

Parkway Visitors Decline

Blue Ridge Parkway travel during the 1974 calendar year was 13,987,273 visitors, which was slightly less than the 1973 calendar year, according to Supt. Granville B. Liles. 1973 travel exceeded 14 million visitors, the greatest in Parkway history.

The decrease is attributed to the closure of about 250 miles of Parkway in the winter of 1974 to reduce travel and save fuel; less travel during the balance of the year apparently was due to efforts of Americans to save fuel.

The Parkway will be open during the winter months so long as it is safe to travel. As in the past, sections will be closed, particularly at higher elevations, because of snow, ice, slides, or other natural occurrences which make it unsafe to travel.

A specific effort will be made to make it safe for travel around Asheville and Roanoke, since these areas do account for the greatest travel on the Parkway.

Supt. Liles emphasized that snowmobiles are not permitted on the Parkway motor road at any time.

Under the Federal Recreation Fee Program, the Golden Eagle Passport and the Golden Age Passport will again be available. There is no entrance fee for travel on Blue Ridge Parkway, as charged in some national parks and recreation areas; however, the Golden Eagle passport will be on sale at major Parkway offices.

In addition, the Golden Age Passport for persons sixty-two (62) years of age or older will be available. This Passport does provide a 50 per cent reduction in camping fees. Camping fees again will be required in Blue Ridge Parkway campgrounds, all of which will be fully opened on May 1.

When you think of prescriptions, think of VARNER'S. adv.

Hints From The County Extension Chairman

By - Jerry Purser



BEEF CATTLE - CURRENT SITUATION

The cattle producing industry is in serious financial condition. The problem is not really oversupply or low prices. Forty dollar cattle aren't cheap compared to prices feeders have been happy with in the past. Can the producer really expect the consumer to pay any more for the amount of beef sold at retail than she is paying now? Marketing margins are wider than they have been in the past but that only accounts for a small part of the cattle feeder's plight. The major problem of cattle producers today is neither consumer demand or marketing costs, the major problem is high feed costs.

USDA estimates that it would require a price of over \$45.00 for the January - April 1975 period for feeders to cover the cost they will have in cattle already on feed. They may be lucky to cover the cost of feeder cattle and feed (roughly \$5.50 - cwt. less than total costs). There is little prospect for profits in the near future for the cattle feeder.

Midwestern feed costs have risen dramatically in just the past year. Corn prices are estimated at \$3.49 - bushel for cattle placed on feed October 1975, compared to \$2.11 - bushel for corn fed to cattle a year earlier. Hay prices have risen from \$24.00 per ton in 1973 to \$37.75 per ton a year later in October 1974. Corn silage is \$23.68 per ton compared to \$14.51 per ton a year earlier. And 30 per cent protein supplement is up from \$8.60 per cwt. in October 1973 to \$9.90 per cwt. in October 1974.

Higher feed costs have forced large losses in cattle feeding over the past months and prospects for continued losses into the future. But the feeder cattle producer has

taken the brunt of the total losses in cattle production in the more recent months. It has been estimated that the cost of producing a 600 pound feeder steer may average about \$50.00 per cwt. under typical midwestern conditions. Over the past 3 months such feeder cattle have averaged just over \$30.00 in price. These figures represent a loss of about \$20.00 per cwt. of \$120.00 per head on a 600 pound feeder.

GENERAL OUTLOOK FOR 1975

The outlook for feeder cattle is based on the outlook for slaughter cattle and feed cost prospects. The key to outlook for cattle in 1975 is feed cost. If feed costs remain high, feeder cattle prices will remain low relative to slaughter cattle prices. But, high feed cost will also cause slaughter weights to remain light which will tend to strengthen slaughter cattle prices. High feeding prices also encourage increased slaughter of calves and "baby beef" which is the quickest way to eliminating a future over-supply of beef.

On the other hand, lower feed costs will tend to raise feeder cattle prices relative to slaughter cattle prices and improve the profitability of cow-calf operations. Also, lower feed cost could make cattle feeding more profitable even at lower beef prices. And, the current "surplus" of beef is a surplus only because production costs are high. There is little doubt that lower feed costs would be preferred by most cattle producers.

Current indications are that acreage of corn planted in 1975 will be roughly equal to the "intended" acreage planned for 1974. With a "normal" yield per acre, total U. S. corn production could be up 40 - 50 per cent over the 1974 crop. Even with a strong world demand that would be a sizeable increase. With decreasing supplies of poultry and hogs \$2 bushel corn is not out of the question for next fall, but \$2.50 might be a more likely figure. A similar weakness is also possible in the soybean meal market.

Board Eyeing U. S. Development Grants

Continued From Page One
Applicants must submit an Annual Application containing the following information:

A summary of a 3-year plan which identifies needs and objectives and demonstrates a strategy to meet those needs.

Formulation of a program to meet needs and objectives, indicating resources available (other than Community Development funds) and taking into consideration environmental factors.

A description of a program to prevent slums, blight, and deterioration and to provide community facilities and public improvements where necessary and appropriate.

A Housing Assistance Plan (HAP) which surveys the conditions of the community's housing stock, assesses the

needs of lower income persons, specifies an annual goal (number of units or persons) and indicates the general locations of proposed housing.

In limited circumstances, all requirements except the HAP may be waived.

A total of \$63.54 million will be available for North Carolina cities and counties, and it appears that 20 per cent of the money will go to non-metropolitan area.

This grant application must be completed by April 15, so the commissioners have little time to lose in defining the needs of the county.

The commissioners will also open bids for the placement of the general fund in one of the three local banks. The commissioners also need to give final approval to the Rural

Transporation Grant.

Transylvania County is one of the few counties in the state involved in transportation and this two-year grant would allow transportation to be expanded to transport the poor and the elderly to such things as doctors' offices or other necessary trips. This grant would provide 100 per cent funding.

The Commissioners will be asked to approve the sale of the remaining school bonds. Only \$700,000 in bonds remains unsold and the school system will be needing some of this money to complete the buildings recently let to contracts.

Bond experts feel that a March sale will probably hit the market at the lowest possible interest cost.

A petition to add the

Riverside Estates road to the State Secondary System will be on the agenda for approval.

The Social Services Director is asking for \$6,000 to match a \$48,000 State grant providing chore service for home bound elderly or disabled persons.

Mr. Morrison told Commission Chairman Bill Ives that he believes this will save the county money because if the persons have to be institutionalized, then the county must bear half the cost of institutional care and this can amount to several thousand dollars for one person alone.

Assuring Wholesome Food
In a single year, federal and state inspectors certified as wholesome about 120 billion pounds of meat and poultry products from some 5,800 plants.



Sawdust May Prove Beneficial To Cattle

South Dakota State University researchers have found that untreated Ponderosa pine sawdust may have beneficial effects for cattle.

Tests have shown that the coarse sawdust can be used as a roughage substitute at levels up to 15 percent with no substantial loss in animal performance.

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UP AND UP



BALLOON BLOWING is fun for all children as Jamie Weaver, March of Dimes National Poster Child, shows. Even though she was born without eyes, the nine-year-old from Spokane, Wash., gets along great in this world just the same. Jamie represents some 250,000 children born with birth defects in the United States each year.

Oh, No!



An "Oh, No!" is something unexpected that messes up your money plans

An "Oh, No!" is when that "little something extra" your boss hinted about giving you for Christmas turns out to be one of his wife's fruit cakes. That money was to help with Christmas bills. Now the bills are in... but the money's gone.

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