

# Weather, Or Its Offspring, Voted Top News Story of Past Year

The weather during the past year had more of an effect on area residents than any other news happening. The weather, in the natural course of events, always makes the news columns; but this year, the weather made more news than in the past, and as a result, it, and its fury, was considered the top news story of the year by Mail Tribune news department personnel.

The effects of the weather during the year will be felt for many years in the future.

It all started last January when sub-zero temperatures, on top of about a 10-inch snow-fall, persisted for several days, winter-killing many shrubs and household plants, freezing water pipes and cars and running heating bills higher.

The spring generally was cool.

## Temperature Sets New Record

Then suddenly the temperature went to 100 degrees or more for 10 consecutive days, setting a new record in Medford.

It turned cool again (cool, considering it was summer time).

And three months ago the wind blew, and earlier this month it rained.

And people still are talking about the Columbus Day wind storm, and the Dec. 2 flood along Bear creek and Little Butte creek in the Eagle Point area.

All but one member of the news department selected the weather, or one of its playful offspring, as the top news story of the year. Some staff members selected the Oct. 12 wind storm, others named the Dec. 2 flood, and others just indicated "weather." One staff member rated the postmastership discussion the No. 1 story, and the Dec. 2 flood second.

## Highway Construction Ranks High

Highway construction, especially work on the freeway, was rated the second top story of the year by 7 of the 12 people voting. The defeat of the home rule charter was rated second by two members, while politics, the Rogue Basin project and the Dec. 2 flood received a vote each as the second top story.

Third, fourth and fifth place news stories during the year included five stories with progress in education breaking into the top five stories for the first time in several years.

Five staff members rated the Rogue Basin project the third top story. Other third-rated stories included education, three votes; freeway, two votes; the Tiller mountain slide, and the Medford-Alba, Italy, exchanges, one each.

Five staff members rated education as the fourth ranked story. Three members rated the defeat of the home rule charter as the fourth story, and one vote each was cast for the Alba-Medford exchange, hospital and other buildings, the Tiller mountain slide, and Marvin Madden and the postmastership.

## Fifth Ranked Varies Greatly

The fifth ranked news story of the year varied greatly among staff members. Three believed politics ranked fifth, three others believed the home rule charter defeat was fifth, and two rated the Sabin oral polio vaccine fifth. Receiving one vote each were the McGahuey execution, the Madden-post office argument, the Winemucca to the Sea highway, and progress in education.



Miss Wyatt creates one of top stories.

The story of a girl who stepped from Jacksonville to Atlantic City received 6 of the 12 votes as the top human interest story of the year.

It was the first time in several years that a girl from Oregon placed in the top 10 in the Miss America contest. To get to the national contest, Miss Martha Wyatt won the Miss Rogue Valley and the Miss Oregon contests.

The other four first place votes for the best human interest story went to the Leroy Sanford McGahuey execution — the trial, sentence and the appeals attempting to prevent the execution.

## Second Top Human Interest Story

The McGahuey execution was ranked second top human interest story by six staff members. Two others rated the Marty Wyatt story as second, and the rest of the votes went to the sister city program, Mrs. Ann Todd, the story of the death of a Grants Pass woman and her two children, and fires, especially the case involving a series of 12 fires in Jackson and Josephine counties.

The sister city program, principally the telephone call via Telstar to Alba, Italy, was rated third most interesting human interest story by seven staff members.

Other third place votes went to Democratic in-party disagreements, the story of the death of a Grants Pass woman and children, the unsolved Crater Lake murders, Mrs. Todd's trial early in the year, and a baby being abandoned by a Grants Pass woman in a Medford park restroom.

## Nine Stories Vie For Fourth

Nine different stories shared honors for the fourth ranked human interest story during the year.

Two votes each were cast for the story of a Grants Pass mother abandoning her baby in a Medford park, the Mrs. Ann Todd story, and the Tiller mountain slide.

One vote each was cast for stories about Miss Oregon, the sister city program, the McGahuey execution, the Dec. 2 flood, a Grants Pass boy taking a plane and flying it to California, and increased interest in fallout shelters.

Six staff members voted the story about the abandoned baby in a rest room in a Medford park as the fifth ranked human interest story, while the other six votes were distributed among six different stories. They were the Tiller mountain slide, the death of a Grants Pass mother and her children, Marty Wyatt, no progress in the Crater Lake murder case, the Sabin oral vaccine clinics, and fires, especially the series of fires in Jackson and Josephine counties.

A month by month review of news happenings in this area follows.



Wind damage is extensive in area on Oct. 12.

## January

Intensification of mosquito control planned ... 1,500 visit Howard Prairie lake for ice skating ... Testimony ends in escrow company case ... 793 business lists in Medford

Harry Skerry Jr. heads Jackson county Bar association ... Jackson Hotel scheduled to reopen ... Medford High school grandstand fund reaches halfway mark ... Revised copies of Jackson County Home Rule charter received by committee members

Local meeting planned to discuss fallout shelters ... Driver Improvement school to start ... Planners ask for coordinator for Bear Creek project ... Irrigation water outlook satisfactory ... Work schedule set for Rogue Basin project

C. O. Lovejoy reelected president of Jackson county planning commission ... Janis Bateman wins state Elks leadership contest ... Zone change to permit Safeway store denied by planners

Eagle Point plans old time political rally ... Community survey to be conducted concerning fallout shelters ... Bomb threat reported by J. P. Penney store ... Several inches of snow deposited in valley overnight ... Home rule committee to submit charter to voters in May

More snow forecast ... Welfare officials discuss pilot program ... Expansion of jail facilities to be studied ... Cold temperatures freeze many pipes ... Steel beams to be placed on freeway

Temporary ice rink constructed in Hawthorne park ... Warming trend to continue ... H. D. Christensen named chairman of school budget committee ... Eagle Point woman dies in home fire

Improvements planned at airport ... Enrichment classes for gifted students to begin at Southern Oregon college

## February

Archie Fries named man of year in Ashland ... Mrs. Ann Todd fined by Judge Sawyer ... Bengston scheduled to start sentence ... Iron Gate project on Klamath River dedicated ... Hatfield to speak at distinguished service award banquet ... Site surveyed for new federal building here ... Cold weather paralyzes employment in county ... Area future farmers plan European trip ... Dr. Doug P. Phillips awarded distinguished service award, Elliott Becken named Senior citizen ... Minor changes made in Home Rule charter

Edwin R. Durno enters Senate race ... Two Medford men killed in two car crash ... 100 persons attend Jacksonville town meeting ... Federal agencies support Rogue Basin project ... Charter to be signed by committee ... Parks and recreation commission requests Bear Creek land for park projects ... Multi-purpose stadium suggested ... Grants Pass industrial park to get electronics firm ... John Snider named head of committee to encourage sister city relations ... Mountain slide near Tiller slowly slides ... Medford High school seniors named to academic honors ... Southern Oregon expects to receive federal recreation funds ... Work starts to widen south Riverside ave. ... Medford school district general fund of \$4,253,022 approved ... Ashland plans adoption of sister city ... Three saved-a-life awards presented at Safety Council banquet



The sister city program ranked high among stories during the year.

quies ... Mrs. Ann Todd found guilty of disturbing public meeting ... Mrs. Fred E. Rankin named Zonta club woman of year ... Agate dam project reported favorable from Senate committee ... Complaints of wrong blood transfusions filed against Ashland General hospital ... Outdoor classes for grade school students said possibility.

## March

Self-evaluation report given on Jackson school ... Work begins to bring direct distance dialing to area ... Jackson House, former Jackson Hotel, opens ... Medford council calls for vote on annexation of area southwest of town ... Paul Bettiol to attend FBI school of law enforcement ... Rehabilitation center for blind discussed ... Water forecast revised down ... Preliminary work starts on county budget ... Southern Oregon college use of Old Ashland General hospital indicated ... New building proposed for Sacred Heart hospital ... Agate dam bill gets approval in Senate ... Mrs. Edward C. Mary Kelly named to national board of Woman's Medical college, Philadelphia, Pa. ... Douglas F. Gordenier elected president of United Crusade ... Magnolia trees planted in downtown Medford ... Phoenix school budget approved ... New signs to designate Rogue valley recreation areas ... Pacific Power and Light company announces extensive area building program ... Public hearing set on District 6 school budget ... Crater High school plans new stadium seating ... Siskiyou county declared depressed area ... New rating to reduce fire insurance costs ... Grants Pass High school wins state basketball tournament ... Janis Bateman places third in National Elks Youth Leadership contest ... Ford Foundation support expected for Oregon education project ... Peary suffer some injury from winter cold ... Medford school district budget adopted ... Funds asked for expanded mental health unit ... County Commissioner Edwin Taylor opposes con-



Sabin oral polio vaccine administered in county.



Interstate highway extension continues.



A downtown building makes way for new offices.

(Continued on page 7A)