

BETHINKING OF OLDE ORLEANS

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DANGEROUS SPORT

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The late Fred Holt took this snapshot in the mid 1920s showing a skier being towed by a Model T. First off, this is a very bad idea and in no way does this columnist promote this sort of deadly activity. At first glance I suppose it isn't much different than water skiing but the legal ramifications and sheer danger are much different.

Believe it or not, people did do this sort of "cross country" skiing in the 1920's. One 90 year old remembers several years ago the skiers being towed by the rope would even be out in a field while the auto tracked the road. Unforeseen fence posts, trees, boulders, etc. would have been disastrous. The twosome in this photo, appear to be having a good time in the winter activity.

I believe our picture was taken on Gaines Basin Road looking north. The area to the left just below the dip in the road is now the site of Wal-Mart. We note in the field a snow fence which would have been in the field just above Wal-Mart on the west side of the road. Ranch houses now occupy this field.

On the east side of the road is a stone fence and apple orchard, both of which are long gone. Many stone fences were cleaned up years ago by crushing them. Farmers saw this as an advantage, plus the crushed

At the time the picture was taken, the road here would have been the original route of the Million Dollar Highway (Route 31). In the mid-1930s it was rerouted with an entirely new route cutting through fields and eliminating sharp corners such as the intersection of Gaines Basin Road and Allen Road, once known as "Dead Mans Corners." Its real name prior to the Million Dollar Highway was Mason's Corners. The Model T and skier would have been about two-tenths of a mile north of that intersection.