

Intensive Investigation Leads to Burglary Ring Break-Up in Area

By GREG NOKES
Mail Tribune Staff Writer
 When a Medford city police officer on routine night patrol came upon four men who were in the act of burglarizing a safe at a local supermarket last December, it set off an intensive investigation that led to the break-up of an inter-state burglary ring.

By the time police had finished with the ring, eight men—all of them from Medford—had been arrested and charged with safe burglaries in Medford, Central Point, Ashland and Happy Camp, Calif.

The discovery of the safe burglary ring merely confirmed what local police officials have known for a long time—there are lots of safe burglars in Medford.

Det. Lt. Lyle Perkins estimates there are 20 "potential" safe burglars living in Medford and vicinity. By potential Perkins means that while most of these men have records of safe burglary, not all of them are actively "engaging in their trade" at the present time.

Difficult Criminal
 The safe burglar is one of the most difficult of all criminals to catch. If he knows his trade, as most of them do, he leaves no evidence at the scene of a crime through which police can trace the crime to him.

Very often police have to rely on a "break" or stroke of luck to help catch a safe burglar. This was the case in December when a police officer happened to drive by a local supermarket at the same time it was being burglarized.

Most safe burglars are professionals in their work. The amateur or beginner will work with an experienced burglar until he knows enough to go it alone, or he will learn it while in prison, according to Lieutenant Perkins.

Safe burglary is not necessarily a lucrative business. Police estimate the lifetime wage of a full-time safe burglar at 25 cents per hour. This sum takes into account the time spent by the average burglar in prison.

Depend on Luck
 Luck has a lot to do with how much a safe burglar will make. Lieutenant Perkins said some safe burglars will find a half-dozen safes to hit them all empty, while others will net upwards of \$1,000 per burglary.

In some cities safe burglars are highly organized; while in others there is no organization at all, with each safe burglar operating on his own.

Perkins said the safe burglars who were arrested in Medford in recent months were not highly organized, but they did maintain some sort of communication with one another so that each usually knew what the others were doing. They kept a sort of informal headquarters in a local hotel.

Police were fortunate in December's supermarket burglary in that one of the four men had also operated with another group in Happy

Camp, Calif. With the information gained from this burglary, police arrested three more men in Medford and a fourth was picked up in Grants Pass.

Police Led to Another
 These four were taken into custody by Siskiyou county, California, authorities and recently faced trial in Yreka. One of these four later led local police to another safe burglar.

A convicted safe burglar in Oregon faces a prison sentence of from 1 to 10 years, depending on his prior record. Nearly every safe burglar serves some prison time during his career. Perkins said a few safe burglars are in prison more than they are out.

Each safe man has his own trademark or distinctive method of opening a safe. Some will enter a building through the roof and "peel" a safe. Others will always force open a door and "punch" a safe.

Because of this trademark, it is sometimes easy to tell who committed a particular burglary. But it is another thing to prove it.

Four Methods
 Perkins listed four methods by which a safe burglar can open a safe:

—He can peel it. This is done by pounding on the safe door with a sledge hammer until the vibrations cause one edge of the door to stick out. A crowbar is then inserted under the edge of the door, and the safe door is peeled back.

—He can punch it. This is

done by taking a sledge hammer and knocking the dial off the safe door. A rod which controls the safe mechanism is located under the dial, and if the burglar hits this rod in the right spot hard enough, it will break the safe mechanism, thereby opening the safe.

—He can burn it. This is done by merely taking an acetylene torch and burning a hole in the safe.

—He can blow it open with dynamite or nitroglycerine. Perkins said this used to be a common method of opening a safe but now that the law provides a 40-year prison sentence for burglary by explosives, this practice has lost much of its popularity.

Depends on Safe
 The length of time required to open a safe depends on the kind of safe to be opened. A top-notch safe burglar may need as much as three to four hours to open a money-chest wall safe, while he can sometimes get inside a box floor safe within three minutes.

Perkins said it is his opinion that while box floor safes are good for fire protection, most of them present no problem to the experienced burglar.

Because safe burglary is one of the most popular of crimes, police agencies have employed special methods to deal with it.

Each police department is responsible for compiling up-to-date data on every known safe burglar within its jurisdiction. This data includes his

residence, his vehicles, his friends and associates, his description, his method of operation and his criminal record.

Data Compiled
 This data is continually being compiled into book form by individual police departments and police associations, and copies are sent to other police agencies.

Also, a police department ordinarily keeps tabs on safe burglars in its area, and if one of them is seen to head out of town, an all points bulletin is sent via teletype informing other police agencies of his

direction, possible destination, fact. But police don't always know who all of the safe burglars are. Of the eight men who were arrested here recently, only two of them had previously come to the attention of police. The remaining six were apparently first offenders.

Medford police hope that with the recent arrests the activities of safe burglars may be curtailed locally. But, Perkins said it is only a matter of time until new ones crop up, or the old ones get out of prison and resume their trade.

MEDFORD TRIBUNE

SECTION D MEDFORD, OREGON, SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 1961 PAGES 1 to 8

VILLAGE VARIETY AND GARDEN SHOP
 IN THE PIGGLY WIGGLY SHOPPING CENTER
BEDDING PLANTS!
 CHECK OUR BIG SELECTION OF FRESH & HEALTHY PLANTS
 • Petunias • Pansies
 • Parsley • Lettuce
 • Tomato • Cabbage
 AND MANY, MANY OTHERS
 STORE HOURS: MON.-SAT. 9 TO 9—SUN. 10-6
OPEN TODAY 10 to 6
 JUST ARRIVED! Big Shipment of Wooden Picture Frames

Greater Utilization Of Raw Products Is Needed in Industry

Grants Pass—Greater utilization of raw forest products is the key to expanded productivity of both public and private timber lands in southern Oregon, according to reports presented recently to some 50 lumber industry representatives who met here for a combined meeting of the truck and timber committees of the Southern Oregon Conservation and Tree Farm association.

Better usage of the present 842,000,000 board feet of timber used annually by the mills in Jackson and Josephine counties could add materially to local payrolls, it was pointed out.

Improved logging and milling practices and equipment in the past 10 to 20 years has added materially to the value of the average acre of harvested timber, but even greater research is needed to develop new techniques and new uses for presently unusable by-products of the forests.

Serves as Chairman
 Glen Duesen, Kopag, head of the timber committee, SOCTFA, served as chairman of the meeting, which attracted both public and private timber managers from Jack-

son and Josephine counties. Darrell Davis, chairman of the truck committee, acted as co-chairman of the meeting, and presented a detailed report on action taken by the committee to resist legislation on the state and national level which, if enacted, could place undo taxes and restrictions on the lumber industry, the prime economic factor in both counties.

Details of several research projects in forest practices and regeneration studies were reviewed by spokesmen at the meeting in response to a question relative to the reforestation job being done on both public and private lands in southern Oregon.

Scarcity of Seed
 Scarcity of seed sources, weevil infestations, difficult terrain and adaptability of seed to the area were cited as reasons for the difficulty in securing a high percentage of regeneration on cutover lands. Most of the lumber men were optimistic about the job being done in spite of difficulties encountered, but stressed the need for continued research in the field.

Cal Smith, Industrial Forestry association, a private industry sponsored lumber organization active in tree farming, reported on the work being done by the Roseburg experiment station in genetics, and pointed out the need for more work on the problem of eradication of brush on cutover lands which takes nourishment, water and sunlight from seedling trees, and creates other problems in reforestation.

Committee Named To Judge Entries

Members of the judging committee for the Oregon-Nevada-California-Southern California freight lines \$500 scholarship have been announced by C. C. Proctor, southern Oregon ONC-So. Cal. sales representative.

Headed by Alf B. Mekvold, Jackson county school superintendent, the committee consists of Donald E. Faber, G. A. Cottingham, Archie C. Fries, O. A. Eden, Dean Anderson and John R. Reid.

The panel of judges will select one student from the Jackson county area to receive a \$500 scholarship for the 1961-62 school year. The award is one of 26 such educational grants given throughout Oregon, Nevada and California to high school seniors who will graduate this spring and attend college in the fall.

Proctor said recipients of the awards may attend any four-year college or university in the country, and that there is no condition concerning educational endeavor.

Applications are available at Medford, Phoenix, Crater, Eagle Point, Prospect, Ashland, Butte Falls and St. Mary's High schools. Candidates from Rogue River High are included in the Grants Pass terminal area.

All applications must be submitted by May 15.

PENNEY'S

ALWAYS FIRST QUALITY!

Begin your summer lounging with patio furniture that's way

ahead in SAVINGS . . . VALUE . . . STYLING . . . COMFORT

SPECIAL! WEB CHAISE LOUNGE!

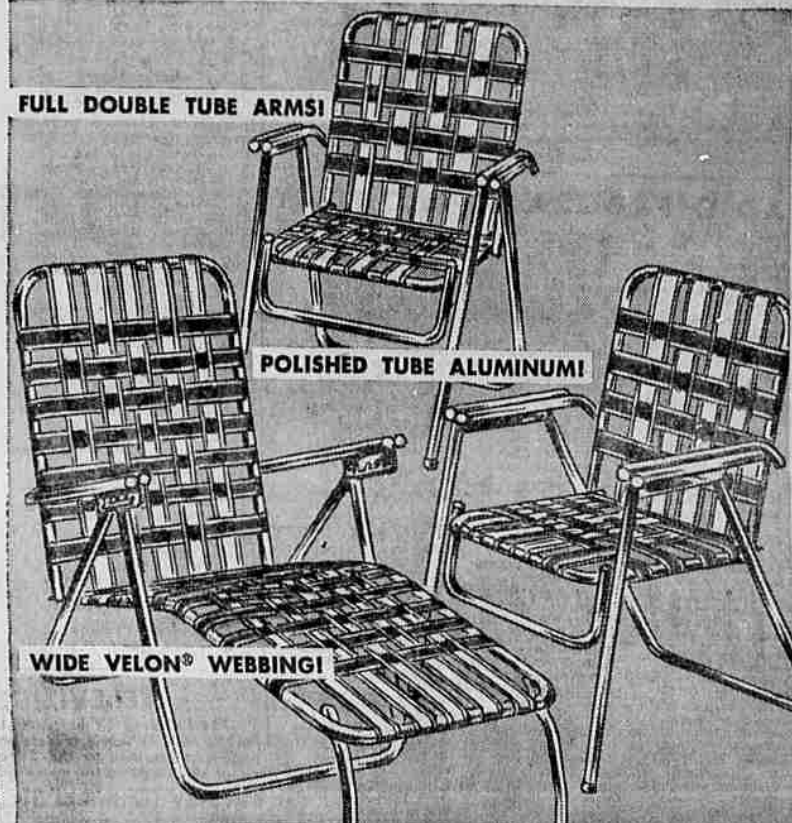
Sit back and relax on Penney's new chaise of lightweight tubular aluminum . . . (double tube arms) . . . 5 straps wide and 16 straps long assure you sturdy and long-lasting satisfaction . . . straps of poly webbing in green/white, turquoise/white, yellow/white to coordinate handsomely with any patio decor. Handy folding . . . for easy storage . . . and carrying. 4-position adjustment.

8⁸⁸

WEB FOLDING CHAIR!

Sturdy web patio chair (double tube arms) at a new low price! Lightweight tubular aluminum and long-life plastic webbing in green/white, turquoise/white, and yellow/white. Folds for storage . . . cleans easily.

4⁸⁸



FULL DOUBLE TUBE ARMS!

POLISHED TUBE ALUMINUM!

WIDE VELON® WEBBING!

SPECIAL! INNERSPRING LOUNGE

A lounge that invites you to relax . . . designed to give comfort and never a weather worry. 2-pc. innerspring cushions upholstered in heavy vinyl print . . . sturdy double bar construction . . . strap and helical supports . . . big easy roll wheels.

22⁸⁸

SPECIAL! Padded Lounge

5 POSITION BACK ADJUSTOR!
 Real value! Aluminum tube frame folds easily for storage! Plus comfortable cotton filled plastic covered chaise pad. Charge it today!

14⁸⁸



heavy steel bowl, tubular steel legs, chrome-plated, crank-lift grid, draft control, sturdy steel twin-leg frame, 5 1/2-inch rubber-tire wheels

24-INCH OVEN BARBEQUE

Cook outdoors the tasty way with our fine motorized spit on a big portable brazier. Copertone-finish hood, adjustable grill, U.L. approved motor. Terrific!

16⁸⁸

REPLACEMENT LOUNGE PADS

HEAVY VINYL PRINT COVER!
 It's easy to make your old lounge look new with a large 24"x72" replacement pad. Heavy vinyl print covering is waterproof and easily cleaned . . . smart button tufted . . . cotton and foam filler.

6⁹⁸

7 FT. GARDEN UMBRELLAS

Supper on the patio . . . to enjoy your summer to its fullest you will want this big 7' umbrella with 3-position push-button tilt, polished aluminum pole, 8 sturdy ribs. Laminated plastic top of solid colors with large floral print underside.

22⁹⁸

42" STEEL TABLE 14.98

CHARGE IT! DON'T MISS OUT ON A SINGLE ONE OF THESE TERRIFIC SAVINGS!

VETERANS

IF YOU HAVE APPLIED FOR A

G. I. LOAN

BE SURE TO GET YOUR TITLE REPORTS FROM THE . . .

JACKSON COUNTY TITLE CO.

YOUR LOCALLY OWNED TITLE COMPANY

121 East Sixth Street • Phone SP 3-4551

TITLE INSURANCE • ESCROWS

Jackson County's Oldest and Most Reliable Title Company

Established 1885