peterson and Denise Henkle are among those participating in social events, judging contests and horsemanship competition.

Over 400 young men and women will participate in the events scheduled for the Stadium Building. The horse show is open to the public and is free of charge. Admission to the State Fairgrounds during this time just before the State Fair opens on Saturday August 26 is also free.

The evening "round-up" planned as social events during which exhibitors can get to know each other, are a new feature this year, explains Duane Johnson, OSU Extension 4-H & Youth Specialist.

The program for intermediate contestants, ages 12 through 14 is scheduled for Sunday evening, August 20. The senior "round-up" will be held Tuesday evening, August 22. Events for the intermediate classes will begin at 8 a.m. Monday, August 21, and continue until 10 p.m. The judging will resume at 8 a.m. Tuesday and conclude at noon.

Senior riding and showmanship classes will follow the same schedule beginning at 8 a.m. Wednesday, August 23, and continuing until noon on Thursday.

Judges for the intermediate horse show will be Barbara Holiday, Klamath Falls; Karen Robinson, Seaside; Ron Davis, Olex. Senior show judges will be Bonnie Johnson, Tonasket, Washington; Paul Rutland, Philomath; and Helen Wagner, Oregon City.

### TWO JOIN JOB CORPS

Delbert McLachlan was sworn into the Job Corps by Judge Paul Jones August 17. He will report August 23 at Yachats. The Job Corps is a job training program for young men from the ages of 16 and not yet 22. Initial tests are given to the applicants prior to acceptance in the program. Delbert, a Heppner High School graduate, did real well in these tests according to Nate Marston, Oregon State Employment Counselor in Heppner. Delbert will receive specific training in an area that further tests show he has the most aptitude for.

Delbert is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Darrel McLachlan. He will join Nick Marick who is already at Yachats. Nick went in last month. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. H.H. Marick of Ione.

### DAN DINGES PROMOTED

Dan Dinges, 49, a former Lexington resident, has been appointed executive vice president of Western Bancorporation, where he will be bank relations officer for the holding company's 23 affiliated banks in 11 western states. Since 1971 he has been executive vice president of First National Bank of Oregon. He entered the banking field in 1950.

Then there was the kangaroo that went to a psychiatrist because he did not feel jumpy anymore.

### IRRIGON

Frances Rose Wilson Mrs. Wesley Cronk has returned to Irrigon after visiting with her parents, Rev. and Mrs. Lynn Sparks in Santa Cruz, Calif. While there she attended the Elim Camp Meeting.

MR. & MRS. PERRY PUMMEL attended a 50th wedding anniversary celebration in Ontario. It was given for Pummels' cousin, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Oltman, by their children. Other relatives who attended and are visiting in this area, include his brothers, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Pummel and Cindy, of Long Beach, Calif. and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pummel of Salem and his mother, Buelah Pummel of Portland.

Cora Ellis and family visited the children's grandmother, Jessie Hartfield, in Arlington recently.

MR. & MRS. EARL ISOM of Irrigon, visited with old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Milford Smittle in Elgin, while they were away on vacation.

Visitors at the E.A. Stephens home on the past week end were Mr. and Mrs. Guy Parke and family and Mr. and Mrs. Joe Stephens and son Robert of Portland. Mr. Gail Mosely of Salt Lake City, a brother of Mrs. Joe Stephens, accompanied them. They were all here to attend the Umatilla School reunion held at Hat Rock Park, on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Congers of Redmond were weekend guests of Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Murdock and attended the council Square Dance.

Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Murdock took Frank Demeritt to Heppner Monday for medical care.

MR. & MRS. LYNN DUGEN

and family of Hillsboro were Wednesday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Don Hardwick.

Mrs. Linda Lucas was the hostess Friday to a Constans party. There were seven ladies present. Mrs. Betty Murdock is the Constans Dealer in this area.

Mr. and Mrs. Denzil White were business visitors to The Dalles last Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ken Dunlap

and Mr. and Mrs. Art Watkins of Heppner took a boat trip to the mouth of the John Day river Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ray O'Neill and family spent the weekend in Prineville on business and visited with Mr. and Mrs. Ray O'Neill, Sr.

Mrs. Guy Van Arsdale was a business visitor to Milton-Freewater and Walla Walla last Thursday.

Guests of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Yeigh this past week were Henry M. Anderson and his daughter Mrs. Diane Marklerberg of Bonners Ferry, Idaho.

MR. & MRS. TONY NEUMAYER returned home last week from Boise, Idaho where Tony had been at National Guard camp near Boise and Mrs. Neumayer visited with friends.

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## An Open Letter from the Office of the President.



Wallace W. McCrae President

An Educator of many years experience who heads this institution of higher learning

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*Wallace W. McCrae*

Wallace W. McCrae President

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