

Oregonian 'Seeding' Each State's Tallest Mountain

Mitch Michaud, a mountain man from Portland, Ore., has set upon an odyssey that would tickle the fancy of the Greek poet Homer.

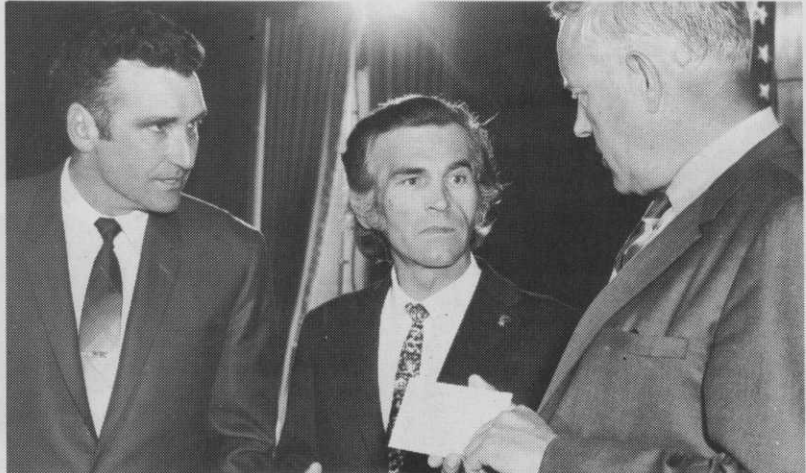
Michaud is shaping a voyage through the U.S. on a trail never before taken by man in a single year. His goal . . . to climb the highest peak in every state during 1970.

A mountain guide by trade, the 40-year-old Michaud has climbed the taller mountains of the United States and Europe and now hopes to be the first man to conquer such peaks as Jerimoth Hill in Rhode Island (elevation 812 feet) along with Mt. McKinley in Alaska (elevation 20,320 feet) in one calendar year. Why?

Michaud explains the high mountains are the last of the pioneer areas where a challenge still exists for man to use his best judgment and knowledge of nature to succeed. It is exhilarating to reach the summit of the high peaks, he explained, where fresh air, bright sunshine and a clean environment abounds.

To assure the maintenance of the mountain ecology, Michaud plans to plant a handful of Oregon grown grass seed along the mountainside. It's a small gesture, Michaud admits, but it is emblematic of the value of grass in our environment. He will also pass out small packets of Oregon grass seed to wellwishers along the route. The packages explain the story of Oregon grass seed by pointedly stating Oregon is the Grass Seed Capital of the World with more than 405 square miles of grass seed production.

Michaud has already acquired the nickname, "Johnny Grass



Oregon Governor Tom McCall, right, visits with Mitch Michaud, center, and Bill Rose, seed grower, about the importance of grass to the nation's ecology. Michaud will distribute the grass seed across the nation during his endeavor to climb the highest peak in each state during 1970.

Seed," since the Oregon Seed Council provided him with several thousand packages of seed to distribute along his route.

Armed with a letter from Oregon's Governor Tom McCall, who has named Michaud official goodwill ambassador for the state, the mountain climber will make personal calls on the governor of each state, where he will offer them suitable varieties of Oregon's famous grass seed for use in any of their state parks.

Some of the "peaks" he will climb aren't really mountains at all. The highest point in Florida is a 345-foot hump in the highway. In Ohio, the 1,550-foot summit is located on a spot housing a radar station and Michaud must have security clearance for the climb. Scaling the highest point in Illinois will cost Michaud one dollar since the site is located on

a farmer's land who charges hikers to enter his property. Michaud was to begin his trek Apr. 6, scaling Moana Kea in Hawaii for the longest climb on his itinerary. The 13,796-foot mountain begins at the ocean's edge. His remaining announced schedule follows:

May 10	Idaho, Mt. Borah	12,662
May 16	California, Mt. Whitney	14,495
May 23	Washington, Mt. Rainier	14,410
June 1	Alaska, Mt. McKinley	20,320
July 4	New Mexico, Wheeler Park	13,160
July 11	Colorado, Mt. Elbert	14,431
July 25	Wyoming, Garnet Peak	13,785
Aug. 1	Montana, Granite Peak	12,799
Aug. 8	New Jersey, High Point	1,803
Aug. 12	Connecticut, Mt. Frissell	2,380
Aug. 15	Massachusetts, Mt. Greylock	3,491
Aug. 17	Rhode Island, Jerimoth Hill	812
Aug. 22	Maine, Mt. Katahdin	5,268
Aug. 26	New Hampshire, Mt. Washington	6,288
Aug. 30	Vermont, Mt. Mansfield	4,393
Sept. 2	New York, Mt. Marcy	5,344

Field Burning . . .

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over, straw residues are best adapted to the soda pulping process which is virtually odorless. The paper is quite low in tear strength, however.

Agricultural chemist V. H. Freed and other workers at the OSU Environmental Health Sciences Center have found that various industrial raw materials can be extracted from straw residues. Among them are lignin, pentosans, waxes, and in particular, cellulose, which can be used

to make a wide range of acetate plastics. Straw also can be used to make such products as a high density construction board and an organic soil amendment.

A new process developed by microbiologist D. A. Klein and his associates could solve many of the problems involved in both utilization and disposal of straw residues. For it makes possible rapid and controlled microbial breakdown of straw, as well as other lignin-containing materials. The process, called photofermentation, essentially consists of exposing the straw

first to intense light energy, then to selected types of fungi or bacteria.

Perhaps the most promising potential use of straw residues found to date is as a feed for livestock. In feeding tests conducted by animal scientist A. T. Ralston with replacement heifer calves, ryegrass pellets supplemented with molasses, urea, and barley have produced average daily gains of 1.74 pounds at a cost of 13.3 cents per pound. And pellets containing equal amounts of wheat chaff and alfalfa also have produced average daily gains of 1.74 pounds on steer calves.