

Missionary tells Heppnerites of life in Central American republic

Back in 1964 a very small central American country, most people learned about as British Honduras, became self governing. Its name was officially changed to Belize, the original name of the area, in 1973. A missionary-teacher Ned Walter, on furlough from his work in the former capital of the country, Belize City, in swampy land along the western shore of the Caribbean, visited in Heppner last Wednesday and Thursday.

He brought updated knowledge about the country to a group gathered at the Methodist Church Wednesday evening, Oct. 3, to view his color slides, to hear his narration and to enjoy refreshments provided by the high school youth of the church.

Walter was for some time a research chemist with the Dow Chemical Co. and his wife, also a research chemist, worked for Eastman Kodak Co. About twenty years ago they decided to enter the mission field and spent 17 years (1958-1975) in Brazil. They reared their eight children there before being reassigned to Belize, where both teach in Wesley College.

Walter explained that Belize is still under the protection of the British military because of the "Guatemala Question", a border dispute dating back to Guatemala's independence in 1859. The small country is economically impoverished and cannot maintain any military establishment, so the government depends on the British making a show of force periodically to keep the Guatemalans in place.

The 142,000 population is nearly 98 per cent non-white and is basically Mayan and Carib Indians who have intermarried with the descendants of the African slaves whom British settlers brought to the colony when they logged mahogany there.

There are several great Mayan ruins in Belize. It has the second longest coral reef in the world. Many adults migrate to the U.S. because wages are so low in Belize. Because 98 per cent of the population is literate, speaking, reading and writing

English, those who get to the U.S. have a language advantage over others who don't speak English.

One-third of the country's population lives in Belize City which is in the hurricane belt and has been destroyed twice. After the 1961 hurricane which

killed more than 300 persons and left thousands homeless, the government began building an inland capital at Belmopan. This planned community of 3,000 became the country's official capital in 1970.

Heppner nurses stage 'disaster' in Stanfield

Linda Connor and Sally Winters of Heppner will coordinate a mock disaster training exercise this afternoon in Stanfield.

The make-believe disaster is part of a 40-hour Crash Injury Management course the two Heppner nurses are giving to Stanfield police and firefighters.

Since the mock disaster will be made to appear as real as

possible, Ms. Connor cautions anyone who might be driving to Stanfield today not to become upset if they come upon police and firemen dealing with a large-scale "tragedy."

Details on what the "disaster" will consist of were not released, so that the incident will come as a surprise to Stanfield emergency workers.

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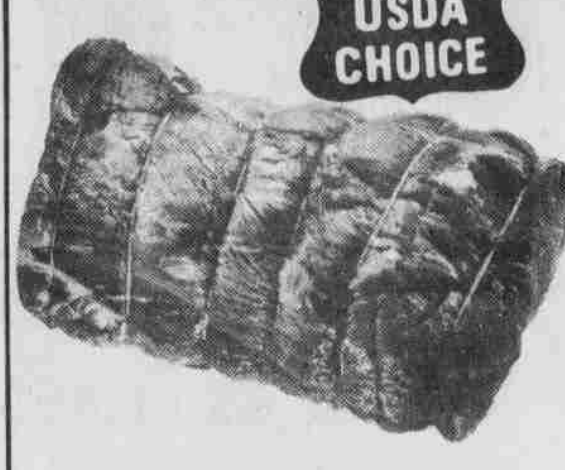
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Area clergy to attend BMCC confab

Church leaders from Umatilla and Morrow counties have been invited to a conference at Blue Mountain Community College, Oct. 12.

The conference signals the start of a series of meetings between the college and various interest groups in the college area, according to Ellsworth Mayer, dean of academic planning and research. "In the future, we hope to focus on other special groups, besides the church community, like the business community or the retired citizen community," Mayer commented.

Rev. Mary Alice Geier and Rev. William Hallman, two authorities in community college ministry, will serve as resource people. Rev. Geier presently serves on the staff of Campus Ministry with Community Colleges in Southern California. Rev. Hallman is the Western Regional Director of the United Ministries in Higher Education. The two will discuss the mission and role of the church in community college education.

"What life is like here" is the title of a panel discussion by students, faculty and other people involved with Blue Mountain. Possible courses that the college could offer for the group will be considered. Several such church-community college conferences have been held throughout the state. "We're not really unique, but it's a first time for us," Mayer pointed out.

The conference is open to anyone who would be interested in attending. It will be held in the Pioneer Hall theater.

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