

County Extension Agent Outlines 1955 Activity

(Editors Note: The Herald and News asked County Extension Agent C. A. Henderson to prepare an article summarizing the agricultural situation and outlook for the new year. Here in two connected articles, Henderson describes first the local scene, and then the national agricultural outlook.)

By C. A. HENDERSON
Agriculturally speaking, the year 1955 was not too happy for farmers of the Klamath Basin. The diversion of 30 million acres of land in the United States from production of basic commodities, to production of crops grown here has had serious effect on the economy of this region. As a result of planting diverted acreage to other crops, barley production in the nation has doubled with heavy production of potatoes in California on diverted acreage and increases in various grain crops and alfalfa.

livestock products, although the price outlook on some of these commodities is not too favorable. The fact that growers are equipped for this type of farming and have the know-how and experience, production costs can be kept at a lower level than when new farming practices are undertaken. Reports by economists indicate that little change from last year's costs can be expected.

A glance at the U. S. Census indicates that the number of farms in Klamath County is decreasing, with the size of the individual farm, increasing. In 1940, there were 1,552 farms in Klamath County, but the number had dropped to 1,451 by 1945. The 1950 census shows 1,295 and the 1955 1,297. The average size of each farm had increased roughly about 18 per cent, during this same period. There are two answers as to why number of farms is decreasing. First, is that producers are finding it necessary to operate large units for greater efficiency and lower costs, resulting in their purchase of neighboring farms. The second reason is that quite a number of city residents are purchasing farm lands for country homes and the establishment of business enterprises in the county.

National Picture

The year 1956, finds farmers very undecided as to farming plans. The big question is what to plant. Formerly this was not a difficult question as every farmer had a rather definite plan and knew what offered the best chance for a reasonable return on his investment. He also was pretty sure what crop or rotation was best for his land.

War changed these plans. The government needed an increased quantity of certain foods. Wheat, cotton, corn, peanuts and rice were designated as basic commodities and high support prices guaranteed by the government to increase production.

When the war was over and there was no longer any need for increased production, these high supports were continued. It was poor politics to do away with them.

New regulations and laws required that a part of the acreage be taken out and planted to other crop, if the high support was to be maintained. It was known as "diverted acres" and could be planted to any other crop, except a basic commodity crop (wheat, corn, cotton, peanuts and rice).

This plan did not decrease agricultural production intended. Only the poorest land was taken out and on the balance more fertilizer was used, resulting in still greater production.

Under this program a total of 38,350,842 acres were taken out of wheat, cotton, corn and rice and planted to crops with either low supports or no supports at all. Growers of these crops are facing ruin at the present time. Surplus agricultural products continue to pile up and there is little major relief in sight. The government now has \$8,500,000,000 tied up in these supported commodities.

This surplus brought about by high supports on certain so-called basic commodities is seriously affecting practically every farmer in the Klamath Basin. The Basin income has dropped one third and that means a loss of \$15 million a year to the community. In 1952 the Basin income from all crops and livestock was over \$44 million. In 1954 it was \$30,518,000. With lower prices this year on potatoes, grain and livestock the total gross income will be still lower, notwithstanding somewhat higher prices for alfalfa hay, some grass seeds, poultry and dairy products.

In their frustration over a situation over which they have no control, many farmers are planting grass and other forage crops. This is increasing the number of cattle and helping to increase livestock being marketed. As a result choice



KLAMATH COUNTY MOBILIZED DISASTER UNIT officers and members lined up for an informal shot in front of one of the four-wheel drive vehicles used by the unit recently to allow this shot. Left to right: George Wardell, assistant director; Joe LaClair, Klamath Basin Civil Defense Director; Dr. Paul Sharp, medical adviser; Mrs. Sharp; Vic Douglas, deputy director in charge of the unit; Ed Scholer, president of KASRU. The unit, comprised of 123 four-wheel drive vehicles and drivers, is aimed at offering aid in case of emergency in rough terrain where use of ordinary vehicles is not feasible.

Civil Service Examiners Tell Of Engineer Openings

The Field Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners for the Department of Agriculture announced that applications will be accepted for appointment to the positions of engineer (agricultural) and (civil) GS-5 and GS-7, salary, \$4,345 to \$4,930 a year; range conservationist, soil conservationist, and soil scientist, GS-5 and GS-7, salary \$3,670 to \$4,525 a year.

These positions are located at various points in the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, California, Nevada, Territory of Alaska, and Territory of Hawaii. In the employment of the Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

For the GS-5 position the applicant must have a bachelor's degree with a major in one of the four options indicated above or a combination of education and experience which will give the applicant a technical knowledge comparable to that which would have been acquired by the successful completion of a four-year college course.

For the GS-7 positions applicants must show six months of professional specialized experience con-

sistent with the duties of the position in addition to meeting the requirements for the GS-5. Persons in these positions will perform technical professional, or scientific duties appropriate for the position to which appointed. Applications for these positions must be on file with the executive secretary, Field Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners, U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1218 S. W. Washington Street, Portland 5, Oregon.

Interested persons may obtain information and necessary application forms from the Commission's local secretary, located at window I post office building from most first and second-class post offices. In this area, from the regional director, 11th U. S. Civil Service Region, 302 Federal Office Building, Seattle 4, Washington, or from the executive secretary, Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners, Department of Agriculture, 1218 S. W. Washington Street, Portland 5, Oregon.

carcass beef is now less than the price it was on the hoof four years ago. Summing up the agricultural situation in a few words, we find that agricultural production is outstripping population increase and that no practical method has yet been put into practice to solve the farm surplus problem. In the meantime, farm costs are going up and farm population is decreasing.

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Mobilized Disaster Unit Offers 123 Four-Wheel Drive Vehicles In Basin

At least one Civil Defense unit in Klamath County has gone into compound low and is really making tracks. It's the county mobilized rescue unit, made up of some 123 four-wheel drive vehicles and volunteer drivers, standing by in case of emergency in rough country.

The unit, under the direction of Vic Douglas and George Wardell, is an important part of the CD program according to Joe LaClair, director of the Klamath Basin, and is on a permanent standby basis to offer aid in those cases where ordinary vehicles are of little use due to rough terrain.

Formed two years ago, the unit has grown in both stature and experience, being called out three times last year, once on a search for a lost plane and twice taking part in search and rescue operations where local citizens were lost in the hills.

Through the CD organization the Jeeps and other four-wheel vehicles have available walkie-talkie radios, medical equipment and service and other gear needed in rescue work. CD also foots the bills for any extra-ordinary expense incurred by the drivers while on duty, although most expenses are paid by the volunteers while on a routine mission.

District leaders have been set up for various Basin points with Bob Walker acting as director for Merrill, Mervin Wilde in Malin, Marvin Michael in Dairy, Harry Bray in Bonanza, Sylvan Crume

in Sprague River, Elmo Mickelson in Fort Klamath, Vic Sisson at the Klamath Agency, Lewis Jones at Chiloquin, Jim Brown at Algoma and Paul Mauldin and Bill Jenkins in Klamath Falls.

In case of an emergency where aid is needed parties should call their nearest district leader. In Klamath Falls either Douglas or Wardell should be contacted.

Membership in the organization is still open, says LaClair, for anyone wishing to donate his services and those of a four-wheel drive vehicle on a volunteer basis. Nor are women barred. One of the most enthusiastic members of the unit is Mrs. Aul Sharp, who can handle her Jeep with the best

of them. Her husband, Dr. Paul Sharp, is medical director of the unit.

In general the unit was formed as a disaster unit and not as a pure search unit, KASRU taking care of that end of things in the Basin. The unit works closely, however, with KASRU and other agencies in cases of missing persons, hunter mishaps in the woods and other circumstances where extreme mobility over rough ground is needed.

A practice mission has been planned for sometime in the spring or summer, according to LaClair. Here a mock emergency will be plotted in rough country and worked out by participating members.

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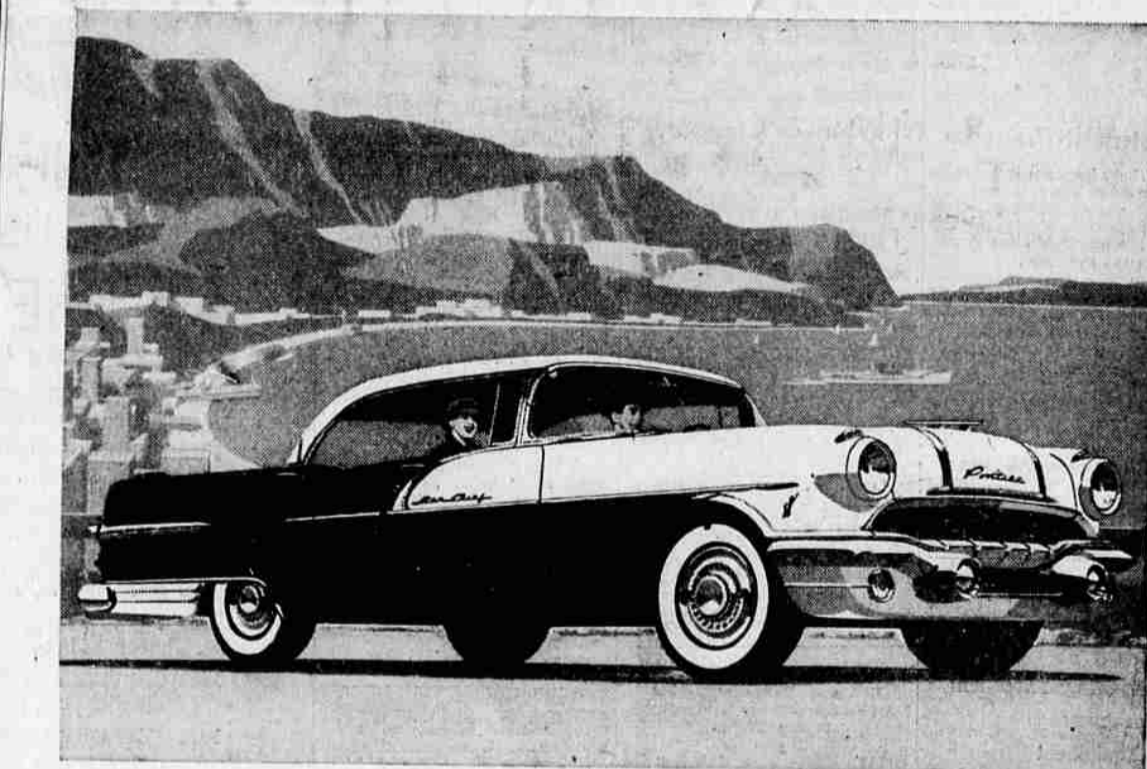
KNOWATA, Okla. (AP) — Robert Bruce Hill, 42, who was bound over for District Court trial yesterday by County Judge Leslie J. Coffman on a charge of drunk driving — his second offense — had a novel story. He explained in court his wrecked car had pinned him to the ground and that a helpful stranger came by and "poured whisky down my throat" to alleviate the suffering.

The monthly meeting of the Central Klamath District Camp Fire Girls Leaders' Association was conducted by chairman, Mrs. Wayne Galloway.

A report on the annual dad and daughter banquet to be held in February was given by Mrs. A. E. Fitzgerald. This year's birthday theme is "Plant Seeds and Reap Friendship." Mrs. J. M. Britton and Mrs. Virgil Davis were appointed to a planning committee from the central district.

The yearly program was read to the group by Mrs. Charles Johnson as submitted by program chairman, Mrs. Bill Boles. Mrs. John Swain announced the hostesses for the February meeting, as Mrs. L. Hatfield, Mrs. R. Caldwell Jr., Mrs. Ray Aschenbach and Mrs. W. Galloway. After the short business meeting, Mrs. Robert Clark led the group in a Camp Fire song fest. Mrs. Johnson, field director for Camp Fire gave a few highlights on table decorations and using the "Birthday Project" theme in program planning.

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