

Nyssa Gate City Journal

SECTION
SECOND

VOLUME LV

The Sugar City

THE NYSSA GATE CITY JOURNAL, NYSSA, OREGON, THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 1960

10 Cents Per Copy

NUMBER 23

Oregon Dental Health Ranks Low In Nation According to State Board

Oregon's dental health record is one of the nation's worst, and there is little immediate prospect of any significant improvement.

That is the gist of a report—details of which were revealed in Portland this week—being prepared by the state board of health for the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The health board statement charges that 87 percent of all six-year-olds and 95 percent of all children from 6 to 16 years of age suffer from some degree of tooth decay.

The state rate for decayed, missing or filled teeth among 16-year-olds was listed at almost twice the national average.

"At this age," the report says, "less than one percent of Oregon children are free of tooth decay."

The critical report was prepared by Dr. David Witter, health board dental director, who has conducted numerous surveys of dental problems throughout the state during the past several years.

"Every study that has been conducted in recent years shows an extremely high incidence of dental disorders," he said.

Little Attention Given to Problem

While dental caries (tooth decay) is the greatest problem in dental health, little attention has been given to other phases of the problem," he continued. These were listed as tissue and gum disorders, cancer of the mouth, industrial dental health problems, needs of state institutions, dental problems of older persons, and malformations such as cleft lip and palate.

Despite the size of Oregon's problem, Dr. Witter said, only 33 of the state's 207 communities with more than 100 population have "an identifiable dental health program."

He emphasized that the high incidence of tooth decay "can be reduced through preventive measures" for most children. Chief among these measures is fluoridation of public water supplies, which he said "will reduce the

incidence of tooth decay as much as two-thirds."

Fluoridation Limited in State

At the present time, 18 Oregon communities serving upwards of 102,500 persons are fluoridating, and an additional 12 with about 22,000 residents have natural fluoride in beneficial amounts, according to the report.

Dr. Witter noted that voters in 22 Oregon communities have turned down fluoridation, and he said wryly:

"At the present time there is little demand for consultant service on water fluoridation from local dental societies, health departments, city councils, parent-teacher and civic groups over the state."

The dental expert called for dental surveys conducted before and after fluoridation is started in Oregon cities, and "community-wide education programs," to distribute findings.

Lack of Funds Deter Progress

"This activity is essential to combat the 'scare' propaganda used by the opposition to fluoridation programs," he said.

Dr. Witter indicated that many of the programs to pin-point Oregon dental problems or to seek solutions have been hampered by lack of funds and personnel.

One bright spot in the report, however, is a notation that tentative plans are being laid to provide more dental care to the underprivileged, especially children, and to chronically ill persons throughout Oregon. These probably would be "through community or civic group sponsored dental clinics."

Salem, Portland, and Lane and Jackson counties reportedly already have established care programs for the dental indigent, and seven other counties were said to be considering similar program activities.

Gary Bybee returned home Monday after graduating from Utah State university Saturday.

Swimming Pool Data Available From Oregon 'U'

Operating data for communities considering new or expanded swimming facilities has been tabulated for a report just issued by the University of Oregon's bureau of municipal research and service.

The report includes details of use, operation and cost of the 67 publicly owned pools in Oregon.

Pools in the state are predominantly the outdoor type with 50 of the 67 in this classification. Many pools have been constructed with voluntary contributions of citizens.

Publicly owned pools are located in all cities over 10,000 population, in 11 of the 15 cities with 5,000 to 10,000 population, and in 14 of the 26 cities with 2,500 to 5,000 population, in eight of the 47 cities with 1,000 to 2,500, in three of the 48 cities with 500 to 1,000 population, and in three of

GARNERS HAVE NEW SON

Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Garner of Walla Walla, Wash., former manager of Eastern Oregon Natural Gas Co. here, became parents of a son, Victor Paul, on May 25.

Mrs. G. Jones Plans Piano Recital June 13

Mrs. Grant Jones will present Miss Broshia Case, Nyssa senior student in public piano recital Monday, June 13, at 8 p.m. in the Payette LDS church.

Miss Karen Bybee, also of Nyssa, will appear with organ interludes during the program. The public is invited to attend.

SPEND WEEKEND IN UTAH

Mr. and Mrs. Max Jones and daughters returned recently from Utah where they visited his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Jones in Lewiston. In Salt Lake City they visited Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Findling, former Nyssa residents.

ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH DAILY BIBLE SCHOOL BEGINS

Daily vacation Bible school of the Assembly of God church will begin June 13 at 9 a.m. and last until noon each day for two weeks.

Mr. and Mrs. Frel Blair, Boyd and Sharon, Mrs. Kenneth Cottle and Allan spent Memorial weekend in Salt Lake City visiting friends and relatives.

The children of Mr. and Mrs. Jay Bunn are spending three days with their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Kesler, Sr., while their parents are on a fishing trip.

ANNOUNCEMENT . . .

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