

It's a sign of the times

By ARTHUR HUTCHINSON
Gazette Staff Bureau

HELENA — Most of the more than 30 billboards under construction along scenic U.S. 89 between Livingston and Gardiner are illegal and will have to be removed, department of highway officials said Friday.

Livingston area residents including Sen. Ben Stein and Rep. Bill Warfield raised strong protests about signs being put up by the Randolph Sign Co., Gardiner, along the Yellowstone Valley route to Yellowstone National Park.

"Most of these signs will have to come out," said John A. Poole, senior assistant right-of-way supervisor. "The owner of the structures realizes this and is attempting to bring them into compliance, if possible. He knows he has a problem. He was misinformed."

POOLE SAID NEW signs erected since the first of the year were probably, with a few exceptions, illegal under the state's Outdoor Advertising Control Act of 1971.

However, Robert Champion, right-of-way supervisor, and Poole said removal of nonconforming billboards probably would not begin until October.

No federal money has been received for the program, and the state act forbids the

state to acquire signs unless federal 75 per cent matching money is available.

Poole estimated it would take \$1 million a year for five years for the beautification program.

IRONICALLY, HE said, some of the biggest offenders putting up illegal signs are candidates for governor and other elective offices.

The act generally allows billboards and advertising signs only in areas zoned or historically used for industrial and commercial purposes. Even then they have to meet spacing, size and lighting limitations.

Billboards are not permitted within 600 feet of primary and interstate highways in areas of farming, grazing, forestry or within 500 feet of public forests, parks, campgrounds, playgrounds and cemeteries.

EXCEPTIONS ARE signs advertising sale, lease or activities conducted on the property where the sign is located.

Warfield and Stein criticized the highway department for dragging its feet in enforcing the Billboard Control Act which became effective last June 21.

Department officials denied that they were stalling but conceded that they were moving cautiously. "We don't want to set any bad precedents," Poole said. "We want even-handed administration."

Stein said the department probably would use lack of funds as an excuse to stall, but Champion said, "We hope by the time we are through the permit stage to the acquisition stage we'll have the money."

NONCONFORMING signs are to be acquired and removed at the 75 to 25 federal-state ratio, but the federal funds will only pay for signs erected before October 1968 when Congress passed the Highway Beautification Act.

Montana now is trying to persuade federal officials to help pay for signs erected from 1965 through 1972 when the Montana act became enforceable.

"We hope the commission will speed up its enforcement plans," Warfield said.

The commission Thursday approved billboard control regulations.

TRAINING SESSIONS for field personnel on the program are scheduled to start the second week in May.

Permits for billboards were required under the act by last Sept. 22, but because of delays in writing the regulations, the deadline was extended to June 30.

Poole said 1,000 applications for permits had been sent out, but only one of the fairly detailed forms had been returned.

(Continued on Page 4)

Private drive set up ConCon spending banned

HELENA (AP) — Barred by the Montana Supreme Court from spending public funds to promote a new constitution, convention delegates formed a

private organization Friday to continue the voter education they had planned.

The state's high court permanently stopped 19 members of the post-adjournment Voter Education Committee, the state auditor and the state treasurer from any further expenditure of public funds for voter education purposes.

Shaken and somewhat confused by the decision, the committee, in a hastily called meeting, called the decision "a tragedy of major proportions toward passage of the document."

Oscar S. Kvaalen, R-Lambert, who filed the suit, lauded the decision and said, "Now the people will receive an objective presentation."

Kvaalen said the voter education should be left up to the individual delegates "to provide the people with varying views on the document."

He said he had reservations about the document, particularly the education, revenue and legislative articles.

Of the legislative article, he said, "I don't like the idea of annual sessions and the open meetings."

"There is a function for the so-called smoke-filled rooms," he said, "a legislature can't do its work with vested interests breathing down its neck."

Delegates, in a hastily called Friday afternoon meeting, pooled their resources, raising \$1,510 for its "Citizens Committee for Constitutional Improvement."

The committee urged delegate and citizen contributions to be sent to Box 101, Colonial Motor Inn, Helena.

Voter Education Committee chairman John Toole, R-Missoula, was named chairman of

the organization, George Harper, I-Helena, was named treasurer and Betty Babcock, R-Helena, was named secretary.

Con-Con President Leo Graybill Jr., D-Great Falls, said the Voter Education Committee will remain to run "procedural and administrative matters."

"We are duty-bound to comply with the court decision," he told the delegates.

He said he wanted to study the decision further and confer

with delegate lawyers to see if an appeal was feasible.

The Supreme Court's ruling said the Constitutional Convention did not have the authority to spend funds for voter education following adjournment.

The unanimous "per curiam" or "by the court" decision shocked the delegates because of a previous ruling by the high court that held Con-Con Delegate Charles Mahoney, I-Clancy could not run for public office.

It said the term of office of the 100 delegates runs until repeal of the Con-Con Enabling Act on June 30, 1973.

In a statement issued jointly by Graybill and Toole, the committee said the decision "has deprived the citizens of Montana to learn the facts" about the constitution.

Some hinted the decision opened the door for powerful adversaries to the constitution.

"There are some powerful sources forming to propagandize the constitution against the people," said Fred Martin, R-Livingston.

The court decision left \$45,000 unspent and an \$18,000 deficit left to the Constitutional Convention Commission.

The ruling said the convention must ignore the deficit of the commission and "will have to be paid from taxpayer's funds by deficit appropriation or otherwise."

The key point in the 18-page opinion seemed to be that neither state nor any state agency possessed absolute control over the appropriation that is required by the 1889 state constitution.

James Murphy, R-Kalispell, one of the prime movers behind the Enabling Act, said the problem might not have arisen if the convention had retained the constitutional commission.

"We had contemplated the educational features would be done by the commission, but the delegates wanted to get rid of the commission as fast as they could. They started on this new tack that we had not really considered," he said.

He said he doubted "powerful sources" are trying very hard to defeat the constitution.

"I really think this idea of an image of big business fighting the people would alone put the constitution across," he said.

Gates to park opened

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS, Wyo. — Snowplows were more in evidence than the famed black bears, but Yellowstone National Park opened its gates for business Saturday morning, beginning the park's centennial year.

A heavier than average winter snow accumulation means that some of the park's roads still belong to the plows, but the north (Gardiner), west (West Yellowstone) and east (Cody) entrances are open.

Craig and Dunraven Passes won't be opened for another two weeks, and heavy equipment is slowly making its way toward the south entrance, which, park officials say, may be open within three or four days. The Red Lodge-Cooke City entrance is not expected to open until late May.

No tourist facilities will be available immediately except the general store at Mammoth. Opening dates for various hotels or other lodgings, food service and other facilities are scheduled during early May.

Peekaboo patterns

Patrick Brown wasn't too concerned about the "Morse code" pattern of sunshine caused by a cemen-block wall at a Billings

shopping center. He was busy hiding from his parents, Dr. and Mrs. J. O. Brown of Glendive.

Two-year-old mystery becomes 'case closed'

CHEYENNE (AP) — It had been more than two years that an unsolved murder case lay in the Laramie County sheriff's office files.

The only known fact was that a woman's battered body was found Feb. 8, 1970 in a roadside ditch 18 miles east of Laramie.

And then, within the past two weeks, identification of the body was made and a suspect determined, culminating Friday in the arrest of a Minnesota man on a first degree murder charge.

Laramie County Atty. Thomas J. Carroll said the charge was filed against George Costello from the St. Paul suburb of Forest Lake, Minn.

The charge was sent to Minne-

sota by the Cheyenne authorities Friday and later in the day Costello, about 33, was taken into custody by the Ramsey County (St. Paul) sheriff's office in Minnesota.

The charge was lodged in connection with the death of 33-year-old Eunice Kratochvil of White Bear Lake, Minn.

Costello was described as a State Corrections Department worker employed at the Lino Lakes Reception and Diagnostic Center.

Mrs. Kratochvil was a counselor at the same facility.

The woman was unidentified until this month when Sheriff Harold Cosine received an anonymous letter from the Twin

Cities area in response to an article about the mystery that appeared in a national detective magazine.

Officers then traced the woman through fingerprints to Minnesota and confirmed her identity.

The Ramsey County sheriff's office reported Mrs. Kratochvil had left her family because of domestic troubles and took about \$2,000 with her. Her body was found in Wyoming two days later.

An autopsy revealed she had a fractured skull, broken nose and 17 cuts on her head and face.

Cosine said it appeared the woman had been killed where her body was found.

Saddled with red tape

By ROBERT W. MAITLAND
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WASHINGTON—Can a six-year-old Communist horse in a new horse and happiness in New Jersey?

Apparently the U.S. government doesn't think so.

For the past seven months a big gray gelding named Joy of Life has been nervously eating hay and trotting around the fields of a New Jersey farm. He has become the focal point of a battle between a U.S. citizen's claimed ownership rights and miles of bureaucratic red tape.

And all the unfortunate beast did want to have the lead back to be born in Cuba six years ago.

THE HORSE WAS purchased from its Cuban owner last year by Mrs. Mildred Segal, who wanted it for her riding stable in West Orange, N.J.

But U.S. Customs officials stopped it when she applied for an animal import permit, saying that because of its Cuban origin, she could not enter the country.

After several of her own personal protests failed to open any avenues for the horse's entry, Mrs. Segal turned to her congressman,

Rep. Joseph G. Minish (D-N.J.).

Minish and his staff began an investigation that disclosed the boundary between the United States and Canada was sometimes harder to cross than the Iron Curtain.

JOY OF LIFE was originally brought to Canada from Cuba in 1967 as a two-year-old race horse. But he never got near a starting gate.

A Canadian amateur horseman named Roger Vigness saw the horse and bought him for training as a jumper.

Seven months ago, while on a trip to Canada, Mrs. Segal hired Vigness as a riding master for her suburban Essex riding club. Included in the deal was the purchase of the horse for \$250.

After being contacted by Mrs. Segal, Minish sent a letter off to the Treasury Department, which regulates all U.S. Customs activities, requesting the horse be admitted without further delay.

THE RESPONSE was a long-winded "No."

Appalled, Minish sent a letter to Treasury Department Special Assistant James E. Smith, explaining that Joy of Life had been in Canada for just years and could not be considered a Cuban steed.

"I would venture to say that this type of bureaucratic decree would strike the general public as farcical and would place our government in a rather ridiculous position," Minish wrote Smith.

The "red horse" entry request suffered another blow in February when it was placed in the hands of Stanley L. Sommerfeld, the Treasury Department's foreign assets control director.

SEVERAL WEEKS ago, Sommerfeld handed down a decision that may prevent Joy of Life from ever placing a hoof on U.S. soil.

The Treasury Department official claimed that, remote as it may sound, the Cuban government would benefit financially if the horse was allowed to immigrate to New Jersey.

"A change in the existing policy of denying licenses in this case would clearly have an adverse effect on the program of denying Cuba foreign exchange earnings from direct or indirect exports to the United States," Sommerfeld charged.

Minish has vowed to fight on. But as it now stands, Joy of Life can only hope that President Nixon will one day share a pleasant dinner with Fidel Castro and remove all trade restrictions between the United States and Cuba.

| Cooler | | Index | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------|--|
| Cooler, cloudy and windy Saturday, chance of showers at night, high 60 to 65, low 35 to 40. More weather on page 4. | Vials, weather, obits | 4 | |
| | Leaders | 5 | |
| | Comics | 6 | |
| | Sports | 11-13 | |
| | Classified | 12-19 | |
| | Church news | 20 | |



Ridin' high

A Washington State Highways Department maintenance employe, Tom Arnold, sways 200 feet over the waters of Tacoma Narrows as he paints suspension cables on the Narrows Bridge. A crew of five men works daily to inspect and paint the 5,979-foot-long span.

It's time to change the time

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One of the two days of the year when many Americans aren't exactly sure what time it is comes up this Sunday, the day most of the country switches to Daylight Saving Time.

By decree of Congress, the nation's clocks are to be advanced an hour at 2 a.m. on the last Sunday of April.

At 2 a.m. on the last Sunday of October, the clocks will be set back an hour, reverting to Standard Time and creating the other day of confusion over the time.

Daylight Saving Time became national policy in 1917. However, Hawaii, Arizona, Michigan and Indiana have voted to remain on Standard Time.

In addition, parts of Utah, North Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oregon and Texas have been exempted from Daylight Saving Time by the U.S. Department of Transportation, which oversees the Eastern Time Zone.