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SOUTH SEASIDE, OREGON
PERIODICALS DIVISION
1917-1918

Main Eagle

Oregon's Oldest
Weekly Newspaper

GRANT COUNTY, OREGON

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1936

Lightning Strikes Set Forest Blazes

Fire In Izee Burns Large Forest Area

After an excellent fire record in the early part of the season, Grant county was finally hit hard by major and minor fires over the Labor day weekend, with the result that there was no holiday for foresters or many loggers. So far as can be determined, all fires were started by lightning in the dry electrical storms that passed through the area Sunday and Monday.

First of the major fires was that in the Seneca area, which is more fully covered in a separate item. Biggest in point of acreage burned in the Izee fire, which had covered nearly 4000 acres late yesterday and was still not completely controlled. Fires of lesser magnitude also hit near Vinegar Creek in the Blue Mountain ranger district; on Sunshine divide, north of the middle fork in the Izzo ranger district; on Wickup Creek near the forest camp in the Bear Valley district; on Big Creek in the Prairie City district; and on Scotty Creek, in the Bear Valley district.

All fires except the one in Izee are now in the mop-up stage or out. The Izee fire has been completely trampled, but snags were still burning near the trails yesterday afternoon, and constant vigilance was being maintained to prevent the fire from spreading through showers of sparks. Fallers were thrown into the area to cut down the snags.

Izee Fire Biggest
Fire first broke out in that area on state protected land about 2 p.m. Monday, and subsequently spread to Malheur forest land. While a majority of the burned over area was brush land, there was also a large amount of timber burned. At first report of the fire, the crews from Izee that were engaged in fighting the Seneca fire were immediately sent back to Izee, with their equipment, and these crews were reinforced by more firefighters from the Ellingson lumber company, Blue Mountain Mills, the forest service crews from Burns and Edward Hines lumber company crews from Hines. Forest service fire fighting headquarters

Dog Poisoner Works Again

Inactive for two or three years, one of the meanest persons in the world, the dog poisoner, has been at work in John Day the past week. To date, at least eight dogs have met their death at the hands of the killer.

First dog to get a taste of the poison, which resulted in his agonizing death a few minutes later, was Rusty, the large Irish setter owned by Keith E. McKenna. Rusty's death occurred shortly after 7 o'clock Saturday morning. Several hours later, two youngsters, playing in a back yard near the McKenna home, discovered the body of Tonya, the young German police dog, which was four-year-old Mike Thorpe's best friend and constant companion. And, before the day finally ended, two more dogs had met the same fate. And Sunday and Monday added several more to the growing list of dog poisoning deaths.

An autopsy performed on the McKenna dog by veterinarian Dr. August Stevenson of Canyon City revealed that the dog had died of strychnine poisoning. This report coupled with details of the sudden deaths of other canines, leads Stevenson and dog owners into believing that either meat or candy filled with strychnine is being tossed into vacant lots and back yards. John Day city police have been asked to make an investigation and to put forth efforts to apprehend the person or persons responsible for killing dogs. They were requested to send stomach contents of a dog or dogs into state laboratories for examination.

All youngsters are asked to refrain from eating candy or other foods which busy be found in alleys, back yards and vacant streets as the food may be full of strychnine intended for some person's dog.

Dial Phones Readied For

AA & V

John Day Man Loses Life In Major Fire At Seneca

Elwood Jackson, 38, of John Day, an employee of the Edward Hines lumber company at Seneca, lost his life while fighting the big sagebrush blaze which threatened to destroy that community Sunday afternoon. Jackson was with a group of men trapped by the fast moving fire, and became separated from the rest of his group when all had to run for their lives.

Alvin Stockwell of Seneca, another in groups, received painful burns about the face when he had to dash through a wall of fire to make his escape. Others in the group were unburnt.

Searchers, including Hines employees, state police and Cecil Jackson of John Day, brother of the victim, searched the burned and still burning area through a large part of the night, but it was not until after daylight that the body was found by a Hines employee. A John Day physician had also spent the night at the scene, prepared to treat Jackson if he was found alive and to give medical attention to any of the fire-fighters who might need it.

Caused by Lightning
Fire, definitely known to have been started by a lightning strike and fanned by a wind that accompanied and followed the electric storm, started shortly after noon Sunday, and before being surrounded Sunday night had covered about 300 acres. Most of the acreage covered was grass and sagebrush land, with the loss in timber being relatively small. For a time the fire imposed a major threat to the community of Seneca, and shunts were prepared to evacuate the area. A shift in the wind and the prompt response of fire crews enabled the fighters to halt the flames just short of the populous area.

Headquarters for directing the fire-fighting and dispatching crews were set up in an office at the Hines lumber company. Henry McCormick, Bear Valley district ranger of the Malheur national forest, was in charge of planning; Barney Douglas, forest service timber sales officer at Seneca, was in charge of the fire; and staff man Oliver Cliff from the John Day office of the forest went to the scene to handle SOS. Handling operations for the Edward Hines company was Roy Seebart, assisted by Ray Brisson and Chet Arnett.

Crews Gathered
In addition to Hines and forest service crews, there were fire-fighters from Blue Mountain Mills at both John Day and Dayville, a crew and equipment from the Ellingson mill at Izee, and a crew from the Ruberg logging company, also at Izee. Many individuals not connected with logging operations also volunteered and were accepted to fight the blaze. Ranchers of the area also pitched in and used their men and equipment to stop the spread of the flames.

Destroyed in the fire was a jeep owned by J. W. Southworth, a Bear Valley rancher. Two tractors suffered slight damage, but were not destroyed.

At the height of the operations some 150 men and seven tractors were employed in fighting the fire. Monday afternoon the men and equipment from Izee were released and sent back to that community, where another fire of major proportions had broken out. Late Monday the fire was under control, in the opinion of Cliff, but a great deal of work remained to be done to confine the blaze within the fire trails until it burned itself out.

Priest Feted At Reception

The Rev. George A. Murphy, priest at St. Elizabeth's Catholic church in John Day the past 17 years, was honored at a farewell reception Sunday August 28. The luncheon was served at the

Grade School Registration Figure Given