

Vital Need for Aerial Ladder Truck By City Cited By Medford Fire Consultant

Medford is one of very few cities in the United States of more than 10,000 population which does not have an aerial ladder fire truck, according to Fire Consultant Leo Weidner, acting chief here.

But the department's reasons for feeling the need of such a truck are not just a matter of "keeping up with the Jones family," Weidner said. The potentialities of this type of equipment for preventing property loss, entirely aside from its effectiveness in saving lives from taller buildings, make its purchase most desirable, he said.

Gives Facts, Figures
Weidner has been making a series of talks on fire prevention problems to a number of Medford civic groups in recent weeks. Pointing out that it makes no difference to him, personally, one way or the other, whether Medford passes or rejects the proposed bond issue and tax levy for the department, Weidner has been giving facts and figures regarding the department.

The two proposals are so closely related that it would hardly be worth while to vote for one and not the other, he said. The \$125,000 bond issue is for purchase of a new ladder truck, for two new sub-stations, for an alarm system, and for new hose. The tax levy is to provide continuing funds for the new equipment and for additional personnel needed to operate it.

Value Here Triples
The city has practically the same types and numbers of fire fighting apparatus as it had when it was half its present size and before property had tripled in value, Weidner said. There has been some increase in pump capacity and modernization of equipment, but no increase or modernization in the equipment to save human lives in serious fires. In days gone by this could be excused because there was no better equipment available, but

this conditions is no longer true, he points out.

With present equipment, outside rescue of people trapped by fire above the third floor would have to be done by improvised means, if at all, since manually operated ladders will not reach further. To raise a ladder of the present maximum length would require the service of four to six men, for two to four minutes, during the time when their services are most urgently needed

for other duties. The aerial ladder can be raised to full height of 85 feet by one man in 30 seconds.

Can't Reach Floors
In Medford there are buildings whose upper floors can not be reached with present equipment, and permits have been requested for buildings of even greater height.

Weidner said that the aerial ladder equipment also would permit ladder pipes to be placed

on the fly ladder, thus enabling water to be directed from the full extension height. Lack of such equipment prevented the effective fighting of a fire in one of the packing plants recently. Equipment of this type is a very necessary part of fire fighting. Weidner stated, and from a humanitarian point of view as well as from the practical view point it is a necessity.

18 Miners Killed In Belgian Explosion

Mons, Belgium, May 12—(U.P.) At least 18 miners were killed and 18 were trapped yesterday by a coal gas explosion 1,650 feet down in a mine. Four were injured.

Rescue workers wearing gas masks dug through caved-in sand and rock to the main shaft of the mine, which is south of Brussels near the French border. They took out 18 bodies and four badly injured miners.

Eighteen others were missing. Rescue workers heard faint tapping through a wall which blocked a passage. There was no sign of how many of the missing were alive.

A mine spokesman said the death toll probably would go considerably higher.

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Tourist Promotion Methods Here Liked

The efforts of the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce to entice money-spending tourists to this area and to keep them here longer may be used as models for tourist promotion programs in other areas, as the results of a meeting held here this week.

Jack Sugg and Howard McAllister of the Oregon Advertising club and Carl Jordan of the travel information department of the state highway commission met at the Medford hotel with members of the tourist and convention committee of the chamber and other officials.

After the up-state promotion men had outlined their plans for attracting more tourist dollars to the state, the local committee explained what they are doing in that line and showed that Medford's plans are well formulated and well in advance of what has been done elsewhere.

The Ad club representatives and the representative of the highway commission expressed keen interest in the striking folders and information sheets that are being prepared for distribution by the chamber, and were also impressed with plans to educate local residents to be better tourist hosts. The program

here will get into full swing during Tourist Host week, proclaimed by the governor for the week of May 22.

Statistics Given
The motive behind all the activity to draw more tourists was revealed in statistics given by Jordan and Sugg. They said out-of-state visitors brought in \$110 million to Oregon last year, making the tourist industry the third ranking business in the state in point of income. Two and a quarter million tourists entered the state in 770,000 cars. That is exclusive of the thousands who come by rail, bus and car. About 80 per cent of the vacationists travel by car.

This year should be still better, according to current indications and the rate of inquiries being received by chambers of commerce and the travel information department.

The whole idea is to get those visitors to stay here just a little longer. It is estimated that the average tourist spends about 6.8 days in the state. If they could be induced, by increased hospitality and better information about existing attractions, to stay an additional half-day, it would mean another \$8 million in income to Oregonians.

Unoccupied Wing of Sanatorium Burns

Philadelphia, May 12—(U.P.)—Fire today damaged the now unoccupied wing of the Belle Vista sanatorium where 10 patients died in a blaze set by an inmate last March 29.

Today's fire also was the work of an arsonist, authorities said. "The place reeked with gasoline," District Fire Marshal Edward H. Chew said. "It must have been splashed on the walls."

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Handling of Cargo Declines in Portland

Portland, Ore., May 12—(U.P.)—A continued decline in shipping in the Pacific area affected cargo handling last month. The Portland Merchants' Exchange said today 590,744 short tons of cargo was handled in April as compared to 729,563 tons during April 1949.

Cargo imports increased from 2,843 tons last year to 10,713 tons last month but foreign imports declined from 154,753 tons last year to 69,669 tons last month. The corps of engineers said river traffic through the Willamette Falls locks and through the Bonneville dam lock picked up during April.

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