

# Shellegraph



Ben Visser, left, and Doug Carlson discuss where the exact start and finish lines are located for the Mileage Marathon. The 1959 Fiat in the background is the Carlson/Trokey entry.

## A RECORD RUN ON THE RIVER ROAD

Judging from the publicity, the uninitiated might assume that Ben Visser was the sole participant in the Wood River Lab's annual Mileage Marathon. (R)

It was Ben, after all, who set the new world record - who milked an all-but-incredible 376.59 miles per gallon from his 1959 Opel. It was Ben who fielded the phone calls from radio stations all over the country. It was Ben the St. Louis TV crews were interested in. It was Ben who was interviewed by the Associated Press and the United Press International. It was Ben who took the phone call from the London Times. London, England, that is. It was a picture of Ben and the Opel that was requested for the next edition of the Guinness Book of Records.

But Ben himself tends to downgrade all the hullabaloo. "Sure," he says seriously, "I set a new world record for miles-per-gallon, but my Opel and the other cars in the unlimited division

are one-time-a-year gadgets. There's a lot more to the Marathon than that!"

Visser's right, of course. For those few people, like Ben, who choose to run in the unlimited class, the Marathon is serious business and a lot of hard work. For most of the other entrants it's a reasonably friendly contest to determine who can get the most mileage out of the family auto. And for all hands, it's a "bring-the-kids" outing - a Saturday that opens with the Marathon itself and winds up with an old-fashioned picnic.

So far as the Shell Research Complex is concerned, in fact, there's nothing official about the Marathon at all. It's run by the Mileage Marathon Committee of the lab's social club, the Shell Research Lab Club. And it all started - very informally indeed - back in 1939 with a friendly bet between lab employees.

The 1973 Marathon drew 39 entries in five divisions,

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## SHELL OIL ANNOUNCES CRUDE OIL AND PRODUCT INVENTORIES

Shell Oil Company recently announced its estimated operating inventories of crude oil and major products as of January 1, 1974.

In making the announcement, a spokesman cautioned that the reports from individual companies give an incomplete picture of the nation's supply situation. An assessment by an agency such as the Federal Energy Office of the overall national supplies, demand and inventories, is required for interpretation of the national situation.

Shell's January 1 crude oil inventory was approximately 20.2 million barrels, up 700,000 barrels from a year ago. This increase, which amounts to less than one day's supply for the company's refineries, represents a normal month-to-month fluctuation in Shell's crude oil stocks.

In a recent report to the Federal Energy Office, Shell stated that the crude oil available for processing in January represents about 93% of the capacity of its refineries. The report to the FEO also estimated that crude

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### McDOWELL, THOMPSON MOVES RECENTLY ANNOUNCED



McDowell



Thompson

Two moves were recently announced. They included the transfer of Larry L. McDowell, assistant manager industrial relations, Employee Relations, to Employee Relations - Head Office on special assignment. Larry has previously worked at the Dominguez Plant and at Head Office - New York.

Randall M. Thompson, accountant, Treasury, Anacortes Refinery, has been transferred to the Houston Refinery as an accountant in the E&S Department.

### WELCOME TO SHELL



Pat Meaux Sr. Steno Treasury

### BERRY'S WORLD



© 1973 by HEA, Inc. *Jim Berry*

"Better let me out of here, Charlie. If my wife sees who's in our car pool, she won't let me help cut down on pollution and ease the gas shortage!"

### A RECORD RUN ON THE RIVER ROAD (Continued from page 1)

ranging from motorcycles to family cars to modified family cars to those esoteric cuties in the unlimited class. All were driven by employees or retirees of the lab - or members of their families.

Depending on which division they were in, entrants drove either a 38-mile course through the Illinois countryside or a 14-mile course along the Great River Road, a picturesque stretch of highway that parallels the Mississippi north of Alton.

The modified and unlimited divisions allowed "marathon driving techniques," such as coasting, while others required maintenance of a rather steady speed - one that simulated ordinary driving.

Mileage is measured in two ways for the contest. The first is the most obvious to the average motorist - straight miles per gallon. The other is ton-miles per gallon.

"Ton-miles per gallon is really a better measure of efficiency," says Pete Van Benthuysen, a member of this year's committee. "It measures gasoline mileage per ton-weight of the vehicle. For example, if one car weighs one ton and gets 20 miles per gallon, it would also get 20 ton-miles per gallon.

"But if another vehicle weighing two tons also gets 20 actual miles per gallon, it's twice as efficient - and would get 40 ton-miles per gallon."

Doug Carlson and Rich Trokey, driving their modified 1959 Fiat, then racked up a record of their own, cracking the 300-miles-per-gallon barrier for the first time. The Fiat, in fact, is a Marathon veteran. Doug and Rich bought it for \$55 in 1967, and it has been modified, re-modified, and modified again over the years.

The two coaxed 304.17 actual miles per gallon out of the Fiat, but neither that record nor the ton-mile record set earlier by Hendrickson and Wilpers was to stand up long.

When Visser came coasting down the River Road and across the finish line, he had done it all. His official totals: 376.59 actual miles

per gallon and 451.90 ton miles per gallon.

To understand those records you really have to understand the car. It's a freak-if-it-were-Rube-Goldberg-kind-of-vehicle that's good for little more than competing in the Marathon once a year. Here's how the Wall Street Journal described it the day before the Marathon took place: "Toss your car apart. Throw away the frame, transmission, springs, shock absorbers, and rear axle. Build a new frame with the rear wheels side-by-side in the center where the trunk used to be. Put a 2.2 motor in sideways where the back seat was and connect supply to the rear wheels with oversized bicycle chain. Pump up the tires to about eight times their normal pressure... and coast every chance you get."

In a classic bit of understatement, Visser reinforced the Journal's description: "To get better gasoline mileage, you have to sacrifice something."

Superficially speaking that's it. It's in that kind of car that you break a world record. And yet, as Visser says, "There's more to the Mileage Marathon than that."

Consider, for example, the case of Greg Johnson, who got 49.40 actual miles per gallon out of his unmodified, un-messed-with Volkswagen.

Consider Dave Barker, who got 124.70 ton miles per gallon out of his 1969 Barracuda. Says Dave, "In the modified standard division, you can't do too much to the car. You make a few carburetor adjustments, and you inflate the tires to the 40-pound limit. But mostly you rely on good conservative driving ability. You start slowly and you stay slowly. You hope no one pulls out in front of you so you don't have to jam the brakes. Drive nice and easy, and you get a lot of mileage."

And that's what Ben Visser is talking about when he says that the Mileage Marathon is more than kooky, one-time-a-year, highly modified automobile. Getting maximum mileage out of the family car - particularly now - is really what it's all about.

### INVENTORIES ANNOUNCED (Continued from page 1)

oil available for processing in the February through April period would be equivalent to 84% of refinery capacity if the Arab boycott continues. The company's motor gasoline inventory as of January 1, 1974, was 17.4 million barrels, up 1.2 million barrels from a year ago. This represents about a 6-day supply over the minimum required to keep its distribution system flowing.

Home heating oil, diesel fuel, jet fuel and kerosene inventories total approximately 15.1 million barrels, up 2.2 million barrels (representing an additional 6-day's supply over the corresponding period of 1973). Residual and other heavy oil inventories totaled 1.6 million barrels, which is 900,000 barrels below last year.

Shell believes its minor gain in product inventories reflects the warmer winter thus far and the efforts of the American public to conserve energy.

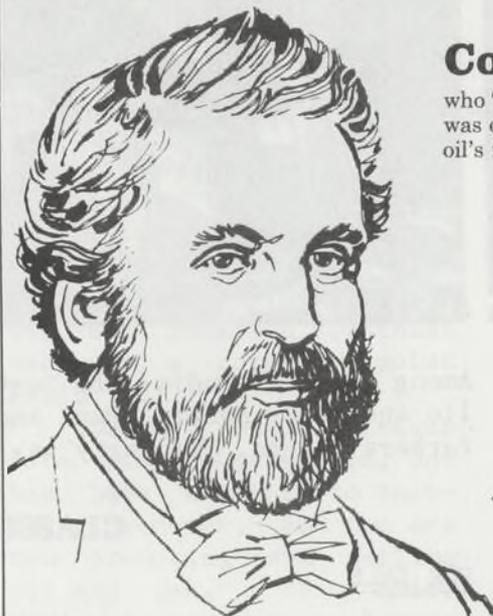
### SHELL HIGH BIDDER ON TWO GEOTHERMAL LEASES

Shell Oil Company was high bidder on two lease units at the first U. S. geothermal lease sale, which was held Tuesday, January 22, in Sacramento, California.

Shell bid a total of \$4.5 million on two of the 12 units offered for sale in the Geysers geothermal area, 80 miles north of San Francisco. The company was high bidder on both units, bidding \$3,200,000 on a 2,340-acre unit and \$1,300,000 on a 1,534-acre unit.

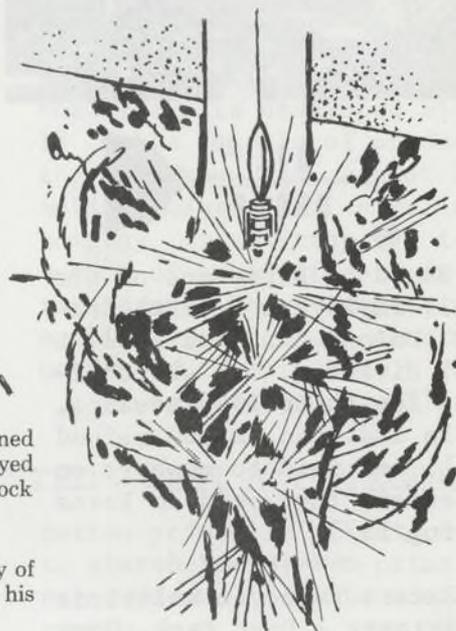
The "Geysers" is the only commercial geothermal field in the United States. The geothermal steam produced is used to generate electricity. Under active development the field's present capacity is about 400 megawatts, sufficient to supply a city of about 400,000 people. Shell will commence drilling on the newly acquired tracts as soon as plans can be completed and permits obtained.

## MAN WITH AN IDEA



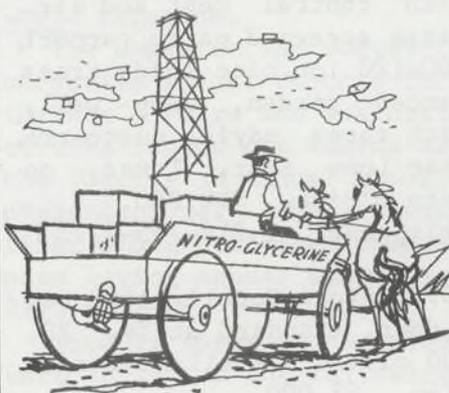
### Col. E. A. L. Roberts,

who "torpedoed" oil wells to increase their flow, was one of the many men whose ideas sparked oil's first century of progress.



Roberts, an ex-Civil War officer, reasoned that an explosion at the bottom of a "played out" well would melt clogging wax, break rock crevices open, and thus restore oil flow.

When he arrived at the booming oil city of Titusville, Pa., in 1865, people scoffed at his idea.



Finally, a group of investors let him experiment on a clogged well. To the scoffers' surprise, the well "came in" again with a substantial flow. Well-shooting became a widespread industry practice and increased production by millions of barrels.

Since 1859, when the first oil well was drilled, men with ideas have worked to provide Americans with this abundant, low-cost source of energy—energy that has meant more human progress in the last century than in the previous 6,000 years.

### STELLMAN TRANSFERS TO SHELL CHEMICAL



Stellman

R. G. Stellman, who was on special assignment with X-Pan-II has been assigned as business representative, Shell

Chemical, Catalyst Business Center, effective January 16.

Dick started with Shell in June 1963 as a technologist at the Wood River Refinery.

He was transferred in 1968 to the Houston Refinery as a group leader in Technological; then in 1970, he was transferred to Houston T&S Organization, Head Office; and, then in 1971, he returned to the Houston Refinery as assistant manager Aromatics and later became process manager Aromatics-East.

### SHELLEGRAPH

Published by Shell Oil Company for its Houston Refinery and MTM Research-Houston employees at Deer Park, Texas.

Mrs. Dotti West - Editor

### SURVEYORS CELEBRATE ACCIDENT-FREE YEAR ON THE JOB



Among those attending the Surveyors' safety party were Roy Lie and Jerry Kuntz, Hank and Cora Lee Krebs, and Noel Barbara Baughn. The party was held at Bud Hill's Steak House.



Board of Directors of the Shell Employees Federal Credit Union has declared a 6.0% dividend for shareholders for their 1973 savings. In addition, a 23% refund will be paid to members on interest they paid on loans during 1973.

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Recent Employee Relations Department - Deer Park Complex moves which will affect refinery employees have been announced.

Ken Morris has been assigned to the Personnel Section, and Bill Spahr will be assigned to the Industrial Relations Section effective February 1.

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#### R. E. BISHOP RETIRES AFTER 37-3/4 YEARS



When R. E. Bishop, pumper No. 1, Dispatching, retired late last year, he was the oldest hourly employee seniority-wise, holding badge number 25.

Bishop, center, recently returned to attend a retirement party held in his honor.

Wishing him the very best were John B. Harkness, former Houston Refinery process superintendent, on the right, and Clarence H. Welch, special tester, Refinery Lab, in the background.

### CLASSIFIEDS

#### FOR SALE

14" wide-track tubeless tires with rims; fit Ford Econoline truck or Plymouth Matador. \$12.50 each or two for \$20. Telephone: 644-0133 after 5:30

57' 2-bedroom mobile home with central heat and air. Large screened patio, carport, 100x120 lot, nice shade trees, fenced garden, deep well, with three paying customers. Near Lone Star, Texas, on Lake O'Pine. \$10,000. Telephone: 1-214-755-2275

1972 Toyota Corolla, 1600 cc, 2-door, standard shift. 20,000 miles. Excellent condition. \$2,000. Telephone: 422-3293 after 5

Garage sale - 1/26 & 27. Telephone: 472-0225

Hotpoint refrigerator, approximately 13 cu ft. Good condition. \$50. Telephone: 472-4930

84" round bed for \$50. Marine compass for \$5. Serving cart for \$7.50. Telephone: 487-0742

1965 Dodge Coronet, 4-door with automatic transmission, air conditioning, 318 engine. \$500. Telephone: 472-8994

3-bedroom house, 333 Irene Deer Park. Separate 2-car garage with large storage area. Telephone: 479-3646

German Shepherd female puppy, A.K.C. black and silver. 8 weeks old. Good watch dog. \$65. Telephone: 358-3213

#### WANTED

Carpool from Meadowcreek SW Pasadena area to refinery (working hours: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm). Telephone: 946-3279 after 5

#### PERSONAL

I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for the wonderful retirement party and gifts. I have enjoyed the association with all you wonderful people at Shell.

- E. L. Williams

### VOLUNTARY BLOOD DONOR PROGRAM

Those who have previously volunteered to participate in the Voluntary Blood Donor Program should have already received a notice of the time they are scheduled to give in the training room at the east end of the main washhouse building on January 28 and 29 from 10 am to 4 pm or on January 30 from 9 pm to 1 am on January 31. Anyone who hasn't received their notice and those who didn't volunteer before and would like to participate should contact G. L. Boatright, personnel representative, Employee Relations, on 479-2311, ext. 460, or 533 (plant) in order to be scheduled.