

Three Medford Departments Review Activities of Year

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles describing the purposes, 1959 accomplishments and 1960 plans of Medford's 17 departments, boards and commissions as they were reported at the city's Living Annual Report banquet at the Rogue Valley Country club Wednesday night. This article gives an account of the reports of the parks and recreation commission, library board and water commission.

PARKS, RECREATION

The Medford parks and recreation commission completed its first full year of operation in 1959, and has many worthwhile accomplishments to show for it, according to Russ Jamison, commission chairman.

One of the first jobs the commission had was the selection of a competent and qualified parks and recreation director, and for this position they hired Robert Hawthorn, formerly the assistant parks director at Spokane, Wash.

Jamison said the commission itself grew out of a citizen's fact-finding committee appointed by the mayor and city council in September, 1958, to determine what was needed to create an adequate parks and recreation program for Medford.

Several Departments

The report of that committee showed the park and recreational services being offered by the city at that time were administered by several departments with no over-all direction and a resulting loss in efficiency.

To correct this condition, the mayor and council appointed the commission and charged it with making recommendations regarding the general supervision and control of all city park and recreational facilities and to establish a parks and recreation department to carry out the programs to be developed.

Hawthorn assumed his duties in May last year, and the department was organized in time to carry out an expanded summer recreation program, Jamison pointed out.

Becoming Integrated

It is now on its way to becoming well integrated with the community and with other city departments and agencies, he said.

Some of the commission's accomplishments in 1959 include the coordination of citizen's efforts in establishing a neighborhood park on Union st., the renovation of the Roxy Ann park picnic area and the establishment of an expanded maintenance program, Jamison said.

The commission accepted the donation of the logging locomotive from the Medford Corporation and placed it in Jackson park. It reviewed and approved plans for the development of the Jackson park pool project, which is now under construction, and accepted the Crater Lions club's offer to provide a wading pool at the park as a club project.

The year 1959 also saw an expanded aquatics program, an extension of the swimming season at Hawthorne park, and the development of both summer and winter recreational programs to complement the program offered by School District 549C, he pointed out.

In addition to these accomplishments, the commission cooperated in hosting the Senior Citizen's conference in

Medford last fall, Jamison added.

See Active Year

In regards to the commission's plans for 1960, Jamison said, "It will be an extremely active year if we are to close the gap in this important field of municipal responsibility... but with the necessary support we can recover many years of lost effort and bring Medford's parks and recreation facilities up to a respectable level of acceptance."

One of 1960's projects will be the completion of a master plan of city parks to facilitate long range city planning and orderly park development. The year will also see the completion of the Jackson park swimming pool and attendant facilities, he said.

Another project will be the participation in the joint effort of other cities and Jackson county to clean up Bear creek, he noted, and they will also work toward the creation of a Medford Parks Memorial Fund to more adequately attract and administer bequests and contributions to city park development.

The commission will continue and expand the present recreational programs, Jamison added.

Besides Jamison, other commission members are Mrs. Edith Eden, Mrs. Owen Kunkel, Verli Walker, James Zack, Herb Partridge, Eugene Thorndike, Jerry Lausmann and William Singler.

LIBRARY BOARD

The library board has three main responsibilities: to set broad library policies and employ a capable librarian to carry them out, to promote library service, and to secure adequate funds for its operation, Board Member Elliott Becken told those attending the banquet.

Becken spoke for Mrs. LeLand Mentzer, chairman of the five-member library board.

He pointed out that the official name of the library recently was changed to the Public Library of Medford and Jackson county.

The change in name was made, he said, to give the library a title indicative of the cooperation between the city and county which have jointly supported the institution for the past 40 years.

Under a contract with the county the library provides services for branch libraries in Jacksonville, Gold Hill, Central Point, Eagle Point, Butte Falls, Phoenix and Talent.

All books purchased with

library funds are made available to the branches through rotating collections and special requests, he pointed out. Becken said that because of this unified library system, more services are possible for all county residents.

One of the board's 1959 accomplishments was the acquisition of Omar Bacon as head librarian, and Becken said under his leadership the library will endeavor to more effectively extend its services to all groups in the community.

Some 4,537 new books were added to the library's shelves last year, including many gift books for which the library administration is grateful, Becken said.

Forty-seven volumes on Oregon history were added from the fund established by the will of the late Ella J. Smith, he noted.

Another of the past year's accomplishments was the expansion of the library's services by the acquisition of paperback books which supply many titles that could not otherwise be purchased.

Circulation Increase

Becken pointed out that in the last six months the circulation of library books has shown an increase of about 10 per cent.

He said that this year, an effort will be made to evaluate the direction the library should go in building a book collection that will serve the economic, cultural, informational and recreational needs of this area.

Some of the new services planned by the board for 1960 are the establishment of a public meeting room in the library for use by community groups, the establishment of a drive-up book return at the main library and the encouragement of the borrowing or return of books at any branch library and with a single card.

The library, in cooperation with the Ashland library, is seeking, Becken said, some \$23,000 in federal and state funds for the purpose of expanding services to the branches and working towards keeping them open for more hours during the week.

Besides Becken and Mrs. Mentzer, other board members are Mrs. Eve Hamilton, Gene Thomas and Richard Travis.

WATER COMMISSION

Chester Hubbard, chairman of the Medford Water commission told those attending the banquet the water department is somewhat different from the other departments in that it has more autonomy.

Hubbard said the city charter obligates the commission to provide a pure and wholesome water supply for use by the inhabitants of the city and for fire protection, and to carry out this function, the charter gives the commission the authority to maintain, operate and extend the water system, establish rates and regulations and collect and control water revenue and funds.

The charter also includes a provision for the sale of surplus water to areas outside of the city, Hubbard added.

During 1959, he said, the total water consumption in Medford was 3,318,045,000 gallons, a 10 per cent increase over 1958.

Maximum Daily Use

The maximum daily use was 23,800,000 gallons, a 13 per cent increase over the previous year, Hubbard added.

He pointed out that the sharp increase in water consumption was caused in part by the rapid growth of the city and in part by 1959's dry weather.

The increase in the number of water customers is indicative, he said, of the growth of the city. At the end of 1959 there were 10,411

customers served by the Medford water system, an increase of 456 customers or 4.8 per cent over 1958.

To keep up with this increase, nearly five miles of new water mains varying in size from 4 to 24 inches were placed in service in 1959, giving Medford a total of 111 miles of water mains. He added that the number of fire hydrants had to be increased from 701 to 735 last year.

Construction Projects

Two major construction projects were undertaken by the water commission last year, one of these in the southeast part of the city where the new 500,000 gallon, reinforced concrete, Barneburg stand pipe and pump station were installed.

The second construction project is on Capital Hill where two previously open reservoirs were covered with aluminum roofs at a cost of \$98,000.

With the covering of the reservoirs, Hubbard said, all city water is now under cover from the time it leaves the subterranean depths at Big Butte Springs until it comes out of the householders faucet.

In 1960, the department anticipates the addition of 400 new customers to the

MAIL TRIBUNE, Medford, Or. Friday, Feb. 12, 1960 A 3

water system which will require the installation of three to four miles of new water mains, including a new 14-inch trunk main on Crater Lake ave. for service to the Grandview area, and 30 new fire hydrants.

Diversion Canal

Another project contemplated by the commission this year is construction of a \$150,000 diversion canal from Four Bit creek to the Willow Creek reservoir.

The start on this canal hinges, Hubbard said, on whether or not the precipitation between now and May is above normal.

If it's not, he said, then the canal will be built so the city will be able to meet its water obligations to the Eagle Point Irrigation district next summer.

In addition to Hubbard, members of the water commission are George Polski, Dwight Houghton, John Pletsch and Darrell Miller.

MacArthur Makes Further Progress

New York (UPI)—The condition of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, hospitalized with a urological ailment improved further Thursday, an Army spokesman said.

MacArthur "made further progress in gaining strength slowly," Col. Gordon Barclay, 1st Army information officer said.

MacArthur is scheduled to undergo surgery as soon as his condition permits.

WHO'S SEEN' DOUBLE

Henley, England (UPI)—Things got a bit confusing in magistrate's court Thursday during a trial in which a man was found guilty of drunken driving. The defense attorney, John Easby, and the prosecutor, Denis Easby, were identical twins.

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MISSING MAN SOUGHT—Two Volunteer horsemen search the area downstream from the point where the auto of missing Adolph Coors III was found near Morrison, Colo. The part of the stream where the horsemen are looking is the place that officers found Coors' hat and glasses. The FBI has entered the case but so far has uncovered no new clues. —(UPI Telephoto)

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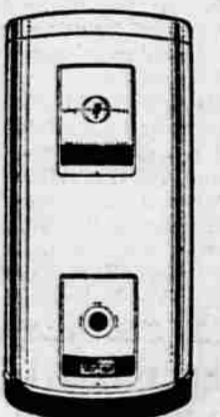


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