

Valley News

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Which Way Now For Lebanon's Elderly?

By RICH BARLOW
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LEBANON — Edna and Roland Campbell are in their late 60s. They live in a four-room apartment in a white, wood-frame building on Fairview Avenue. Their apartment is neat, attractive — and inexpensive. Low rent makes them luckier than other elderly residents in Lebanon, and even the Campbells have to trim costs wherever they can, especially because of heavy medical bills they've collected over the years.

Gertrude Genest, 73, lost her trailer home in a fire last May, four days after the death of

her husband. She now lives in an apartment on Bush Street. Gertrude pays almost two-thirds of her monthly Social Security to cover her rent. And like the Campbells, she has medical problems. She takes pills for her high blood pressure; she estimates a six-week supply runs about \$21.

Another senior citizen who requested anonymity — she'll be called Mary — also lives in a well-kept apartment. But her rent is higher than the Campbells', consuming three-quarters of her Social Security check each month. Inexpensive housing, she says, "would help me a lot. Not only me, but a lot of other people" in

Lebanon.

All of these senior citizens supported the Lebanon Housing Authority's (LHA) controversial proposal to construct an elderly housing complex on the Marlar property at 14 School Street. In fact, all are on the authority's waiting list for housing. That wait grew longer last month when the planning board refused approval of the project's site plan, setting back the LHA in its search for a suitable property.

But while the battle over the School Street project has ended, the underlying issue that provoked the controversy remains. That issue concerns the availability of affordable housing

in Lebanon for the community's elderly, who with their relatively fixed incomes are more affected than many by today's meteoric rises in the cost of living. LHA officials report they have 42 senior citizens on their waiting list for housing. The largest complex the LHA considered building on the Marlar site would have had 41 apartments.

The Campbells have been on that list for slightly more than a year. They are both retired, Roland having left his post as a custodian at Dartmouth at the age of 60 because of health problems. Edna worked as an office clerk at local hospitals, putting in

over 13 years at Mary Hitchcock and seven at Alice Peck Day. She continues to do occasional volunteer work at the latter institution.

They pay \$185 a month for their quarters. "We are getting as reasonable a rent" as is available, Edna says.

She's right, according to LHA Executive Director Buddy Romano. Average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Lebanon, he said, falls somewhere between \$275 to \$325 a month. And the Campbells' rent should rise sometime this fall, says Edna, because of renovations to

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— HOUSING



Valley News — Linda A. May

The Tri-State Limited is greeted by the Hartford High School band upon its arrival from Boston Saturday in White River Junction.

White River Junction Back On Tracks

By DAVE COBURN
Valley News Staff Writer

ABOARD THE TRI-STATE LIMITED — Steve Marshall, standing in the chilly space between cars, looked out to the east where the flat bottom of the Connecticut River valley gives way to the White Mountains. The snow-capped peaks of the Presidential Range rolled by, shining in the bright

Railroad Days, a three-day celebration of the town's rail heritage, and more specifically the Tri-State Limited, a five-car diesel train which took over 700 railroad buffs and leaf peepers on tours of the valley between White River Junction and Woodsville yesterday.

The Limited, chartered for the weekend by the Mystic Valley Rail-

road, is a profit of about \$1,200, according to Frederick Briggs, a member of the businessmen's association.

Along the 40-mile stretch between White River Junction and the Woodsville depot, the sumac which thrives in the roadbed of the Central Vermont Railway had lost its bright red flame. Other trees had already passed their peak for the season.

Hampshire from the bottomlands all the way to the eastern slopes of the Whites.

Riders on both the morning and afternoon trips were entertained by barbershop quartets which plied the length of the train singing old-fashioned songs. Passengers, a mixed group of all ages, joined in a hand-picking sing-along when the quartet

Ford, Carter Say U.S. Must Deal With The PLO

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gerald R. Ford and Jimmy Carter, who were instrumental in bringing Israel and Egypt together, say the United States eventually must deal directly with the Palestine Liberation Organization to gain a comprehensive Middle East peace.

In an unprecedented joint interview, the 38th and 39th presidents also agreed that many moderate Arab leaders support the Camp David peace process but are afraid to speak up.

Ford and Carter, frequently calling each other "Jerry" and "Jimmy," spoke on the flight back from Saturday's funeral of slain Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. The White House released the text yesterday.

Sadat had urged that the United States talk with the PLO.

"At some point that has to happen," said Ford, who was president when then-Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger employed shuttle diplomacy leading to the separation of Israeli and Egyptian forces in the Sinai.

"That is the kind of development that I think has to take place if you're going to get the negotiations for the future off dead center," he added. "I would not want to pick the date today . . . but as you go down the road at

Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. said yesterday that U.S. forces will conduct "very extensive" military exercises in Egypt next month with troops from Egypt and some Persian Gulf countries. Page 5.

opportunity to represent them in these eventual negotiations," Ford added.

Carter said "the greatest thing the Palestinians could do for themselves is for the Palestinian mayors to say, 'We will negotiate even this limited self-government or full autonomy,' and then consolidate their position."

Ford agreed, saying, "If I were in the shoes of the PLO, I would, rather than fight it, accept whatever can be negotiated between Egypt and Israel."

Ford also suggested that returning the rest of the Sinai to Egypt before next April's deadline would be "a great step forward."

"Once the Camp David process is finalized, if the pressure is on from the United States and other sources, there can be another step that will appeal to the moderate Arab nations," Ford said. "And if they're given the opportunity they will disengage themselves from the radicals."



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By DAVE COBURN

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ABOARD THE TRI-STATE LIMITED — Steve Marshall, standing in the chilly space between cars, looked out to the east where the flat bottom of the Connecticut River valley gives way to the White Mountains. The snow-capped peaks of the Presidential Range rolled by, shining in the bright October sun.

"I think this is one of the things that could rejuvenate White River Junction, the economy of White River Junction itself," said Marshall, who believes that White River could well become "the economic center of this (Vermont) side of the Upper Valley."

What he was talking about was

Railroad Days, a three-day celebration of the town's rail heritage, and more specifically the Tri-State Limited, a five-car diesel train which took over 700 railroad buffs and leaf peepers on tours of the valley between White River Junction and Woodsville yesterday.

The Limited, chartered for the weekend by the Mystic Valley Railway Society, a group of railroad enthusiasts from the Boston area, was, for many, the highlight of the event, which ends today. It was also the biggest money-maker of the weekend for Railroad Days' sponsor, Downtown White River Junction, Inc. The group, which sold 670 tickets for the two three-hour tours, expects to clear

a profit of about \$1,200, according to Frederick Briggs, a member of the businessmen's association.

Along the 40-mile stretch between White River Junction and the Woodsville depot, the sumac which thrives in the roadbed of the Central Vermont Railway had lost its bright red flame. Other trees had already passed their peak for the season too, but crisp, clear October weather accompanied both tours.

The Limited, a modern diesel-powered train on loan from the Boston and Maine Railroad, rolled up the valley at a leisurely 30-mile-an-hour pace. The tracks parallel the Connecticut River most of the way, offering passengers spectacular views of New

Hampshire from the bottomlands all the way to the eastern slopes of the Whites.

Riders on both the morning and afternoon trips were entertained by barbershop quartets which plied the length of the train singing old-fashioned songs. Passengers, a mixed group of all ages, joined in a hand-clapping sing-along when the quartet struck up, *I've Been Working on The Railroad*. The passenger cars, among the most modern rolling stock owned by the B&M, erupted in a chorus of "oohs" and "aahs" as the snowy caps of the Presidential Range came into view about an hour north of White

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— RAILROAD

Railroad

(Continued from page 1)

River Junction.

Such exclamations of delight were probably a daily occurrence before the B&M dropped its regular passenger service in 1964. Today, the B&M runs only three freight trains a day on the White River-Wells River section of the road.

Organizers this morning hailed the Railroad Days celebration as a success, although they conceded it was difficult to determine how much extra business the event generated for the downtown business community. Many of the 130 railroad enthusiasts who rode the Tri-State Limited from Boston Saturday stayed at local hotels and patronized downtown restaurants and theater.

Robert Triplett, the outgoing executive director of Downtown White River

Junction Inc. this morning called it "a rousing success. The town really got into it."

Enthusiasm for Railroad Days among downtown merchants began building a week ago with a rush on pin-striped engineering caps ordered by the business group to promote the event.

"This little hat kicked it all off," said Briggs yesterday as he stood in the doorway of a passenger car on the return trip from Woodsville. Briggs said the group sold over 300 of the hats during the week. "This little hat brought that whole Main Street together," he added.

Phidias Dantos, owner of the Hotel Coolidge, which hosted 70 of the visitors from the Mystic Valley Railway Society, said the weekend was part of the businessmen's group's effort to

"build a solid foundation for the renaissance of the village," not just a one-shot injection of retail business. The effect of Railroad Days on local businesses would be impossible to gauge anyway, he said, because foliage season and bow hunting season also tend to increase activity in the stores.

Triplett ended his 11-month stint with the downtown organization Sept. 30 but stayed on in a voluntary capacity through today to oversee the event. The downtown association has not officially announced his replacement, but DWRJ chairman Dubois S. Thompson said last week that Lawrence G. Chase, vice-president of Twin State Electric Co. was the leading choice for the full-time position.

The three-day event also gave visitors a first glimpse at the embryonic

Vermont Railroad Museum, a collection of railroad nostalgia organized by DWRJ Inc. Railroad Days. The "museum" this weekend was a display of pictures in the caboose of "Old 494" behind the Municipal Building, but organizers hope to find a permanent home for the museum.

Marshall, a train buff who works at the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory in Hanover, said he felt the foliage tour could succeed as a regular fall attraction. "Of course, we're steam buffs," he said, looking out to the mountains east of the river. "But this is great."

His six-year-old son Jamie turned away from the endless fields of withered cornstalks rolling away beneath his gaze to concur. Asked how he liked his first ride on a diesel, he flashed a toothless grin and said, "It's great."