Herald and News

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BILLBOARD

By BILL JENKINS

Enjoy your winters at home department: Ran into Emmett Sivemore the other day on his return from a vacation down in the sunny south. Seems that he took out of here looking for warm weather, but when he got as far as Indio ran into a stream of people fleeing Arizona — also looking for warm weather.

So he stayed where he was, right there in sunny California. But he wore a wool shirt every day and a jacket at night.

Shucks, it's been nicer than that right here.

Fred Pope came out of his winter hiding to appear at a rump meeting of the social improvement, breeze shooting and you-can't-do-it-again club where he reported on the recent bull sale at Red Bluff. Says it was quite a gathering of the select and a good time was had by all, as the old stories always said.

Last time we went to a bull sale down there it rained twenty four hours a day, flooded the roads and also our motel over at Oak grove where we were staying.

But even at that, it's quite a show. Well worth attending even though you don't buy a carload of bulls.

Joe Matlick is back from his annual trek to the Midwest, bringing with him a first hand story of the new stickers being hung on the cars back there. "Vote Democratic, The Farm You Save May Be Your Own."

Wonder how long the people can go on singing the blues without getting in a real blue mood? Good thing 1953 was a near record year so there is enough money floating around to finance expensive political campaigns and plans.

All during the summer we thought dogs spent their time lying in the middle of the street because it was warm. Apparently this was the wrong outlook.

Because they spend just as much time lying in the middle of winter's icy streets. Quite a chore dodging 'em on your way to work.

Maybe it's sort of a game with 'em. Like Russian roulette with humans.

Had the first flat tire in two years the other early morning while coming to work. At least had the advantage of being close enough to home that I could hike back and get a gasoline lantern to light up the scene instead of having to fumble the wheels on and off in the dark. First handy one I can remember having.

But it was still cold.

Fred Pope was complaining that he was reading too much in this column about mouse shooting and saying we should get a new topic, like changing ammunition or something. Okay, anything for a Pope. We are now using a pistol instead of a rifle. The mice are doing fine.

CAUGHT IN THE ROUNDS

By DEB ADDISON

RETAIL MEMO:

The first month of 1954 has afforded merchants an opportunity to give some evaluation to selling prospects and buying plans that lie ahead, says Women's Wear Daily.

Buying office people point out that retail sales are running ahead of market orders. Orders placed in January and now in stock are being watched carefully for trends. If customer response turns good in the next 20 days, retailers will burn up the wires for replacements.

January business in Klamath Falls, as you get it from street corner reports, runs everywhere from better than a year ago to 20, and even 30, percent under 1953.

The only authentic report we can give you is for Herald and News advertising. It fell 12.4 percent under January 1953; there was one less publishing day, 26 this year and 27 last.

Manufacturers do not intend to wait out the predicted slump in economy, but will fight any decline by intensifying sales efforts. Spokesmen interviewed by the Journal of Commerce said that they expected a general step-up in advertising and marketing expenditures this year.

Sales forces, they said, are being expanded. Robert F. Elder, Boston marketing consultant, predicted total advertising volume would jump from $7.5 billion in 1952 to eight billion dollars this year.

"Not only is this a very large amount of money," he said, "but it's critically important money. Its job is to catalyze the high level of consumption that we need to sustain a prosperous, high-level peacetime economy."

Elder pointed to an even more concrete reason why companies will spend more in 1954. "We are going to keep more of our profits in 1954 than we did in 1953 so, therefore, we will spend more as long as it is productive."

Aggregate circulation of daily newspapers in the United States rose to a new high of 54,472,286 copies in 1953. This is an increase of 521,671 — or about a one percent gain.

The figure was calculated on the basis of 1,785 daily newspapers listed in the Editor & Publisher International Yearbook for 1954.

Herald and News circulation in 1953 was up nearly three percent over 1952. The gain came in the last half of the year. If was the first gain, incidentally, since 1948. (A sharp-pencilled gent from Audit Bureau of Circulations is due here any day; figures aren't final until he says so.)

The tourist business, which is supposed to be of economic importance in Oregon second only to lumbering, and of economic importance in Klamath third only to agriculture and lumbering, is almost synonymous with motoring.

The Automobile Manufacturers Association states that 80 percent of all vacation trips are taken by auto. Tourist business in Klamath probably would run higher than 80 percent by car. That's no reflection on our excellent train and plane service. This is just a country to see by automobile, as far as vacations go.

AMA says that when mom, pop and the offspring hop into the family buggy for a two week holiday, their expenditures run something like $140 per person.

The breakdown of the motorist's dollar (and it does break down fast enough when you're touring) is like this in cents out of a dollar: Meals 29, transportation 21, lodgings 20, retail purchases 18, theatres and amusements 7, admissions to travel attractions 5.

Studies show that 17.3 percent of all vacations are taken in the months of March, April and May.

COST OF LIVING MEMO:

The Dun & Bradstreet Daily Wholesale Commodity Price Index of 30 basic commodities was 275.26 on Feb. 4, against 275.56 a week earlier.

The Weekly Wholesale Food Price Index, representing the total of the price per pound of 31 foods in general use, fell one cent last week to $7.01. That was 14.4 percent above the corresponding level of last year.

SAM DAWSON

NEW YORK (AP) — The steel industry's bashful customers aren't exactly crowding its March order books. So the quiet days may last well into the spring, steelmen are willing to admit today. Earlier they had hoped for a pickup by March at the latest.

But their apparent confidence that operations are sure to revive later in the year, and their faith that other factors in their profit setup will offset the current dip in sales, has much to do with the general change for the better in business psychology noted in recent days,
than first feared.

Many now believe that the recession will run itself out faster

Some steel companies are trying a little price cutting here and there to nudge customers into a buying mood again.

But mostly this has been on a purely competitive basis—aimed at getting a bigger share for individual companies of whatever demand for steel there may be just now, rather than at drumming up new demand. That will have to wait till steel users stop trimming stocks.

The steel industry had its biggest year in 1953 in many ways. And the annual reports of steel companies, showing striking profit gains over the previous year, have helped cheer the stock market. Dividends have been well maintained, too, and some even increased, in spite of a notable drop in profits in recent months.

The first 15 steel companies to report for all of 1953—and the list contains all the biggest ones—show combined profit after taxes of $596,258,502, a gain of 4 per cent over strike-beset 1952's total for the same 15 companies of $413,584,935.

The big gains came early in the year. The fourth quarter in most instances was disappointing.

Steelmen admit that their earlier predictions that operations would pick up by this time went sour. They made a little miscalculation. They underestimated the amount of steel their customers had built up as inventories.

These stocks are still being dipped into by many steel users. But steel executives feel sure, once again, that inventories are now pretty well whittled down and the customers will be coming back to order more.

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They'll Do It Every Time

By Jimmy Hatlo

Frank Tripp

There are many kinds of salesmanship. Some are very subtle, some endure, some die aborning But wherein the salesman sells himself, along with his merchandise, customers stick and follow him from mousetraps to locomotives.

Every time I need a suit I still remember Herman Strauss — and his derby hat. Before I was born he created a business that bears his name to this day. He met every customer at the door, watched the treatment he received, and bade him goodbye when he left.

The practice came out of days when he was alone in his tiny clothing store, when he knew the details of every transaction from morning till night, and stayed open evenings to accommodate his customers.

Fifty years later Herman Strauss had a big and modern store with a corps of salespeople, but he never stopped greeting the customers. To the end, he kept his own books and worked late into the night sending out the monthly bills in his own handwriting.

He never removed his derby, as he stood at the doorway to direct traffic. This became an annoyance to his staff in the new flossy surroundings. Yet that derby had a pulling power equal to the best show window that the store's expert ever dressed. Unbeknown, even to Herman, it was his master sales gadget.

One time, after I rated a reporter's raise of three a week, I felt I could afford a better suit. We hadn't begun to "pay while you wear" yet. Mr. Strauss met me at the door the day that I first dared enter his establishment.

He turned me over to a salesman, then kept his eyes and ears open. Presently he told the salesman, "Show him those in that rack." I told him I had seen, but couldn't afford them.

"I know, I saw," he said "Try this one on again." It was the very suit I longed for.

"I can't pay for it." I told him.

"That looks fine on you," he insisted. "I want you to have it. Pay for it when you can."

These were new words to me, from a man who had never seen me before. They earned Mr. Strauss a pretty fair customer over the next 50 years.

I was more proud of that suit than any I've ever owned. I got to know Herman Strauss very well and long after reminded him of the risk he took.

"I never lost a penny on a customer that I had to force to take credit," laughed the wise old merchant.

Then there was Billy Hoffman, who fed the reporters and most of the business neighborhood wonderful German food from Mrs. Hoffman's kitchen; fancy dishes, cheeses, and drinks, of course.

Billy's sales gadgets were a skull cap, a dice cup and a fanatic fondness for the great Bismarck's philosophy. The town's fancy fronts and imported chefs, never hurt Billy's place.

He was always ready to shake for the drinks and careful not to be a too consistent winner, but he got the most trade out of frothing at the mouth and running out of English when we introduced a new jab at Bismarck. It was a daily show that the customers wouldn't miss.

Pretty soon Billy couldn't be around any more. He was home laughing how he used to keep the boys all stirred up about Bismarck—and his place went out of business.

GUEST EDITORIAL

By E. C. FERGUSON
Medford Mail-Tribune

The recent action of the Jackson County Stockmen's association in backing C. C. Hoover's proposal for utilization of some of the huge store of forage crop seed now held by the government for reseeding federal and-or state-owned lands throughout the nation should add impetus to this project.

The government through the price support program, has accumulated 125,428,500 pounds of seed including the following:

Alfalfa, of various varieties	34,750,900 pounds
Red Clover	14,930,900 "
White clover	81,300 "
Ladino clover	13,124,000 "
Crimson clover	104,000 "
Biennial sweet clover	2,597,000 "
Alsike Clover	3,758,600 "
Tall fescue (Alta)	14,697,000 "
Birdsfoot trefoil lotus	117,000 "
Smooth brome grass	52,400 "
Mt. Brome grass — Bromar	53,000 "
Primar slender wheat grass	47,400 "
Hairy vetch	20,131,000 "
Common vetch	20,974,000 "

Under the plan as proposed this vast quantity of seed, now rapidly deteriorating due to age, would be released to various federal, state and other agencies controlling public lands. These agencies could use the seed for replanting cut-over areas, for arresting erosion from wind and water, for better retention of natural moisture in the soil, for promotion of soil fertility, for aiding reforestation, and for prevention of encroachment of brush type plant growth and weed invasion.

The possibilities along this line have already been demonstrated by the Jackson County stockmen. Organized in 1947, one of their chief projects was and has continued to be the prevention of erosion through grass seeding.

Cooperation with federal, state, county and private agencies has been excellent and through the use of seed, mainly donated by local growers, the association has accumulated research data dealing with reforestation on seeded and non-seeded areas, prepared seed beds by mechanical methods, controlled burning, surface disturbed areas resulting from logging operations, etc. The information includes proper rates of seeding per acre, kind of seed adapted to the area, time of seeding for varying soil types, elevation and exposure.

All this information is available to the Department of Agriculture and to such public services as might be involved in actual use of the surplus seed.

The extent of federally owned land in Jackson County alone gives some idea of the large amount of seed which could be used to advantage. Of the total county area, 73 per cent is classified as timber and grazing land and approximately 54 per cent of this is government owned.

Somewhat the same percentages exist throughout the western states.

In the midwest and southern states the seed could be used to tie down soil constantly threatened by wind and water erosion.

In addition to the benefit to public lands, utilization of the seed hoard would tend to remove one of the factors depressing the seed market. The supply now on hand will continue to hold down future production or sale of similar forage crop seed so long as it exists.

Temporary restrictions may be imposed designed to protect the commercial seed channels such as insulation proposals, present agreements to seal stored seeds until there should be a domestic or foreign demand. But none of these measures will give definite assurance of non-competition with future production. In fact, it is believed that uncertainty will prevail as long as this surplus seed is unused. The quantity on hand may be released by administrative order, and whether or not this is ever done, every seed dealer and producer is aware of the possibility.

The mechanics of transferring the stored seed to land administering agencies for planting need not be complicated. Actual work of getting the seed onto the ground would also be a fairly simple operation. In some areas the planting could be done from airplanes.

If advantage is to be taken of the proposal this year, however, time is of the essence. The United States Department of Agriculture should cut red tape and as quickly as possible get the seed into the hands of such agencies as the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Oregon and California Land Administration, National Park Service, Soil Conservation Service, and such state and other bodies as might make good use of it.

If this season goes by without something being done with the surplus seed — some of which cost the government as much as $1.25 per pound — the delay of another year will further decrease the germination power and make later planting that much less efficient.

Tragedy Avoided In Gulf Mishap

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—A 65-foot charter boat, carrying 77 persons and out of fuel, was tossed against a jetty in the Gulf of Mexico last night but all aboard were rescued without serious injury.

For a time the Miss Birmingham seemed in danger of breaking up in the rough Gulf waters at Sunset Beach. The Coast Guard alerted all available rescue craft for emergency duty.

At midnight, however, the last of the passengers and crewmen reached shore, some in small boats some wading and swimming through the shallow water. Others leaped to the swaying wooden jetty. The worst injuries were minor cuts and bruises.

JAMES MARLOW

WASHINGTON (AP) — One of the best thermometers for showing the state of the nation's economy is the government's figures on the number of people employed and jobless.

Every month the government produces a fresh batch of figures. How does it get them? They're collected by two government agencies: the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Census Bureau.

The BLS does it by mail and the Census Bureau by knocking on doors. The two agencies work independently of each other.

The BLS covers less ground. Its surveys don't include farmers, domestic workers, the self-employed and unpaid family workers. The Census Bureau takes in practically everybody.

The BLS has an arrangement with about 155,000 employers who send in every month a report on the number of people on their payrolls. Comparing this with previous months' figures shows whether employment is up or down.

These reporting employers range from steel mills, auto plants, mines, banks, insurance companies, railroads, gas and electric companies, street car lines and even beauty parlors to the government itself, a big employer.

Once a month, in the week containing the eighth day of the month, the Census Bureau sends 300 paid people around to 25,000 homes in 68 counties, including the country's 21 largest metropolitan areas.

These census-takers—called enumerators—go out with a prepared list of questions and cover an estimated 8,000 individuals 14 years or older living in the 25,000 homes.

If that seems a small number of homes and individuals on which to draw conclusions about total employment and unemployment in a country the size of this, the Census Bureau says:

When unemployment reaches around two million, for example, its estimate on the total number unemployed will not be off by more than 150,000, and when employment hits around 60 million, its estimate will not be off by more than 350,000.

The Census Bureau's latest figures—for the week of Jan. 3-9—show 59,778,000 employed, 2,359,000 unemployed. In the same week of 1953 the figures were: employed 60,800,000; unemployed, 1,900,000.

If you do some substraction on those figures you'll find that while the total number of people employed in January 1954 is 1,022,000 fewer than a year ago, the total number of unemployed has increased only 459,000.

The Census Bureau's explanation: a number of people who were employed a year ago but aren't now are not looking for jobs now so they can't be considered unemployed.

The enumerators ask questions like these: Who's working in this house? Anyone looking for work? If so, how long has he been looking? Anyone doing part-time work? And so on.

The government doesn't have the means of making a check on every individual every month. But both agencies have a guide or measuring stick—economists call it a bench-mark—for checking the approximate accuracy of their estimates.

This means that at some time in the past they had actual figures covering individuals nationwide.

The last time BLS made a bench-mark was in the first quarter of 1951 when it got what it considers a complete count on employment and unemployment from social security and unemployment insurance records for workers covered by its survey. BLS is now making a similar check on the first quarter of 1953.

The last time the Census Bureau made a bench-mark, or head-by-head count, was when it took the national census in 1950.

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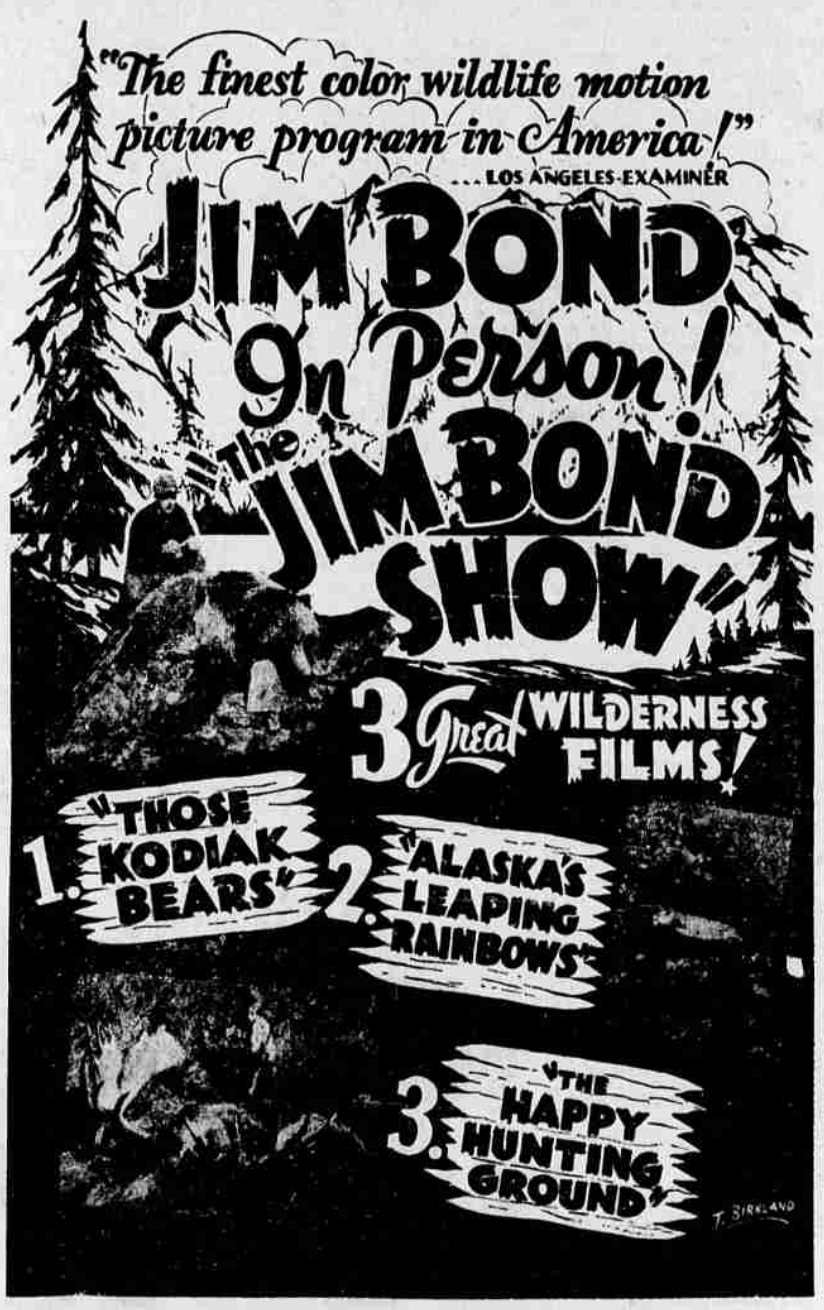

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