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## Sisters salutes...

• After investing between four and seven years in mixed martial arts, and enduring a seven-hour test, the following people earned first-degree black belts through Outlaw Martial Arts: Ethan Ferwalt, Amy Berry, Anessa Stotts and Jeremy Buller. (pictured from left to right above). Jaymie Kaczmarek (pictured in the middle) earned her third-degree black belt.

• The Sisters Band of Brothers has announced the winners of the summer raffle. First prize went to David Prock, Sisters; a Payson fly fishing rod and accessories. Second prize of watercolor prints by Cathie Raaf went to Jessica Madron, Sisters; and third prize of two rounds of golf at Aspen Lakes Golf Course to Martha Allen, of Dundee.

The prizes were donated by E.F. Payson Rod Company, Sisters artist Cathy Raaf, and Aspen Lakes Golf Course.

Chapter President Tom Barrier said: "We thank the community for help supporting our efforts to raise funds for the benefit of area veterans in need."

Band of Brothers meets every Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for lunch at Takoda's Restaurant. Veterans are invited to attend for camaraderie, friendship, and mutual support.

• Sisters Christian Academy (SCA) would like to thank/salute the following folks for their donations for our 2017 Walk/Jog-a-thon:

Trader Joe's, Costco, Ray's Food Place, Melvin's, VFW Post 8138, Trailer World, Circa Coffee Co. 1880, Hull's Construction, Vast Church, RE/MAX, Action Air, Gordon's Last Touch, The Pony Express, Monte's Electric, and All You Need Maintenance.

We also salute all of our parents, our volunteers, our financial donors, and our staff for a job well done! And finally, to all of our walkers and joggers — you're the best! Way to go, team SCA!



## Tales from a Sisters Naturalist

by Jim Anderson

### The alligator lizard

In Al St. John's field guide, "Reptiles of the Northwest," the section on lizards ends with two very similar look-a-likes, the Oregon alligator lizard, (*Elgaria scincicauda*) and the California alligator lizard, (*Elgaria multicarinata*), and lists an additional five subspecies. Turn the page after that and the snakes begin, starting with the rubber boa.

Dennis McGregor, a most talented artist and poet, took on a clever project of making renderings of named-a-like animals in juxtaposition. The paintings are a hoot. I especially enjoy his rendering of the "Spider Monkey,"

and the "Cow Bird" is nothing to sneeze at either, not to pass up the "Bullfrog," and "Bulltrout."

Looking at McGregor's clever rendition of the alligator lizard perched on the alligator's head, there's no problem telling who is who; however, be warned, if you pick up an alligator lizard be prepared for about the same reaction you'd get when picking up a real alligator. You'll get bitten.

But unlike the real alligator, whose tail will stay on no matter what or who grabs it, the alligator lizard's tail is built to detach itself from the main body, and even keep twitching for a few minutes to keep a predator from noticing the tail's owner, who then goes on to live another day and grow another tail.

The alligators of North America will take on just about anything smaller than they are, and usually end up getting it down, whole or in pieces. It's about the same for both Oregon and California alligator lizards, but instead of pigs, goats and chickens, these tiny (by comparison) distant cousins

go after insects, spiders, slugs (in season), centipedes, scorpions, earthworms, and smaller lizards — and swallow them whole.

But if you decide to get right down to brass tacks and try to put a positive ID on that alligator lizard, all I can say is, "Good Luck!" Al St. John makes it look easy, sure, he's been gazing into alligator lizards' eyes from the time he left the cradle; the first word Al learned to say was "herpetologist," not "mama."

A herpetologist is a person who studies reptiles and amphibians, and I have no doubt Al began his studies of reptiles and amphibians from the time he first saw a snake in his native land of McMinnville. I know for a fact he was hauling native rattlesnakes out from under the rocks there before he was a teenager; which makes him the best person in the Northwest to ask anything about herps. He's still alive in spite of his early childhood.

Alligators are almost entirely limited to the New

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