

Klamath Juvenile Court Rates High In Oregon

(Editor's Note: This is the second of three articles prepared by the League of Women Voters of Klamath county on "Know Your Community—The Juvenile Court.")

Under the Oregon juvenile court structure, Klamath county ranks among the five counties with the highest standards. Multnomah county, with its court of domestic relations, ranks first. However, Klamath, Marion, Clackamas and Lane counties, which have juvenile jurisdiction vested in the circuit court, retain many of the good features of a domestic court. The same judge hears cases of divorce, adults charged with contributing to the delinquency of minors and other domestic matters which many times are part of the same case for which the minor has been charged with delinquency or dependency. The judge of a circuit court is required to be a lawyer. Thirty Oregon counties have juvenile court jurisdiction vested with the county court which does not have jurisdiction over other domestic matters. It is not necessary for the judge of the county court to be a lawyer.

Klamath county is one of 10 Oregon counties which employ a full-time juvenile officer. One county employs a part-time juvenile officer and the other 24 counties have no probation staff.

The Klamath county juvenile court staff consists of Judge David R. Vandenberg. As judge of the circuit court, he is judge of the juvenile court. He is elected every six years on a non-partisan ballot; Juvenile Officer Gerald Murray, on leave to U. S. army since March 1942. He was appointed in 1941 and was a former recreation officer. Appointment and duties of probation officers are in Sec. 93-607 Oregon law. No qualifications are set forth for said officer, although Sec. 93-606, pertaining to officers appointed in counties of over 200,000 population, states they shall be "discreet persons of good moral character." Under this same section it defines the duties of a probation officer as making investigations of children charged with delinquency or dependency for the district attorney, to be present in court in the interest of the child when the case is heard, to furnish the court any information or assistance the judge may require and to take charge of the child before or after the trial as the court may desire. He is appointed by the judge. His salary is set and paid by the county court. Probation officers have the power of peace officers.

Deputy Juvenile Officer Faye Lucas. She has the same personnel status as the juvenile officer. She has been on the court staff seven years, first as stenographer and for the past four years as deputy. It is considered a progressive feature that Klamath county has a woman to handle cases of girls. (Note: This county uses the title "juvenile officer" instead of "probation officer.")

Stenographer-Clerk Faye Gibson.

In talking with the various law enforcement agencies of

Klamath county, it was learned that this county is diligent in seeing that exclusive original jurisdiction is vested in the juvenile court. The city and state police cooperate by assisting with the police work of the juvenile court, as does the county sheriff. The petitions against children are issued in the district attorney's office after investigation by the juvenile officer.

Oregon law provides that juvenile proceedings shall be private and separate from trial of adults. We are informed by reliable officials that this is the case in Klamath county. Although we did not ask to inspect the confidential records of either the juvenile court or the juvenile officer, we were told by the clerk of the court that records of juvenile cases are kept separate from other circuit court records as provided for by law.

In this court the practice of "continuing cases" is observed in order that the child may be given every opportunity for avoiding a permanent record wherein he is adjudicated "delinquent." The juvenile officer showed the chairman of the committee the record system. It consists of book entry narratives for all cases investigated and individual records for case openings. Although the Oregon law makes no provision for the confidential nature of such records, we are told by the juvenile officer that such records are considered confidential social records. It is difficult to draw conclusions from statistical reports comparing the various counties of Oregon because there is no uniform method of keeping such records; however, we are presenting the court's statistics as a matter of interest:

Year	Number of cases	Delinquent & pre-delinquent	Dependent	Investigations	Juvenile Court hearings	Committed to institutions
1943	182	119	63	488	79	12
1944	240	170	70	490	179	13
1945	298	209	89	474	118	13

Quoting from "Study of Delinquency in Lane County," prepared November 12, 1942, by the Lane County League of Women Voters: "One of the fundamental purposes of juvenile court legislation has been to protect children in care of the court from associating with adult criminals." In order to prevent undue detention of minors, the Klamath county juvenile staff is on 24-hour duty to make immediate arrangements for the custody of the child until the hearing. In most cases he is released in the care of his parents, unless otherwise provided. Under Oregon Sec. 93-615, it is unlawful to

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detain a child under the age of 14 in the enclosure of a jail or police station or in the same building or enclosure with adult criminals.

The detention cottage, where juvenile offenders are lodged pending hearing, is operated by the county court. The committee visited the facility, which is part of the county farm, and found a modern, attractive set of buildings. The grounds are pleasantly landscaped and the living quarters consist largely of cottages grouped about a central administration building. The dining room is very attractive and cheerful. The county library maintains a branch. The juvenile detention cottage consists of four bedrooms, each with two

cots, a reception hall and a bathroom. The building was described by Mr. Morrison, who has been the superintendent for 13 years, as being completely fireproof. For more difficult offenders, there is a cell in the administration building. Supervision of the facility will be improved when more staff becomes available.

FOWL PLAY
DUQUOIN, Ill., May 3 (AP)—Farmer J. Wesley Tucker wasn't complaining too much when he reported to police that a thief stole 14 of his chickens. Tucker said that the robber who invaded his henhouse left in such a hurry he dropped his purse, which contained \$13.14.

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April Weather Hot And Dry

April 1946 was a strange combination of weather. It was the driest April since 1939, and had the highest maximum (83 degrees) since 1934. There were seven cloudy days, 12 partly cloudy and 11 clear days during the month. Minimum temperature, 27 degrees, was the lowest since 1943. Precipitation was only .08 of an inch, with average for April .91 of an inch.

Mean temperature for the month was 48.9 degrees, the highest since 1943 when 49.8 degrees mean monthly was recorded. Normal monthly mean is 46.5.

April 24 was the hottest day this year and April 2 and 30 were the coldest days of the month.

U. S. bureau of reclamation reservoirs showed an increase of 69,890 acre feet total storage water as of May 1, 1946, over that recorded on the same date last year.

Upper Klamath lake: 324,300

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acre feet May 1, 1945; 393,240 acre feet, May 1, 1946. Clear lake, 293,340 acre feet, May 1, 1945, 297,680 acre feet, May 1, 1946. Gerber: 70,330 acre feet May 1, 1946, 66,850 acre feet May 1, 1946.

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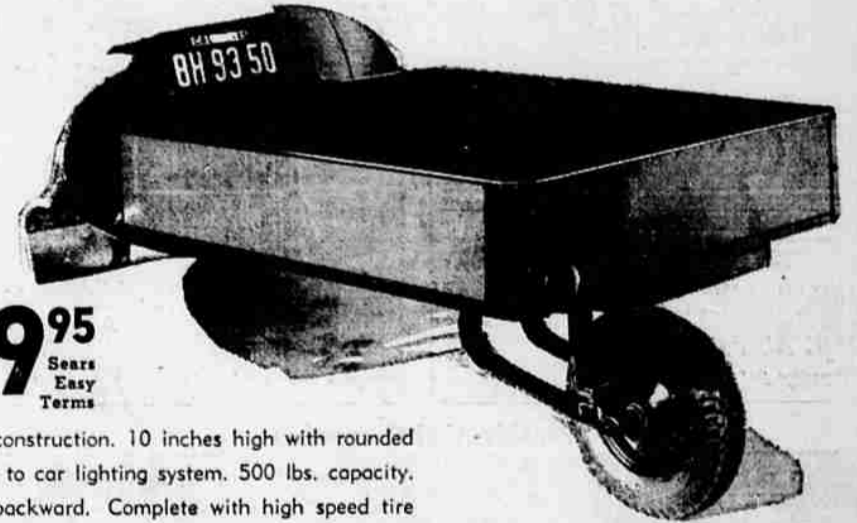
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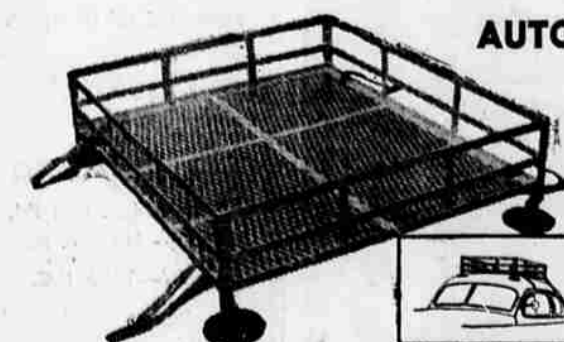
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