

Center Now Being Developed Will Be For Blind Persons

The rehabilitation center for the blind now being developed on the Jackson county fairgrounds would make its services available to blind persons of all ages and include certain services for other local disability groups. Clyde E. Richardson, counselor for the division of vocational rehabilitation, noted last week.

He told the 20 people present at the Red Cross building in Medford that the program also would include the senior citizens "insofar as such groups can be fitted into the facility's program of services to blind persons."

He outlined the proposed services for the blind from the seven-county area of Josephine, Jackson, Douglas, Coos, Curry, Lake and Klamath counties.

Program Outlined

The program will (1) serve those with limited potential capacity, (2) assist people in meeting demands of daily living, (3) teach the techniques for self-care, and (4) provide limited employment opportunities. He told the groups which included service club representatives, public agency officials and physicians, that the services will not be limited to any one of the above areas, but will touch on four basic areas of rehabilitation: (1) medical, (2) psychiatric and psychological, (3) social, and (4) vocational depending on the needs of the individual served.

Clifford A. Stocker, administrator for the state commission for the blind, emphasized that the commission would not expand its personnel, but is relying on volunteer help from the seven county districts.

State Allocation

The state has allocated \$40,000 for the rehabilitation work in this area, he said. This covers case services, salaries and wages and materials. The salaries would cover a full-time secretary here, Richardson, who will continue to operate out of Portland, and a home teacher, Stocker explained.

This is a pilot program which may be tried in other sections of the state if it is successful here, it was explained.

Currently, volunteer help is needed to remodel one of the older fair buildings, Stocker said. This includes cement work, electrical wiring and carpentry.

Comes With Age

Richardson noted that blindness often comes with age. He estimated that 50 per cent of the visually handicapped people in Oregon are past the employable age.

He admitted that fitting blind or visually handicapped people into the fruit and lumber industry is a real problem. Blindness affects a great cross-section of people, he noted.

The county court has not yet appointed a blind rehabilitation committee, but Stocker outlined some proposed subcommittees. These include volunteer services, ophthalmological advisory committee, publicity and public relations, legal advisory, employment, building, program development, procurement and legislative.

Executive Officer Of Unit Promoted

The Sixth Army, Presidio of San Francisco, has announced the promotion of Donald E. Gray, Medford from captain to major. He is serving as executive officer, second battalion, 414th regiment, 104th Division (Inf). He formerly commanded Company F of the same unit.

Major Gray entered military service in 1938 with the Medford unit of the Oregon National Guard. He was called to active duty in 1940, as a corporal, Company A, 186th Infantry, Oregon National Guard.

In 1944, he was commissioned a second lieutenant infantry at Ft. Benning, Ga. His decorations include the Combat Infantry badge, Bronze Star, four battle stars for the Aleutians, Rhineland and the Central Europe campaigns. Major Gray graduated from the Advanced Infantry Course, Ft. Benning, in 1958.

Following his release from active duty in 1945, Major Gray has been active in reserve activities in this area.

Members of the second battalion, 414th regiment, commanded by Lt. Col. John F. Hush, Medford, left for Camp Roberts, Calif., recently.

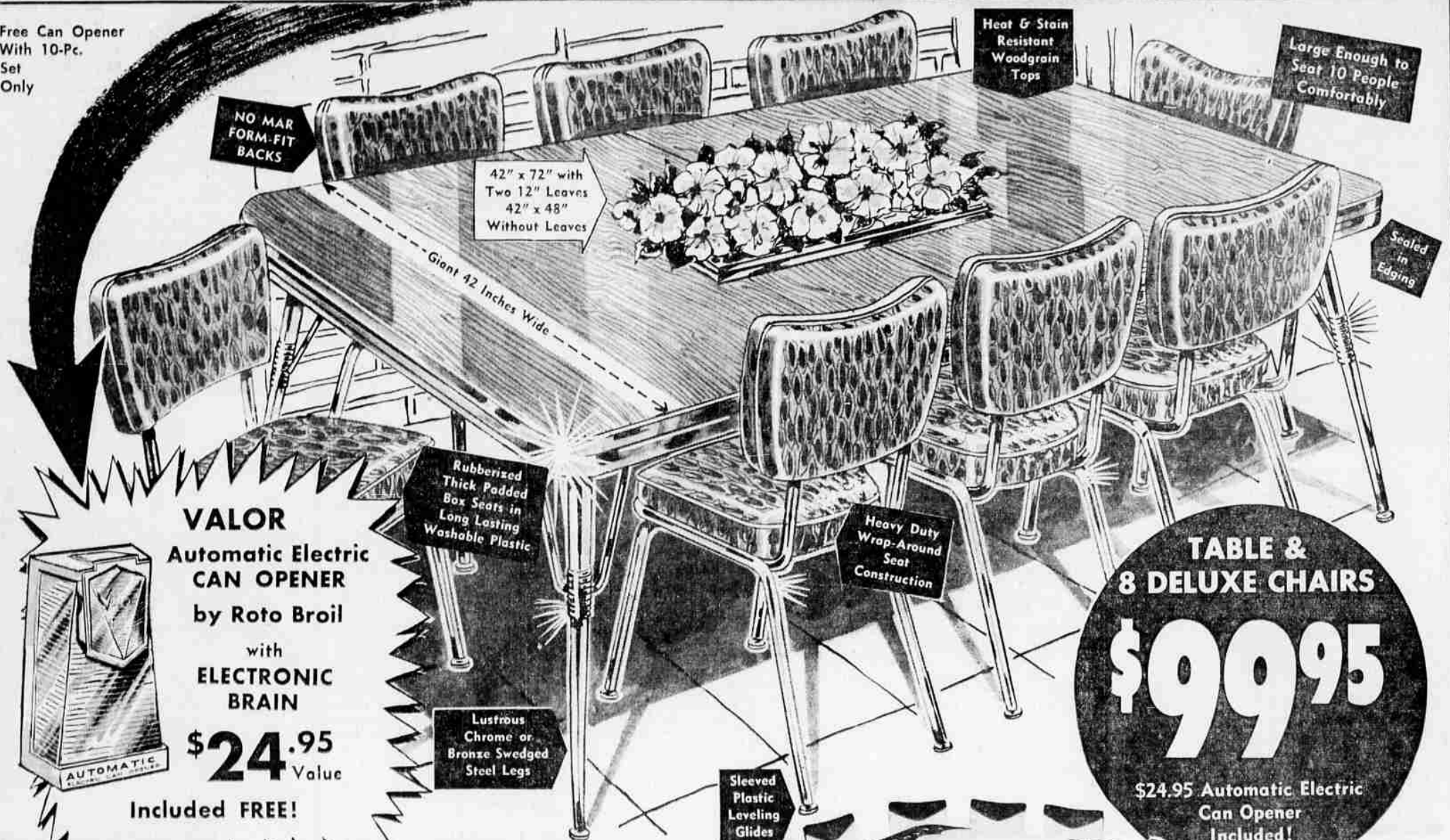
Capt. Donald F. Burrell, regular Army advisor, accompanied the unit to the training site. An advance party of the group left Medford previously.

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