

School Safety Patrol Gives Valuable Service at Streets

When school starts next month members of the Medford Safety Patrol will again take their respective positions at school crosswalks on the busy streets and thoroughfares of the city.

The Safety Patrol provides a valuable, but often thankless, service to the community.

Four times each day, rain or shine, members guide their classmates across the hazardous streets of the city, doing their part to make the trip to and from school as safe as possible for school-age children.

Medford Police Captain Clyde C. Fichtner, who serves as police advisor to the patrol, is justly proud of the record it has compiled. In the 12 years that the patrol has been on duty in Medford there has not been one accident at a patrol-manned school crossing.

Run by District

The Safety Patrol is organized and run by the Medford school district in cooperation with the police department and state department of motor vehicles. A member of the school faculty serves as supervisor to the patrol in each school.

Patrol members are drawn from both boys and girls in the fifth and sixth grades. They are selected on the basis of scholastic responsibility and an aptitude for leadership. Last year there were 265 of these youths serving on school Safety Patrols in the Medford school district. Patrols range in size from 10 to 20 members depending on the size of the school.

Captain Fichtner praises the patrol as being "a valuable supplement to police efforts in regulating pedestrian traffic in and about the school area." He points out that these patrol members are on duty "rain or shine" and because of their volunteer duties they often miss many of the school activity periods.

Valuable Experience

Serving on the Safety Patrol is a valuable experience to the members themselves, Fichtner believes, because they learn a sense of leadership and responsibility that follows them all through life.

He added that in supervising others they are learning themselves.

When a student is selected to serve on a Safety Patrol he signs a pledge in which he promises to "work for the safety of the pupils of the schools . . ." and "to do my part in helping reduce the number of accidents during (the school) year."

Captain Fichtner helps to swear in each patrol member at a school assembly in the fall of each year and to point out to them their duties and responsibilities.

Have Right of Way

He points out that patrol officers are "not to direct vehicular traffic, but are to direct children in the safe crossing of streets or highways." He adds, however, that pedestrians always have the right of way over vehicular traffic when in a crosswalk.

Where there are traffic lights at a school crossing, the patrol goes by the lights when allowing children to cross the streets. Where there are none, patrol members rely on their own judgment as to when it is safe to allow children to cross.

Patrol members are easily spotted because they wear yellow belts and helmets which have been provided them by the department of motor vehicles.

In rain the members wear rain coats and caps which have been donated by the local PTA group.

In addition, the patrol is equipped with safety flags to use where there are no traffic lights.

Fichtner points out that there has been some question lately as to whether or not

safety patrols are a proper responsibility of the schools. Several cities, notably Klamath Falls and Roseburg in Oregon, have abandoned their patrols for this reason, he said.

No specific statute has ever been enacted in Oregon which provides for the establishment of safety patrols, he observes, although some consideration is now being given as to the advisability of such legislation.

Authority for safety patrols now comes from a law empowering the State Board of Education to prescribe rules and regulations for the general government of public schools, he noted.

Wording of Law

This law reads: "Teachers shall exercise watchful care and oversight over the conduct and habits of pupils, not only during school hours, but also at recess and intermission, and shall have the power to punish the pupils for any misconduct on the way to or from school."

A 1948 ruling of the state attorney general said that a safety patrol "is within the scope" of the law, Fichtner points out.

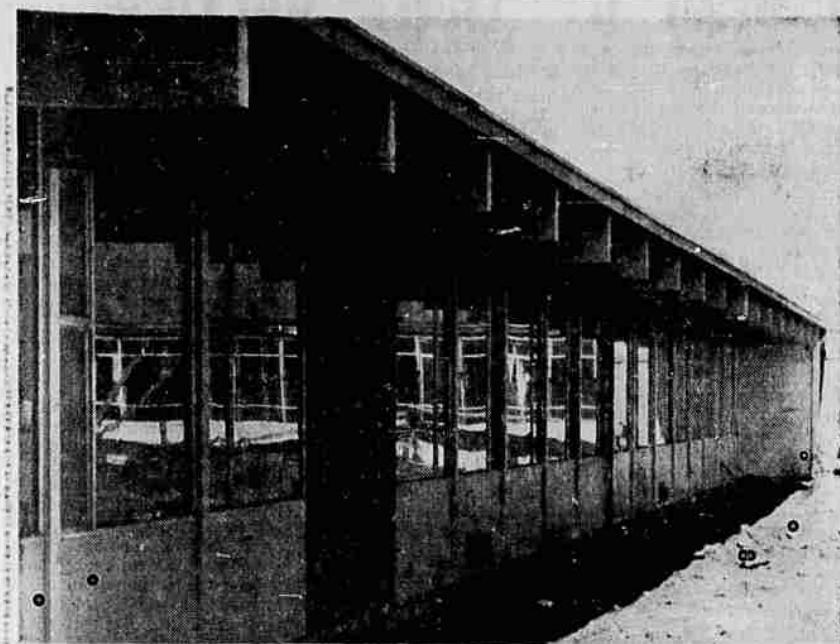
The captain said he has heard of no move to disband Medford's Safety Patrol, and said he does not think there will be any because "we are blessed with far-sighted people" in the school system.

Fichtner is of the opinion that the value of Safety Patrols often goes unnoticed. He encourages PTA groups and others to show their appreciation for the patrol by honoring them with special activities in the individual schools.

Extensively Read Children Are Better

It is a well-known fact that children who read extensively after school hours are better scholars, have larger vocabularies, and are generally more alert to things around them.

It is just as easy for a child to read a children's classic as a comic book, and they provide far more in worthwhile ideas and lasting pleasure. Parents should encourage children to this end.



NEW JUNIOR HIGH—This shows a section of the new junior high school in Ashland, which students will use for the first time this fall. The building, which replaces the former structure condemned by the state fire marshal, is being constructed to accommodate about 1,000 students, but about 650 students are expected to enroll this fall.

BRUSHED WOOL—Marvelous mate for pants and skirts—a handsome slip-on sweater of brushed wool. It boasts bracelet length sleeves and a huge cowl collar that dips in front for added dash. By Select areas.

BOOKS ARE A HELP—Developing the reading habit helps youngsters improve in school work. Books of all kinds should be part of the "equipment" in home study areas.

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Self-Instruction Machines on Way Into Classrooms

Washington, D.C.—All this talk about teaching machines and other mechanical monsters in the classroom leaves the average mother feeling a little faint.

The mental picture of her child learning reading or arithmetic or French from a "teacher" who looks more like Univac than a teacher is far from reassuring. She wonders if all education will be humanized in the next few years.

The answer, according to the National Education association, is no.

Successful Service

It is true that teaching or self-instruction machines are on their way to the modern child's classroom. Highly successful in armed services teaching units, they are now in production for general classroom teaching.

The Department of Audio-Visual Instruction of the NEA recently published a bibliography which reveals that there are now 25 different machines in actual use. Thirteen companies are manufacturing the machines, and more than 13 research and education groups are developing programs for the machines.

According to the specialists, however, the teaching machine, far from making teaching less personnel, will make it more so. The machines leave the teacher free for the more creative aspects of teaching—including more individual attention to students and more conferences with their parents.

Do More Effectively

A machine, after all, cannot hold discussions, debates, conduct demonstrations, or diagnose a student's adjustment or learning problems. These are the things only a real teacher can do—and can do more effectively, when she is backstopped by a machine to take care of some of the repetitive or mechanical drill work which is a necessary part of all learning.

Although mother may never have to talk to a teaching machine, she will want to be able to talk about them.

Most machines have two windows which the student faces. The study problem or question appears in one window. The student punches out his answer. The machine then indicates whether or not the answer is correct.

May Not Proceed

The student may not proceed to the next item until the correct response is given. The machine, unlike most human beings, has eternal patience, and can repeat an explanation over and over without signs of irritation.

Among other advantages to automated learning, say some of the experts, are these: the student proceeds at his own speed; difficult tasks or materials can be broken down into easy progressive steps; errors are immediately made known to the student and he

can correct them; the student becomes an active, rather than passive observer—he, and he alone must provide answers when he's face-to-face with the machine.



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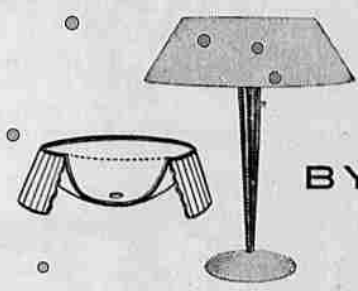
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