

Outdoor Rec / Sports

Letting the cats out ...



THE OUTDOOR COLUMN
By Todd Arriola

Observing the emergence of new, colorful life breathed into our environment, prompted by the arrival of Spring, caused me to reflect on a domestic situation, one that's been a concern all Winter: my cats need to go outside.

This isn't to say they—all five of them—stayed indoors the whole season, because, that would cause me to be labeled insane, and them anti-social freaks.

I did have a few considerations, though, including how to remedy the issue of their water being a constant chunk of ice in the bowl, with freezing temperatures outside. I didn't resolve that annoyance, because I don't have one of those fancy, heated water bowls.

Another obvious concern was, and is, that for whatever reason(s), pets haven't had the best track record, when it comes to survival in that area. I've seen too many simply "disappear" out there, whether they were picked up and taken away as "strays," had run

away, were hit by a vehicle, or were possibly shot.

Two immediate examples come to mind: my motley crew of five consists of Harry, Jr. and Harriet, the accidental father and mother (also brother and sister), and

their three miracles of parenting gone wrong—Abby and Little Girl, the two females, and Dylan, the male. Harry, Jr.'s uncle (I think), Harry, one of my brother, Ryan's, and sister-in-law, Anje's cats, has been missing, as well as Harriet, though, they went missing at different points in time.

When Harry, Jr. was younger, he would play with and hang around Harriet, a calico, frequently, sort of her "protector," and since birth, he looked like a lion, compared to Harriet, with her small, skinny frame. Actually, Harry, Jr. looked like a lion, compared to the rest of them, too. Anyway, they both came home with me, and the other kittens went elsewhere, since there were simply too many total cats for Ryan and Anje to keep around.

Both Harry, Jr. and Harriet are accomplished hunters, so I didn't really worry about their lack of outdoor skills, in that respect, anyway. Before the duo

came to live with me, one day, I noticed Harry, Jr. growling and chewing on what was left of a squirrel—its tail. Harriet can be just as tough, if not more so. They taught their children how to hunt, too, and they don't appear to be slackers, either. It should be noted that I haven't clipped any of their claws at any point. Everything in the house, including my skin, is testament to that fact.

All five display some odd quirks. One notable one, mentioned by my wonderful, and startled girlfriend, Brandi, was practiced in true family fashion, early each morning.

I had no doubt that cats can practically annoy one to death with their varying meowing, and general selfish attitudes. I expected that. What I didn't expect is for the group—clearly at Harry, Jr.'s prompting—to sprint down the hallway, in order to form a feline battering ram, in multiple attempts to open my door. Sometimes, without properly closing the door, they would succeed.

Harry, Jr. was stationed as the head of the ram, I would assume. The others must have been there for morale.

Brandi, who adores the tribe, is also the one who mentioned that I didn't really have names, or, the proper ones, anyway, for two of the three kittens.

Little Girl, as may be assumed, is the little female, a bit shy, straight haired, and mostly white, with some orange. She's the only one I had truly named, and hers remains

the same. Abby and Dylan are named as such, courtesy of Brandi. I incorrectly identified Abby, the cuddly one, who is basically a clone in personality, and hairy looks somewhat, of Harry, Jr., as a male at first (it helps to actually check the gender). The sole male, destined to be eternally tormented by his sisters, all orange, hairy, and gentle, was crowned Dylan.

Noting little concern with current temperatures, though, still aware that this is eastern Oregon, and anything can happen, I'm able to keep a full water bowl outside for the group, mostly unfrozen, daily. They supplement their daily dose of cat food with multiple-course meals of mice, moles, birds, and squirrels (and whatever else is within range of their paws and mouths).

I'm "cautiously optimistic" regarding Harriet's eventual return to her family. Anje's cat, Simba, had returned at some point, after an extended absence of a year and a half, I was told, so, there may yet be hope. Maybe, Harriet wanted to get away from the kids, see the rest of the County, and make new friends. Who knows. Brandi asks periodically if Harriet is back yet, and I dread relaying the news that the absentee mother hasn't called, or, even texted.

Maybe, I can help facilitate a reunion with the group, as I let the others wander outside this Spring, as my father would say, to "blow the stink off..."

Swimming: Empire short-course championships



Submitted Photo.

Riana Scott.

The La Grande Swim Club brought eight swimmers to Moses Lake, Washington February 26-28 for the Inland Empire Swimming Short Course Championships. About 300 swimmers from Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho competed. All swimmers at the meet were required to make qualifying times to compete. This is the final meet of the short course season for most swimmers. Here are results:

Riana Scott (13-14 girls): 3rd 500 free (5:29.15), 3rd 400 individual medley (4:48.66), 2nd 200 individual medley (2:17.10), 4th 100 breast (1:11.89), 3rd 200 free (2:04.30), 3rd 200 back (2:16.54), 4th 100 free (57.41), 4th 200 breast (2:37.19)

The girls 14 and under 400 medley relay (K Jensen, R Scott, L Ricker, R. Ricker), placed 6th with a time of 4:47.32.

The girls 14 and under 400 freestyle relay (K. Jensen, R. Scott, L Ricker, R. Ricker) placed 4th with a time of 4:08.99.

Kids now need fishing license at age 12

As families venture to the outdoors this spring, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife remind parents that youths between the ages of 12 and 17 need a license if they plan to hunt, fish or shellfish.

Although fishing now requires a license two years earlier than in the past—at age 12 instead of age 14—the cost of the license is significantly less than it was in years past. Now a combination youth hunting/fishing/shell fishing license costs just \$10. For just \$5 more, youngsters can also purchase a tag that will allow them to catch salmon, steelhead, sturgeon and halibut. The \$15 combined cost of a youth license and tag in 2016 compares to a cost of \$41.75 last year, a cost reduction of 64 percent.

The youth license was developed to simplify the youth license requirements for hunting and fishing. "There was way too much complexity involved for parents to get hunting and fishing licenses for their kids," said Rick Hargrave, administrator of ODFW's Information and Education Division. "We ... came up with a single, significantly discounted, youth combination license for kids 12-17."

Under the new fee structure, a single license permits youth license holders to take part in all three activities — hunting, fishing and shell fishing. Previously, a separate license was required for each of these activities.

There is no distinction in the fee structure between resident and nonresident youths.

Basketball

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On the boys' side it came down to a head-to-head competition between Cove and Powder Valley.

At the half it was Powder Valley 17 and Cove 10. During the 3rd quarter Cove came out strong and drove the score up to 24 but couldn't hold back Powder Valley who took the trophy home with a final score of Cove 24 and Powder Valley 30.

Trophies were given out as follows:

Girls
First: Powder Valley;
Second: Cove; Third: Jordan Valley
Consolation: Prairie City
Boys
First: Powder Valley;

Second: Jordan Valley;
Third: Cove; Consolation: Prairie City

Sportsmanship Award: Willow Creek

All-star Awards

Girls:
#22 Emily Ennis Prairie City, #1 Ashley Jacobs Willow Creek, #33 Derrick Rothenberger Huntington, #10 Sydney Johnson Harper, #25 Josie Clark Adrian, #4 Madilyn Neil Cove, #20 Tylie Garfield Huntington, #21 Josie Krieger Powder Valley, #14 Autumn Davis Powder Valley, #20 Kiana Quintero Jordan Valley, #14 Baylee Davis Jordan Valley.

Boys:
#22 Lucas McKinley Prairie City, #33 Derrick Rothenberger Huntington, #15 Riley Bradford Adrian, #15 Ethan Lunt



Eileen Driver / The Baker County Press

A healthy crowd turned out for the tournament this year.

Harper, #2 Braden Gregory Willow Creek, #20 Kort Skinner Jordan Valley, #21 Gannon Carreiro Cove, #4 Dawson Gaertner Cove, #24 Reece Dixon Powder Valley, #33 Roper Bingham Powder Valley.

Huntington School Principal Scott Bullock, who was honored to give out the awards, expressed

his thanks to Amy Jones for coordinating the event, to Shellie Guerri for her hard work at the event, to Chuck Guerri for making the ranking boards and helping at the event and the Lion's Club along with community volunteers for manning the gates year after year.

NORTHWEST SHOW
12PM - 3PM

NATIONAL SHOW
8PM - 10PM



THE
LARS
LARSON
SHOW

