

P and K Chemicals Manufacturing Three Products From Limestone in Applegate

By MAUDE ZIEGLER
Mail Tribune Correspondent

Applegate Valley—The first products of a new industry for southern Oregon went on sale in Medford Wednesday from the plant of the P and K Chemicals, Inc., located on the Jacksonville-Ruch highway four miles west of Jacksonville.

Tapping a "mountain of calcite with thousands of tons of limestone" just north of the Oregon-California line at Copper in the Upper Applegate has resulted in local manufacture of a three way product, including roofing and patio gravel, poultry grit and agricultural lime, according to Harold Kezer, one of the owners of the business. Decorative rocks from the white limestone in three foot dimensions also are produced.

New Venture

Kezer's partner in the business is Ford Patterson of the Patterson Plumbing company in Medford. Kezer, who owns a ranch at Reese creek, and also had been in the building and contracting business in Medford for the past four years, said the industry represents a new business venture for both partners. The business was launched in the belief that development of the local calcite rock will bring cheaper products to roofers and farmers of Oregon by eliminating present freight costs. A Cedar Rapids crusher and double deck vibrating screen are in use at the plant. A warehouse also has been erected.

The J and R Equipment company at Ruch has contracted to quarry the calcite which is hauled 21 miles to the crusher and warehouse site near Jacksonville. Cecil Barker of Medford is trucking the rock.

Charles Kimball of Jacksonville, with Delbert Whitley and Ray Ayres, own the equipment company. Kezer said the plant, at first putting out 60 tons per day, now will operate at 100 ton capacity.

The poultry grit, manufactured in several sizes, will eliminate the use of oyster shell, Kezer explained. He pointed out that limestone furnishes the calcium which is a part of every living cell of either plant or animal life. Products of the plant will be marketed within the state, he said. The calcite, according to state tests, is 98.97 per cent pure lime, and produces a high quality fertilizer.

Process Abandoned

According to local sources, existence of the calcite deposit has been known for 45 years or more. During operation of the Blue Ledge copper mine in the area during World War I, owners of the mine started a lime kiln for smelting ore, but the process was abandoned. Until now the calcite was not marketable. A vein of the lime deposit can be seen running through the bed of the Applegate river. Local sources said the Gugenheim interests, who operated the Blue Ledge mine, also owned the area of the calcite deposit at that time.

Manufacture of the lime products at the quarry site was impossible because of a lack of electricity. The eight acre hillside location near Jacksonville, purchased from Cal-Ore ranches, was selected because it eliminated the need for conveyors, Kezer said. The Patterson plumbing office, 827 West Jackson, Medford, is the business headquarters for the firm.

4-H NEWS

A-1 Sewing Club

The A-1 4-H sewing club of Central Point met recently with six members and one visitor present. Debbie Reed was elected as an assistant to the secretary.

We selected a number for the Friendship Follies, and practiced it. Girls of the club met to cut out patterns for color holders, and to practice the number.

The next meeting will be April 11.

Ruth Wilson,
Reporter

Central Point Beef Club

The Central Point Beef 4-H club held their monthly meeting recently at the home of Carolyn Siders.

We discussed the Friendship Follies, which will be held April 8 at 8 p.m. We decided we would do "Red Wing," a square dance. We had a practice at the home of Donna Hammond, and try-outs for the Follies were held last Saturday.

Keith Hockersmith gave a talk on feeds. The next meeting will be held April 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Carolyn Siders' home on Hanley rd.

Judy Frink,
Reporter



PACKAGING—Harold Kezer, on left, and Lloyd Thornton are shown running a two-man assembly line packaging roofing gravel produced at the P and K Chemicals, Inc. plant between Jacksonville and Ruch. Kezer part owner of the enterprise, said the gravel will be marketed mostly in Oregon, along with lime and poultry grit also produced by the company. Kezer is shown filling the sacks and Thornton is operating a machine which seals the tops.



WAREHOUSE—Harold Kezer Sr. is shown stacking bags of roofing gravel at the P and K Chemicals warehouse. The business was launched on the theory that development of local calcite rock will bring cheaper products to roofers and farmers of Oregon by eliminating present freight costs.



ROCK CRUSHER—Pictured above is the rock crusher used by P and K Chemicals Inc. in producing roofing gravel, lime and poultry grit. Calcite crushed comes from a quarry near Copper in the Upper Applegate. The plant has a 100 ton per day capacity.

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Pay Less Drug—585 East Jackson
The Toy House—317 E. Main
Wainscott's Pharmacy—322 E. Main

SEE IT TODAY!

SOC Student Named Research Assistant

Ashland-Lawrence Eugene Barleen, Southern Oregon college senior, has been chosen to serve one year as a research assistant in the Washington office of Sen. Maurine B. Neuberger (D-Ore.).

Barleen was chosen by a selection committee from a group of eight candidates nominated by various Oregon colleges and universities.

The announcement was made last week by Dr. John Swarthout, dean of faculty, Portland State college, chairman of the Senator's committee. Other members include Judge Edward C. Kelly, Medford; J. W. Forrester Jr., editor, Pendleton East Oregonian; and Miss May Darling, member, Oregon state board of education.

The winner will join Senator Neuberger's staff Sept. 1, as a continuation of the internship program started by the late Sen. Richard L. Neuberger in 1955 to encourage outstanding Oregon college students to enter the field of government and public life. Candidates are recommended by the heads of the political science departments in their schools.

Barleen, son of Mr. and Mrs. L. W. Barleen, Klamath Falls, is the editor of The Siskiyou, SOC student newspaper, and president of Theta Delta Phi, men's scholastic honorary fraternity.



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