

December 3, 2002

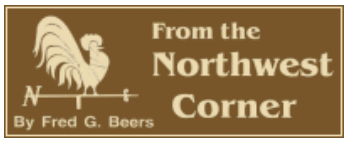
At different times in years gone by, Gene Wood has been Perry's police chief and a deputy in the Noble county sheriff's department. He is an archetypal lawman. Those are just two of the jobs this large man has filled, but most of us who have known him for any length of time still call him "Chief," because he is the very embodiment of a police officer. His physical appearance and his demeanor alone command respect but he also has an authoritative aura that tells you to pay attention. He has been known to rustle up a work party for just about any job at hand, and he sometimes does it by calling in the chits (sic) owed to him because of past favors rendered.

Gene and I are almost exactly the same age (he's older) and he is a devout member of the Lions club while I have been a Rotarian more than sixty years, but we get along very well because we're both Presbyterians. I always enjoy visiting with him. He has an endless store of yarns to tell about this city and Noble county and he has known just about every individual who has ever lived in this community. He is a walking encyclopedia. Recent periods of ill health have reduced the contacts Gene has made for years, but you can still find him around the square every weekday, taking care of office business at Wayne Casteel's establishment on the north side of the square, or helping out at the Brown-Dugger Funeral Home when needed. He is one of the dwindling number of surviving World War II veterans still with us, so I have asked him to tell about his recollection of December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor catapulted this country into World War II. Here's Gene's account:

"Dateline Perry, Oklahoma, December 7th, 1941. I was a junior at Perry High School at this time, living on a farm southeast of Perry. I rode a school bus daily. There was no television and our family had no telephone, only a radio, probably operated by a battery. I didn't really hear much about the attack until the next day. I couldn't really realize what or why it happened.

"I knew it was awful and all of us young men were ready to do what we could. I was too young for the military on December 7, 1941, but two days after graduating I was in the U.S. Army Air Force serving my time. I was honorably discharged and returned home to Perry. I've been here ever since. I'm proud to have been able to serve my country as a corporal in the U.S. Air Force."

Gene and I both well remember that we and our friends thought it was going to be a short war and that we would quickly defeat the Japanese, despite the losses they dealt us in that surprise attack. Instead, the war went on until the Axis powers were defeated in Europe and the Japanese surrendered in August of 1945. More recollections of that period will follow in just a few days.



December 6, 2002

Here's another recollection of Pearl Harbor Day - December 7, 1941, the "day that will live in infamy." My thanks to Elizabeth Treeman Willems for providing this personal memory. This is how Elizabeth recalls that historic day:

"At the remove of sixty-one years, my memories of the first week of December 1941 are blurry. No wonder: my life at that time was a blur. After a year and a half of graduate study at Washington University in St. Louis, I had put my uninspiring thesis on hold, resigned my meal-ticket secretarial job, abandoned my bed (a couch) in the apartment I shared with four other girls, and was preparing to head home to Perry for a month's vacation before I started a new job at Park College, up the Missouri River from Kansas City.

"In between packing my meager belongings (mostly books and thesis notes), I made dazed farewell visits to my Great Uncle Will and Aunt Laura Mars and their families, and to colleagues and friends. Some time toward the end of the week - Thursday? Friday? - I got myself and my stuff down to the railroad station and caught the train to Tulsa, where, by hook or crook, I managed to make connections with the Frisco Doodle Bug to Perry. I remember nothing of the journey or my arrival.

"Probably, but not certainly, I went to church on Sunday, the 7th, to hear our beloved David Thomas preach. Almost surely, Mother (Irene Treeman) afterward served up a Welcome Home dinner: beef roast with potatoes browned alongside, peas and carrots, Harvard beets, Jell-o salad, and one of my favorite desserts-Spanish chocolate cake, lazy daisy sunshine cake, or pineapple upside-down cake.

She, my young sister Francie, and I cleared up the dishes, and then Mother and I retreated upstairs to sort out my dirty clothes (Monday was wash day) and discuss my plans. I was happy, filled with good food, and exhausted. So very soon I begged off, lay down on the bed, and conked out.

"Two minutes later someone was yelling my name. I put the pillow over my head. Then the same fiend was shaking me. 'Get up! Something awful has happened! On the radio! Come downstairs!' Groggily I followed Francie down, to hear the terrible, unbelievable news. Japanese bombers had attacked our fleet at Pearl Harbor. No! We were all scared of Hitler, not Japan. It couldn't be true! But it was, as the, radio kept telling us as each snippet of information came through.

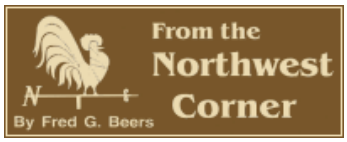
"I never took the chance to ask Dad (Ralph Treeman) where he was when the disaster struck, but the rest of us agree that most likely he was out fishing. Brother John had gone to the picture show at the Roxy Theater, during which there was a news flash that neither he nor most of the audience took seriously, for they all stayed till the end of the film. Brother Bill was up at Iowa State University in Ames, where he had recently graduated with a degree in forestry but stayed around to see which military branch would finally claim him (it's too complicated to go into here), and to pursue his romance with his Iowa girlfriend, Maxine Miller.

"According to Francie, Mother kept exclaiming, 'Oh, my boys! My boys!.' She had two brothers, Murray and Ralph McCune, in World War I. Ralph came home, unscathed, but Murray was grievously wounded in the Battle of the Somme, in France, losing his right arm and nearly his life. Now she tried to track Bill down by telephone in Ames and at last caught him at one of his part-time jobs-sweeping out a university building. He hadn't heard the news and was baffled when the first thing she said to him was, 'Don't do anything in a hurry.'

"Life had to go on, of course, Dad and the boys to work, Francie to school, Mother busy with many activities. As much as possible, however, we stayed glued to the broadcasts. The old family rule of no turning on the radio at mealtimes fell by the wayside. We listened raptly to President Roosevelt's famous 'day of infamy' speech on Monday and his appeal to Congress for an immediate declaration of war on two fronts. There was no question about the answer.

"The attack on Pearl Harbor changed all our lives irrevocably. We can't even imagine what we would have become if it hadn't happened. That we are all still around is indeed fortunate."

Thanks to my friend Elizabeth for this colorful memory of the first Pearl Harbor Day.



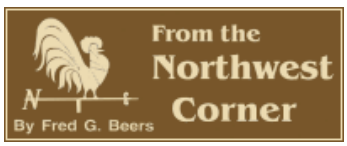
December 10, 2002

Congratulations to a couple of Perry folks who have earned some distinction in entirely unrelated fields. First of all, hats off to Peggy Haxton, the teacher at Rose Hill School on the grounds of the Cherokee Strip Museum on West Fir Avenue. She is one of three Oklahomans honored by the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, PA. Peggy is being recognized for her role as the teacher of thousands of students in the old one-room school house that is a focal point of interest at our museum. For many years it served students in grades one through eight in a rural school district near Perry. Now completely restored, it was moved several years ago to the museum grounds. Students from all over Oklahoma come to Perry each day during the school year to experience the life of an early day boy or girl when this area was being settled in the early days of the 20th century.

Freedoms Foundation recognizes the exceptional efforts of people who promote the benefits of a free society. Since its inception in 1949, the program has honored more than 50,000 Americans. The Rose Hill School program is operated through the Oklahoma Historical Society and the Cherokee Strip Museum. Students spend a day touring the museum and then cross the "bridge of time" to attend classes in the old-fashioned school house. There they learn what it was like to attend classes in 1910. Also receiving the Freedoms Foundation awards this year are Ross Harlan and Gary Lower of Oklahoma City. Kansas student Amanda Rush also will be honored at the dinner. Harlan is a World War II veteran who retired from the Air Force as a lieutenant colonel. He is a retired senior vice president of Oklahoma Gas & Electric. Lower is a former football and track coach who recently retired as international vice president of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

In addition to Peggy's award, Wade DeJager, a senior at Perry High School, qualifies for accolades because he recently made a perfect composite score of 36 on the American College Test (ACT), and thereby became one of only a handful to reach that level of academic achievement. Results of the 2002 national and state ACT scores show that only 134 students out of 1,116,082 rang up the perfect score. Wade's score was in the 2003 program. His parents are Bill and Cheryl DeJager and his maternal grandmother is Dorothy Bowers, who used to be a news writer for this newspaper. All of them are entitled to be proud of Wade's high ranking.

Here's some unrelated information gleaned from the advertising matter in an issue of the *Perry Daily Journal* published in the 1930s, during the Great Depression. According to that day's paper, grocery shoppers at Charlie Huffman's Grocery could buy the following for just a nickel each: Wheat flakes, 2 lbs. Cabbage, bottle of grape juice, Faultless Starch and a can of tomatoes. H.R. Walker's special included a gallon of Golden syrup, 49 cents; 2-lb. Can of Clabber Girl baking Powder for 21 cents, pork roast at 9 cents a pound and hamburger or sausage, 3 lbs. For 25 cents. Remember, this was during very bad economic times. Who wants to go back to that period?



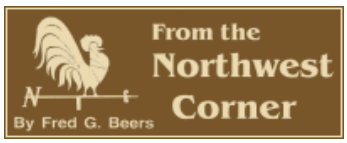
December 13, 2002

The first car I owned after World War II was a Chevy coupe. It was a used car, one of the last that came off the General Motors assembly line before the company devoted all of its production to war-time equipment. It had only a few optional accessories. One of these was a gasoline heater, the kind that became extremely hot in a matter of seconds. (But that's a story for another time.) My next car was a sportier post-war model, and after that I began a lifetime of trading in one model for a newer and better one as necessary. Because of our problems with the Germans, Japanese, Italians and other components of the Axis powers, I made an unspoken pledge to buy only American-made cars. That resolution became harder to keep as years went by. One of my favorite chariots was a VW Beetle. It was a "previously owned" (used) car when I bought it and it served me very well for 17 years. I eventually sold it and bought a pickup. That phase also passed and in due time I had a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) for tooling around. It was handy for a lot of reasons.

The VW folks quit marketing their Beetle in the U.S. about 30 years ago and I sold my little Bug before buying the pickup. I have missed it ever since. Not too long ago the Beetle reappeared in the U.S. and now I have one. It has quite a few bells and whistles not previously available in this model - things like an engine in the front, sun roof, automatic transmission with Cruise Control, leather upholstery with electric seat warmers and so forth. A very neat car indeed. It's fun to drive and I am planning on keeping it for a long time. I just hope it lasts as long as the one I used to have. Young people tell me it is "a cool car," and I can only agree, even if I don't know exactly what that means.

Ed Warner's death the other day reminded me of another era in this little city, when Ed was a clerk at Monte Jones Drug Store on the west side of the square and I was employed in the editorial department of *The Perry Daily Journal*, just across the alley from Monte's store. With my friend, Boyd Norman, who at the time was advertising manager of *The Journal*, we slipped into Monte's back door to take a coffee break at the soda fountain. Ed would greet us, always wearing a neat white shirt and necktie, and we had a good time just talking to him about major issues of the day, like OU's and OSU's football teams. Once, when I was confined at home with hepatitis, Ed brought me a sack full of old comic books and other periodicals. He remembered my favorites. That is just one indication of his thoughtfulness. A mutual friend also reminded me the other day that Ed, though big and burly, knew how to tie a very attractive bow on gift-wrapped packages purchased at the drug store.

As fate would have it, after a few years Ed and I both worked for the Ditch Witch company out on West Fir. He became a lead man because he was a natural leader. He was always friendly with everyone and his winning smile disarmed strangers. Ed had a natural and abiding interest in the history of this area. His grandfather, John Warner, was custodian of the Perry post office in the early days. One of Ed's proudest moments came when he met and later married Ophelia. After Ed retired from CMW, he and Mrs. Warner enjoyed traveling to many places. I'll miss our occasional conversations. In truth, this town will miss our friend, Ed Warner.



December 17, 2002

Wes Leatherock has been a friend and a colleague for many years, back to the time I began my journalistic career in 1941 when his father, the late W.K. Leatherock, who owned this paper, hired me as a reporter. Wes was a youngster at that time, but he virtually grew up in the news room and back shop of this newspaper. He had an interesting life in the news and public relations fields and now he's retired in Oklahoma City. All of this is by way of background. Wes dropped me a line

recently after an interesting feature story appeared in *The Journal* concerning the little Santa Claus house that has been stationed in the courthouse park each Christmas season for many years. Wes clarified several points and you probably will be interested in reading what he had to say. Here's the basis of his message:

"The story in *The Perry Daily Journal* about the little Santa Claus house brought many pleasant memories to a Leatherock. However, the (little) house wasn't built by the Leatherocks. My parents, W.K. and Avis Leatherock, bought it from Howard and Ernestina Cress, who lived in the 800 block on Jackson. It was for their daughter. Howard was the Perry police chief until he resigned to enter the Army around the start of World War II.

"I'm not sure it. (the little house) was original with the Cresses. It's possible they built it or had it built, but it's also possible they may have bought it from someone else. I don't know whether the Cresses' daughter had outgrown the playhouse or they had to leave it behind when Howard entered the Army. In any event, I remember the little house being maneuvered from a winch truck into the back yard at our house, about a block away."

This cleared up some questions for me. I did not remember that the little house originally came from the yard of Mr. and Mrs. Cress, although I remember the family very well. Their house was a half-block east of the two-story Leatherock home at Ninth and Jackson. Howard was a nephew of the attorney, P.W. Cress. As you know, the story about the little Santa house appeared on the front page of The Journal a few days ago as a Christmas season feature. Thanks to Wes for his interest in straightening out a few details.

Speaking of personal ties to the local newspaper, Francis Thetford was managing editor when I went to work there about 61 years ago. Francis is now deceased, but one of his daughters, Sharon Ervin of McAlester, is a published author. She recently had a book-signing in Oklahoma City. Charlotte Ream Cooper, June Ream's daughter, was a girlhood friend of Sharon's and she attended the signing. The book for that occasion was Sharon's latest, *Bodacious*, and it is available at many stores in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Her previous novel was *June and Mother Earth*, and it is also doing very well. I'm sure many of you remember Francis and his daughter, Sharon.

From the Northwest Corner
By Fred G. Beers

December 20, 2002

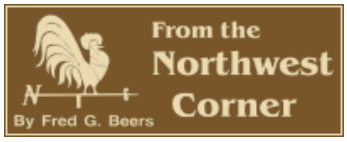
Nowadays, hardly anyone gives fruitcake as a Christmas present. That hasn't always been the case, but for years the item has been ridiculed, scorned, verbally abused and almost demonized by many jokesters, such as late-night TV comics. They usually say there is actually only one fruitcake in existence but it is passed around year after year, making us think there are many of them. As a result, most of us now feel uncomfortable offering fruitcake to someone we really care for. That seems too bad. Fruitcakes are better for your health and teeth than many of the other seasonal goodies that have somehow retained their respectability, at least in the eyes of professional funnymen. Fudge is a good example. It has so far escaped the sarcasm that has all but eliminated fruitcake from the Christmas-time experience. Fudge is still greatly beloved. I bow to no man in my craving for that rich, creamy candy, and there's no stigma attached to it despite words of caution from dentists. In the interest of weight control, however, I am practically fudge-free at this time of the year. Jay Leno and Dave Letterman have not yet declared war on fudge.

I remember a few years back when fruitcake was still an acceptable Yuletide gift. Offering them to friends, neighbors and relatives was a perfectly normal and acceptable tradition. Most homes kept them out in the open and offered generous

slices to holiday visitors. There is something homey about fruitcake. Makes me think of the early 1940s when hundreds of Noble county men and women were in military service at distant bases. Most of them were far from the homes and the people they knew and loved back here. It was a difficult time for everyone, but one Perry gentleman came up with an idea to alleviate the problem. H.R. McMullen (McMillan?) was his name, I believe, and he was known to one and all simply as "Mac." I have little information about him, including authentication of his name. He probably was a World War I veteran because he knew how lonely the young GIs, sailors, Marines, WACs, WAVEs, SPARs and so forth feel when they are separated from the folks back home. He decided on his own to do something about that.

Mac's idea was simple. He proposed that the home folks provide a fruitcake for each serviceman and servicewoman from Noble county. I think he wrapped the cakes, addressed the shipping labels and sent them on their way. No telling how many arrived, intact, at their destination. Anyway, he offered to handle most of the mailing process himself if the cakes were brought to him. Thinking back, that must have been an enormous project for one man, who was either divorced or a widower, but Mac never looked back after offering to handle the project. Hundreds of fruitcakes must have been mailed from the Perry post office to APO and FPO addresses all over the world. When Mac thought interest was waning, he would come to *The Journal* newsroom and urge us to run more stories to re-ignite people's awareness.

As I say, I'm not even sure of Mac's actual name, but I believe he lived in a converted garage behind the home of Bill Wolleson on Delaware. His modest home was on the alley between Eighth and Ninth streets. It is still there. I don't know how long he continued that campaign or what's become of him, but if he were still here I'll bet he would strenuously object to the way fruitcakes have been disparaged in recent years. If you have one of your own, eat it and serve your guests whenever the occasion arises. And if you feel like it, send one to someone in military service. They'll thank you.



December 24, 2002

Christmas Eve is so filled with substantive meaning that it hardly needs local happenings to help us focus on it. Traditionally this is when we celebrate that holy night long ago when the baby Jesus was born in a rude Bethlehem stable. He was, and is, no less than the Son of God Almighty, sent to Earth by His Father to show us how to live and to take upon His own sinless body a sacrifice to earn redemption for all the sins and misdeeds that we have committed. You already know all that. It is a glorious thought, indeed.

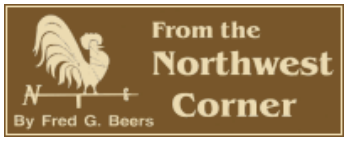
But for just a moment let me call your attention to another frosty Christmas Eve more than four decades ago, when a real-life drama was played out in this community. It was a tragedy of many dimensions with ramifications that affected numerous lives. Changes in the local social order probably took place as one result. It is not the kind of thing any of us likes to remember, especially at this wonderful time of the year, but it at least has meaning as a sign of the times.

Homer Thompson was a well-liked 53-year-old Perry cafe operator in 1953. His barbecue was celebrated far and wide as some of the finest to be found in Oklahoma. Diners regularly drove to Perry from Stillwater and many other parts of the state to sample Mr. Thompson's spicy offerings. He opened the cafe in 1950. It was known simply as Thompson's Bar-B-Q. The cafe was in a white painted cement block building on the old U.S. 64 route. For 20 years prior to that he was the chef at Wesley Marcy's Gem Cafe on the south side of the square and he had a natural talent for something like pure artistry in the kitchen. He was not trained at Cordon Bleu but customers didn't care. The menu at his own cafe was just about the same as those at other barbecue houses, but there was something especially delectable about the food he prepared. He

was a rather large, seemingly happy man and almost always wore a broad smile along with his chefs apron. He was a leader in the dwindling local black community, and he was respected by virtually all who knew him.

On that fateful Christmas Eve in 1953, Mr. Thompson was having a party for employees, friends and family in the cafe building at the intersection of 11th and Perry streets. Twenty or so had been invited but several others who stopped by were cordially invited to join the happy throng. Laughter and glad tidings filled the air, and that probably is part of what attracted two Perry brothers as they approached the building.

The brothers, 38 and 40 years old, wanted to join the party, but Mr. Thompson stood at the front door of the cafe and denied them admission. Details of what ensued are not clear. The younger of the two brothers apparently had a .38 pistol. As the argument became heated he used it to fire a single bullet at Mr. Thompson. It was a fatal shot. The brothers fled but just a few hours later they voluntarily surrendered peacefully to Sheriff John Beasley and Perry Police Chief Gene Wood. They were taken to Stillwater and jailed there for their own safety. Details of what followed, including final disposition of charges filed against the brothers, are not important to this story. But the loss of Homer Thompson on an otherwise happy Christmas Eve was a sad ending to what should have been a time of joy. Thompson's widow operated the cafe for a time after that, but eventually the property was sold and the building razed. The loss of Homer Thompson was traumatic for his family and friends. It marked the end of an era in this tight little community.



December 27, 2002

Here's another personal recollection of how things were at the time of the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, this one from our friend Glenn Yahn. What follows is Glenn's memory of that fateful period when the Japanese virtually destroyed the U.S. Navy's Pacific fleet. Read on for Glenn's story:

"Elizabeth Willems recently wrote for the Northwest Corner: 'At the removal (remove) of 61 years, my memories of the week of December 1941 are blurry.' Now bear with me for just a few lines of blurry memories of a 92-year-old senior citizen. This was before television, panty hose, cars with running boards, women trying to join the Augusta Country Club - but we did have cars - even with radios. On that day, we were out for a Sunday afternoon drive with my wife, Eleanor, and her mother and Dad, Shapard and Auda Thornton from Pawnee.

"We were circling the Courthouse Square in Perry, with the radio tuned low. The announcer said: `We interrupt this program to bring you a very important news bulletin. Pearl Harbor has just been bombed by a large number of Japanese planes. We have no further report at this time as to the extent of damages, or loss of life - or how many enemy planes were shot down. Stay tuned to WKY for later news items as they develop.'

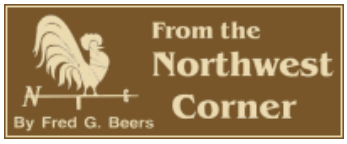
"At that time I was 31, years of age, married, and with a one-year-old daughter, as well I had two good friends on the draft board - Marsh Woodruff and H.C. Donahue - so I felt sure I would be deferred - needed at home to help the war effort.

"As the war in Europe grew `bleaker,' and with the Battle of the Bulge heating up, the pace of the draft was stepped up - we older folks were summoned. Among others were Bus Doyle, from Red Rock, Kenneth Reed, Ed Malzahn, Paul Cress and many others - it almost put an end to the famous old `Perry Poor Boys Club.'

"It was a great experience, but I was homesick after the first day. We were in a group at Fort Riley, Kansas - 18-year-olds and 35- to 40-years of age. Boot camp was geared for the young ones. I lost 30 pounds during basic training. The scuttlebutt was that `you older fellas would never have to go overseas.' A short time later, we were on a troop train headed to Fort Ord, California. In another few days we were on a troop ship, 55 Rawlins, headed for who knows where?'

"A little later (three weeks) we landed on the island of Leyte in the Philippines (where-General MacArthur landed in his return, as promised, to the Filipino people). Later we were sent to Luzon Island and assigned to the Army Air Corps at Clark Field. That was a nice assignment, but I was still homesick. I had a chance to remain with a nice advancement, or to come home. What was my choice? You know darned well!!! I wanted to see Eleanor and Bettye Kaye - and my dear Mom. God bless America, and make it a nation worthy of being blessed."

My thanks to Glenn and the others who contributed their memories of that difficult period 61 years ago when our country suddenly found itself in a life or death struggle with enemies in the Pacific and in Europe. You should know that Glenn, "Mr. OSU," submitted his recollections on an orange: letterhead with 38-28 38-28 38-28 across the top.



December 31, 2002

That was quite an impressive and prestigious award presented to Ed Malzahn the other night by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). It's called an "Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark" and of course it is a tribute to Ed's invention, the Ditch Witch trencher, which is now officially recognized as the machine that launched an entire industry. The ASME chooses one individual for this award each year and this is the first one awarded to an Oklahoman. Everyone in this state can take pride in this recognition, and that is especially true for those of us who live in Perry. Congratulations to Ed Malzahn and his unique company, the Charles Machine Works, Inc.

The Ditch Witch story is pretty well known to most Perryans. The machine was the product of Ed's fertile brain after he watched two sweaty laborers digging a small service line for utility services to a Perry home. They used a pick and shovel in Oklahoma's sweltering summer heat, creating a lateral line from a larger trench dug in the alley by a conventional, large wheel trencher. The big machine was not made for digging service lines, so the thought naturally occurred to Ed: "There must be a better way." That same idea has no doubt provided the motivation for numerous labor-saving devices.

Ed gives some credit to the late Bud Marshall, a local plumber, for suggesting how wide and how deep the small trencher should dig. Bud test-drove the little trencher on several jobs. He estimated it would take two to three days for hand laborers to dig a residential service line, but with the Ditch Witch trencher the same job could be completed in a matter of hours. That would reduce the cost of the job by a considerable amount.

There are many side stories about the Malzahn family and the invention of the Ditch Witch machine. In the mid-1940s, Ed's dad, the late Charlie Malzahn, had a machine shop that had done some defense contract work for the military during World War II. Charlie told Ed to think of something for the employees to do between major jobs. He wanted something the shop hands could make when not engaged in seasonal work. Ed came up with the idea for a small trencher and with his dad's assistance made the first one, using a soapstone and cutting torch as the process moved along. That is a far cry from the high-tech operation now going on out there at the Ditch Witch factory on West Fir Avenue.

My personal favorite story has to do with my time as managing editor of this newspaper back when some of the first Ditch Witch trenchers were being produced by the Malzahns. At that time *The Journal* was printed on an ancient Goss flatbed press. The machine was so old that we expected something to break during each day's press run. We were seldom disappointed. The breakdowns occurred regularly. When that happened, we would just call Charlie's Machine Shop and they responded promptly each time. Usually that meant that Ed Malzahn, in work khakis and a narrow-brimmed khaki hat, would come to our office with a portable welder and fix the old press. About that same time I began hearing that the Malzahns were building some kind of machines and selling them as far away as Australia. I dispatched a reporter to check out the story and he soon came back with a look of obvious wonderment. He described the Ditch Witch trencher as best he could, adding that the Malzahns were indeed selling quite a few of those newfangled things. My first thought was that this was good because it was like adding a new small industry to the local scene, and then it struck me. If Ed and his shop got too busy with those new gadgets, who would weld our press back together when the inevitable breakdowns occurred? The tired old press hung together until a new offset press was purchased a few years later. In the interim, a final irony: I wound up working for Ed Malzahn for 20 years in graphic communications and public relations at the Ditch Witch factory until retiring in 1989. They are still making and selling a lot of Ditch Witch trenchers out there on West Fir and *The Journal* is still getting out a paper on time each day.