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1963

Strike continues as Liberal prepares for annual parade, band festival

In small towns like Liberal in 1963, a grocery store was hard to come by, and once attained, prized by town residents. Unfortunately for Liberal, Nash-Finch, a wholesale grocery store, was closing.

The grocery had opened its branch in Liberal in 1938 and was located at Third and Pennsylvania. After operating for 25 years, the store had closed its doors, and more than 25 Liberal residents were out of a job. The nearest Nash-Finch to Liberal was in Hutchinson, and a few employees would move there to continue working for the company.

The 1963 version of Billy's Picks was winding down for the college football season, with guesses so off that the Times predicted the "publisher will lock the (prize) money up for another year and breathe a sigh of relief."

With \$50 at stake, upsets "sent the contestants reeling." Wayne Poltroff and Mrs. Dale Hickman, both of Fort Worth, Texas, were in the lead running for first place, with four games wrong out of 20 contest games. Fifteen contestants were tied for third place with five games wrong out of 20. Time was running out for contestants, as there was only one week left in the football season.

The Chamber of Commerce was already looking ahead to the Christmas parade and band clinic in Liberal. Eleven floats were expected, with entrants including Busy Bee 4H, "Birth of Jesus," and other contestants registered to present themes like "Angelic Appearance," "Flight to Egypt" and "Christ Walks on Water," among others.

Out-of-town bands which would be in Liberal all day for the band clinic included Oklahoma bands from Turpin, Hooker, Texhoma, Forgan, and Balko, along with Kansas bands from Rolla, Satanta, and Plains. Many bands would also be in Liberal only for the parade, and not the clinic.

Immediately following the parade and clinic, candy was being distributed at the Chamber of Commerce office, and the Peoples National Bank Drive-In.

"Seems that car prowlers were working the night club circuit" on a Tuesday night, the Times reported.

At 1:35 a.m., Carl Gaut summoned police to the Poodle Dog Club, where a prowler was reported to have broken the wing glass from his car to obtain entry. About \$200 worth of clothing was stolen, as well as a billfold containing personal papers.

Another individual, Claude Penrod, went to the police station and reported that "his car had been prowled" while it was parked at the Shangri La Club. Nothing was reported missing from that incident, but his personal papers had been scattered over the parking lot.

Contract negotiations between the striking Teamsters Union and Tradewind resumed while pickets continued to march in front of the plant, continuing a 10-day strike.

Thirty-five members had gone on strike Nov. 12, claiming that the company had been stalling union efforts to negotiate a contract. Leonard Wright, Tradewind president, told the Times that the company was negotiating in good faith and respected the rights of union members to strike as well as the right on non-union employees to work and not join a union.

The company negotiating team consisted of Wright, Pat Young from the Liberal plant, and Marvin Martin, a Wichita attorney representing the firm. The union negotiators were Sam Smith, local president, Clarence Smith and Carl Drake, along with three employees of the local plant.