

### Installation Dated for Local Odd Fellows Lodge

Officers for the 1965 term will be installed for Vernonia Odd Fellows lodge No. 246 next Tuesday evening, January 19 at the local IOOF hall. Lester Galloway of Clatskanie, district deputy grand master for the Clatskanie and Vernonia lodges will be in charge.

Lloyd Quinn is to be seated as noble grand and other elective officers to be seated with him are Percy E. Markham, vice-grand; Harry Culbertson, secretary and Henry Anderson, treasurer.

### Vagabonds Plan Saturday Dance

The Vernonia Vagabonds announce another square dance for this Saturday at 8:30 p.m. at the Scout Cabin in the city park. All interested persons are invited to dance to the calling of Jack Korff from Astoria. Refreshments, as usual, are potluck.

Anyone interested in learning to square dance or in a brush up course in either square or round dancing is urged to get in touch with Don Cameron, HA 9-3693, or Lloyd Quinn, HA 9-5211, before next Thursday, January 21. This will be the last chance this year.

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### OES Chapters Meet Jointly

On January 6, Nehalem Chapter, Order of Eastern Star, was host to Wabanang Chapter of Clatskanie and the two chapters performed the degree work of the order for inspection by the worthy grand matron of Oregon, Mrs. Merle L. Lamar.

Other distinguished guests attending the meeting were: Mrs. Edna Throne, past grand matron, and Mrs. Rachel Humphrey, grand representative to Kansas in Oregon, who received her official appointment during the evening.

The officers of Wabanang Chapter initiated John Wolfenbarger into the order and the officers of Nehalem chapter performed a clever degree in honor of Mrs. Lamar, using styrofoam trees which, when put together, formed a star.

Mrs. Florence Brunsmann was dining room chairman and served cake and coffee after the meeting as well as a potluck dinner before the meeting, with the assistance of some of the other members.

The next regular meeting of Nehalem Chapter will be January 20.

### Baskets Given For Christmas

While there seemed to be less families in the Vernonia area who were really in need of baskets at Christmas time this year, a number of organizations and individuals found those for whom to do things in order to also make their own Christmas happier by having thus fulfilled the true spirit of the holiday.

Many older people and shut-ins were cheered by visits from a Lions club committee which delivered fruit baskets. The Lions club also contributed toys for baskets. These toys were brought by Lions and their wives to the Christmas dinner party in lieu of a gift exchange.

Other who reported preparing baskets were as follows: Rainbow Girls, Christian church groups, Rebekah lodge, the Vernonia Bible church, EUB church groups, St. Mary's Catholic church, LDS church and the American Legion.

Other persons were cared for by individuals.

### German Art Is Studied by Club

The first meeting of 1965 for the Vernonia Study Club was held Thursday, January 7 at the home of Mrs. Harry Culbertson.

During the business meeting, a review of names of families and others given Christmas baskets was heard and recognition was given to individuals and groups who contributed to the needy. It was agreed those names should be publicized. For the program, music of Germany from the days of the Meister singers to the 19th century was traced by Mrs. Marvin Kamholz.

On February 4, Mrs. Owen East will entertain the study group and Mrs. Launee Cousins will give the program on Shakespeare.

A book becomes a classic when people who haven't read it start pretending they have.

### Former Grade School Teacher Tells Experiences During Flood

Lyle Frazier, former teacher at the Washington school, this week wrote a letter to Mrs. Launee Cousins with whom he and his family had planned to spend New Years, in which he gave an account of the Christmas week flood in the Rhododendron area in which he and his family live, and the part played by the Welches school where he is principal. Also, another person mentioned in the letter, Pat Caton Aeppli, is a former Vernonia resident.

Excerpts from the letter are given here:

Before the rain started we had about 12 to 15 inches of snow here at Rhododendron. Government Camp had 38 inches and Timberline had 48 inches. It started to rain, and rained hard and steadily for a week. Within a couple of days or less all the snow at Rhododendron had gone. Before the rain slacked off all the snow at Gov. Camp had disappeared and Timberline had just 4 inches left. The ground was frozen, causing the water to run off even faster than it otherwise would.

On Tuesday, Dec. 22, I went to school early. The wind was blowing quite hard, and we didn't have any water at our house, so I was a little concerned as to the advisability of holding school that day. As a consequence I crossed over the Rhododendron bridge too soon to notice any damage taking place.

Shortly after I got to school Susie (Mrs. Frazier) called and said a woman had called her and said Marmot Bridge, which our bus had to cross, was washing out. I immediately jumped into the car and drove down to check on it. The bridge, however, was all right (It never did wash out), so I returned to school, made a few phone calls to check on conditions, and finally sent the buses out.

At about 9 o'clock Pat (Caton) Aeppli and Susie, who had been working on costumes, came down to help us with the dress rehearsal for the Christmas play, scheduled for that night. We commenced our rehearsal and everything was going fine, when a fellow came in and said the bridge at Rhododendron was washing out. I sent the custodian to investigate. He soon returned to say the bridge was critical. We immediately stopped the rehearsal and, as soon as possible, sent the youngsters home. By the time the bus got to the bridge the state police were there and wouldn't let the bus cross the bridge. They did allow the children to walk across, however.

In the meantime the state police had asked me to see if I could get the high school at Sandy to send the mountain youngsters home. As soon as I got the rest of the grade school children started on their way home I headed for Sandy. When I got into Sandy I was only partially able to convince the high school Supt. of the gravity of the situation. He agreed to send the youngsters home, but insisted they should have their Christmas dinner first. I started back immediately, but was turned back at the edge of Sandy by city officers. By the time we got to the bridge at Rhododendron the officers wouldn't even let the children walk across, so we turned back to Welches school.

We had kept our children, Stanley and Eric with us at school and Becky came out on the high school bus, so at least we were all together.

Throughout the afternoon, people straggled in who had either lost their homes or had wisely decided to move to safer ground until the danger was over. Early in the afternoon we learned that Pat (Caton) Aeppli, who had been helping with the program, had lost her home. Her home, furniture and land had all gone down the Zig Zag river. Slowly, reports trickled in of other homes lost. Many people came in who had gotten out with only the clothes on their backs. Many times, even these clothes were soaked, making it imperative that we find dry clothes for them.

We lost our electricity at the school at about 4 p.m. and never got it back until Wednesday evening. In the meantime, the Forest Service brought down a gasoline-powered generator, so we at least had lights and enough power to make coffee, even though we had no heat. Luckily it was not very cold.

Tuesday night at Wildcat creek, Harry Engols, a resident of that area, heard a noise in the back of his house and stepped out on his back porch to investigate. However, the raging creek had already taken his porch and Mr. Engols was swept away in the torrent. To this date his body has not been found, but it is thought that it may be at the bottom of the log jam.

The permanent residents of the area had to be flown out by helicopter. One man, upon being told to bring the most valuable possession he could carry in his hands, brought out a bottle of imported whiskey!

A woman in the Zig Zag area refused to come out without her cats. So she loaded her nine cats into a gunny sack and climbed into the helicopter. There were also a couple of dogs aboard the helicopter at the same time. A grand time was had by all! I have been unable to substantiate the rumor that the pilot had a nervous breakdown immediately thereafter!

Meanwhile, at the school we were busily feeding all evacuees as well as finding them a place to sleep, and sometimes digging up clothes for them. We must have fed 75-100 people each day for the first three days. We had people sleeping in practically every room of the school although we moved people out into private homes whenever possible. Susie worked steadily from early in the morning until late at night in the kitchen. On Wednesday, a representative of the Red Cross showed up and designated me an official of the Red Cross, giving me authority to buy provisions and charge them to the Red Cross.

The bridge at Rhododendron across the Zig Zag river did not wash out, but the approaches on both sides did. The western side had a gap of about 50 feet, while the gap on the eastern side was 100 feet or more. Susie and the kids were able to walk across over the fill at about noon on Monday the 28th. I came home that night about 9 and we finally had Christmas.

The brightest part of the disaster by far has been the reaction of the general public, including people from Portland, Lake Oswego, Gresham, Sandy and other places as well as the local citizens in rallying to help the victims of the flood. The response to the need of our people has been nothing short of fantastic.

Our first rough estimate is that we lost over a million dollars in assessed valuation in the Welches school district alone.

Our water is still impure and we have to boil every drop. Astonishing as it may seem with the heavy loss of permanent homes, we will lose less than ten students from a student body of about 200.

### Vernonia Eagle

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1965 3

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