



# All my children

By GLEN OZONWOOD

About a week and a half ago Erica took off without telling anyone where she was headed. Not that unusual (after all she is single), but she and Nick had a dinner date set up for the night she split. She wasn't seen for awhile and Nick and Mona were worried. The other day we found out where she was—a hospital in the city.

What was she doing there? I don't know, but I think it's the backstroke. Hey, no time for jokes, this is serious. At first the doctors suspected an overdose, but it was eventually discovered that she had pneumonia. Erica almost died from pneumonia before and when Nick and Mona were alerted, they jumped on the next train out.

There must be more guilt per capita in Pine Valley than any other town in the United States. A tragedy struck Tuesday which ought to kick Nick's guilt-o-meter into the red. But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

## Foster kids helped by Oregon Project

By DAN POSTREL  
Of the Emerald

Foster children, still under the legal control of parents not fit to take care of them, often drift from home to home for years.

"They are in limbo," Lynne Frohnmayer told a luncheon meeting of the Republican Rubicon Society Thursday. "They don't belong anywhere." The child moved from one foster family to another, she said, often "goes through a period of grief and loss, a mourning process. It's almost as if his parents had died."

Foster parents aren't legally obligated to hang in there," Frohnmayer said. When financial difficulties, illnesses, or marriage problems arise in a foster household, parents often arrange to have their foster child transferred. "Whatever the crisis, the foster child is the first to go."

Frohnmayer, who works for the state Children Services Division, said there are 632 Oregon children under age 12 who have spent a year in foster care. "That's a lot of young kids to be spending that much time in foster care and it worries me," she added.

Nationally, studies indicate that foster children spend an average of 56 months—over four and a half years—in various foster homes.

The Oregon Project, conducted

by the state in 1973-1976, attempted to find ways of giving transient foster children more permanent homes. Some parents were forced to give up control of their children, while therapy made others capable of taking their children back, she said.

Children who can't be returned to their own homes cannot be adopted until freed in court from the legal control of their parents. In two years, the 12 project workers—starting with 509 children who had been in foster care for a year—placed 72 percent in permanent homes after parents relinquished all control. In addition, intensive work with problem parents allowed 26 percent of the children to return to their original homes, Frohnmayer said.

The project saved enough foster home costs to pay for itself within three months—and to save Oregonians an additional \$400,000 in taxes. Each month a child under 5 years of age, spends in foster care costs the state \$123.

The success of the Oregon Project earned national acclaim. "It also made us realize that had we started earlier and worked more aggressively with the real parents, some of those kids would never have been in foster care," Frohnmayer said.

The train ride there was interesting because Mona accidentally made Nick feel like it was his fault. Of course it wasn't but by the time the train got to New York, Nick was low enough to wash an ant's belly.

A quick trip to the hospital and after Mona had said hello, Nick and Erica were reunited.

It looked like Nick was going to propose right in the hospital, but the show ran out of time before he had a chance. One o'clock saved him this time, but it wouldn't be too surprising if the two ended up at the altar soon.

The whole thing got a little mushy, but didn't come close to equaling the mush coming down at the young Tylers.

Now that Donna knows the truth, everyone (at least those interested in Pine Valley events) is wondering how she'll react to the knowledge she's sterile. For a

while it looked like Donna was going to follow in Erica's footsteps (when she was married to Phil, she miscarried and really lost it. She moved her bed into the living room—so the baby wouldn't have to climb the stairs—and finally ended up with a vacation in the loony bin) and refused to admit that there is no baby.

But with time it looks like Donna will adjust (she's seeing the shrink to get a hand) and with a husband as sweet and caring as Chuck, she'll pull through okay.

Which is more that one could say about Phoebe.

The stay at the hospital hasn't been that tough for Phoebe because Benny's been smuggling vodka to her. But this week, the source dried up.

Last week, Phoebe called Charles to her side. She told him of a vision of he and her taking a pilgrimage together. He told her she was crazy. Jeez, she's really

trying to milk this stay in the hospital. Anyway, as Charles listened to her babble, he spied and confiscated her flask.

And, he didn't stop there.

When Benny came to see Phoebe the next time, Charles intercepted him and declared the hospital off limits. Ol' Phoebe should start suffering from the DT's soon. No alcohol will probably bring a miraculous recovery soon.

Finally, Estelle's been over to see her friend Maggie again. While Locust Street is probably in her blood, Estelle's been making noises about retiring.

The whole thing has Billy Clyde laughing, but when he discovered she was gone, he waited for her in her room. He passed the time playing with a Mexican toad-sticker, but didn't cut Estelle when she got back. She really wants out.

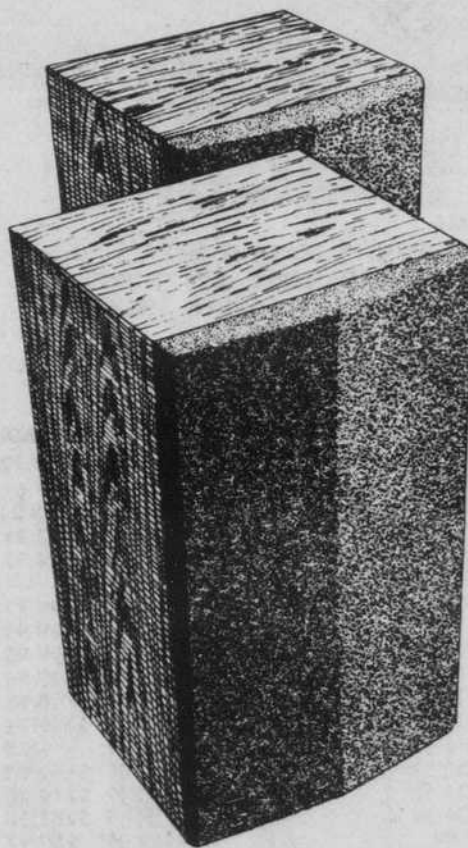
Hope she makes it.

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