

Dennis the Menace



"JOEY WAS LOOKIN' AT THE TOP OF THE GIRAFFE AN HE FELL OVER BACKWARDS!"

Area's Economic Benefits From Outdoor Recreation Reviewed

The business and professional leaders of the area should spearhead efforts to develop recreational facilities in Jackson county, according to Laurance Espey, chairman of the county parks and recreation commission.

Addressing the Chamber of Commerce Roundtable at its Monday noon luncheon at North's Chuck Wagon, Espey outlined the economic benefits that can accrue to an area if its outdoor recreation facilities are developed.

Neil Ledward, county parks and recreation director, and George Brenner, bureau of municipal research planning consultant assigned to Jackson county, discussed work that is currently under way in county facilities in preparation for the coming summer, as well as plans for future development of certain recreation sites.

Espey said he was pleased with the work that has been accomplished so far to en-

hance Oregon's recreation potential, and was "optimistic" in particular about the future of recreation in Medford and Jackson county.

The speaker displayed a number of pamphlets and brochures dealing with the state and local recreation programs, many of which were designed to attract tourists to this region.

He lauded a number of private firms in the state, notably Pacific Power and Light company, Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone company, U.S. National bank and the First National bank, for their efforts in publicizing and fostering the state's recreational potential.

Commission Formed
Espey recalled that when the parks and recreation commission was first appointed by the county court nearly four years ago, the group "had difficulty justifying expenditures."

"But one season after the recreation facilities at Howard Prairie and Emigrant lakes were opened for use," Espey said, "it was easy to be seen that those persons interested in outdoor recreation in this area were not just a minority group."

He said that 213,000 visitors were recorded at Howard Prairie alone last year. Of that figure, some 40 per cent came from nearby counties and 22 per cent of the visitors came from California.

All of this goes to "raise the total area income," he said, since those same people who visited Howard Prairie also spent money elsewhere in the area for such things as gasoline, groceries and lodging.

"Some people would have this area remain as it is now," Espey said, "but in a sense we are all newcomers. We can't build a wall around Jackson county; we must share it with others."

Business people, the speaker pointed out, "are in the best position to increase tourism in this area with friendly hospitable manner," but he said that "too many show an indifferent attitude."

He cited outdoor recreation as being beneficial to youth in developing healthy attitudes. "This is one good way to combat juvenile delinquency," he said.

Espey urged an overall, detailed recreation development plan for Jackson county, one which would apply the "multi-purpose principle."

Opening Date

Ledward announced that facilities at Howard Prairie will open this year on the week end before the opening of fishing season on April 20 to enable fishermen to get their camps established well in advance of the expected rush on opening day.

The director also outlined the development of certain facilities at Howard Prairie, such as riding and hiking trails, parking spaces, picnic areas and boat launch ramps, which are either being built now or are projected for the future.

Brenner said that his office is currently working on an economic base study for the county, and that he hopes soon to be able to prepare a plan for the possible devel-

opment of Bear creek from Emigrant lake to Rogue river. Such a plan, he said, would

tie in with the work that the city park and recreation department is planning for Bear creek within Medford.

"By this time next year," Brenner said, "we expect to

have some specific proposals and suggestions to make to you."

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Your Money's Worth

By SYLVIA PORTER
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OUR OBSOLETE VOCATIONAL-EDUCATION SYSTEM

With a few notable exceptions, the vocational-education schools of our country are appallingly obsolete, dreadfully equipped, staffed by overworked, undertrained instructors, geared to teaching the archaic skills of the 1930s rather than the realistic skills of the 1960s.

Yet, these are the schools on which we are relying to train hundreds of thousands of jobless men and women under the 1962 Manpower Development and Training Act so they can get off the unemployment rolls and become capable of filling the jobs which will be available.

There are exceptions to this indictment of a key part of our educational system: among the most publicized are the systems of Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Denver. But by any yardstick in this area, most vocational-education schools are just not adequate to perform the essential job of training for today's jobs both the young and old unskilled worker.

"The vocational schools and administrators were a major stumbling block from the very start of our work under the training program," remarked Max M. Horton, director of the Michigan Employment Security Commission, during my recent visit to his office in Detroit.

"Under the 1962 law no funds were specifically earmarked to develop any appropriate curriculum for training, and remembering the mess they had with veterans' training after World War II, many of the administrators were reluctant to cooperate. But surely, of all 'first things first' in a training program, the selection of appropriate courses should be first! We had to rely on the help of instructors already overworked and in an overloaded field. We found many of the teachers themselves had to be retrained to teach the courses needed, and how were we to go about that? The facilities were so inferior or useless it was heartbreaking. We have had to abandon training programs for jobs that exist in Detroit right now because we cannot get the needed facilities and teachers."

Every word Horton said is being echoed by other dedicated officials in the manpower field the nation over—and in the April issue of "Harper's Magazine," Edward T. Chase writes one of the most scathing indictments of our vocation system ever.

The vocation schools, says Chase, are "a national scandal." They are training youths in moribund skills, in effect turning "millions of young people into unemployables."

As Horton pointed out to me, so Chase emphasizes that a third of all vocational-education funds (federal, state and local combined) are still spent on training farmers at a time when only one applicant out of 10 can ever hope to find a job on a farm when he leaves school.

The system is "fantastically biased" in favor of farming and home economics. "So archaic is most of the training given in vocational schools," Chase declares, "that unions in the printing, plumbing, food and other trades refuse to give credit for it."

What can be done? Plenty—and you can do plenty on your own.

A simple but potentially immensely effective move, which Horton urges, would be a regional survey of our vocational schools to find out just how adequate the equipment, courses, instructors may be. Any local group can initiate this. Leaders of industry and of unions throughout the country should be eager to help, for surely they want schools to turn out employable men and women, not unemployables.

Another simple but potentially immensely effective move, which Chase urges, would be a major inventory of jobs and skills in demand in every section of the nation by the U.S. Employment Service so we can launch a truly practical training program. Whatever this inventory would cost would be repaid many times over in new paychecks and extra tax collections.

There are weaknesses in the Manpower Training Act, and in this first year we have discovered that among the greatest are its failure to touch the fundamental problem of literacy among the unemployed and its reliance on an antiquated vocational education system to do a modern job.

Now we must work at eliminating these weaknesses—for let us not ever shrug off the central fact that in this age of skills, not even a business boom will offer jobs to that "hard core" who are neither literate nor skilled.

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By CLAY R. POLLAN			
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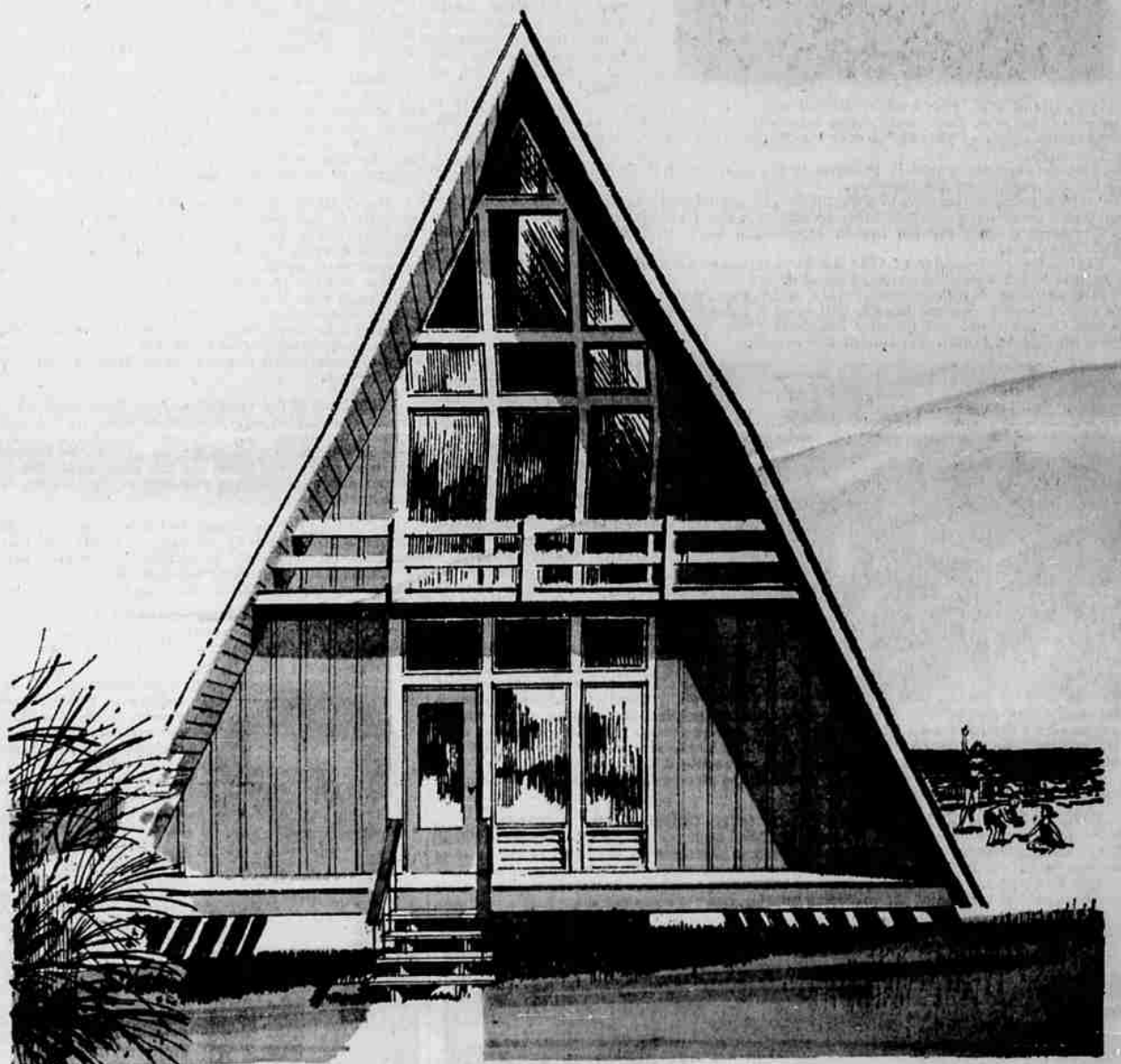
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