

WOEC Current: News and Notes From the Co-op Budget Billing/ Energy Assistance Available to Help

By Marc Farmer

As the economy continues to lag and colder weather persists, we want to make sure our members know that WOEC provides assistance to them in several different ways.

First, we have been offering a program called Budget Billing or what some of our members like to refer to as an Equal Pay Program. This program allows our members to average out their monthly bills making it easier to budget a set amount each month. It eliminates the ups and downs of electric bills by taking the last 12 months usage and averaging it out over the next twelve months, which is especially helpful during the high bill winter months. This program is available to our members who have been

a member for at least one year, and can be done by stopping in at our office or over the phone to sign up. To qualify, a member must have their current balance paid in full prior to being placed on Budget Billing. This also must be done before an account has received a shut off or disconnect notice.

This leads into the second assistance we offer, and that is to work with our members in making a signed payment arrangement. In the event one of our members finds themselves in a position of not being able to meet their current balance, but would like to have the past due amount averaged over a 6 month time period, this program allows it to be added on to the current monthly bill. If a member has been offered a payment arrangement in the past and

failed to follow through, they will not be eligible for a new payment arrangement.

The third way we offer assistance is in working with several outside agencies that offer financial help to our members in need. These programs include Oregon Heat, Community Action, Care to Share, and St. Vincent de Paul. Oregon Heat and Care to Share, St. Vincent, and Community Action have variable amounts they can contribute based on criteria they have established. We refer our member to these agencies based on need and the ability to qualify for funding. Our staff implemented a program several years back that we call "Care to Share" and have raised and donated over \$10,000. The WOEC Board of Directors has donated \$5,000 to Oregon Heat and \$5,000 to Care to

Share each of the past several years to help our members. Anyone wishing to donate to our Care to Share program can do so by stopping in our office to make their donation. Every donated amount helps to keep our friends, neighbors, and fellow members warm and bright.

Our fourth opportunity to work with our members through energy efficiency tips and programs through our news articles, Ruralite, our website, through Touchstone Energy connections, and also by stopping by our office to pick up information.

Please contact us so that we can assist you in meeting your energy needs. Our office is located at 652 Rose Ave. in Vernonia. Phone: 503.429.3021 or 800.777.1276

Creature Comforts ~ What's New

By Michal Smith

Exciting things are happening at the Creatures Pet store this month.

First, we've added Buxton Feed Company (BFC) non GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) feeds for chickens, rabbits, goats, swine and horses! According to the World Health Organization, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are "organisms in which the genetic material (DNA) has been altered in such a way that does not occur naturally." Not only are BFC feeds best choice for the animals, they're good for our local economy. BFC feeds are milled on site in BUXTON, OR! Just think how fresh that makes your animal's food! Plus, BFC employs an animal nutritionist that ensures the proper ingredients are going into every bag. Local + quality - you can't beat that! BFC is also able to and willing to custom mill feeds as well - ask for info on this in the store. In order to keep this venture sustainable, we are offering these feeds at a

5% discount when your feed order is preordered and prepaid for the following week(s) order. This business model will benefit both Creatures and our customers - we won't be required to store large quantities and the customers are able to get exactly what they want and save money!

Second, new patterns and styles in the Lupine Company collars and leads are in the store and in time to strut Fido and/or Fluffy around the lake and downtown Vernonia in the latest colors and designs. Lupine products are guaranteed and are a great value to owners whose dog or cat chews through the Lupine lead or collar. Customers simply collect what is left of the collar or lead; bring it back to the store (or send it directly to Lupine); pick out another collar or lead (of same retail value) and pay nothing - you are back in business and at no extra cost. Bring it back as often as it happens - hence the lifetime guarantee!!

Thirdly, over the course of this month we'll be expanding our in-store stock of dog and cat food to in-

clude Blue Buffalo, Iams, Science Diet and Eukanuba. These have been widely asked for and so we are responding. On that note, we can order in a variety of brands on a weekly basis so if there is a brand or specific flavor you'd like to purchase here locally, checkout our website www.creaturespetshop.com for a complete list or email creatures@frontier.com your request for a list and we'll be happy to send one out to you.

Lastly, new for our store is the implementation of consignment sales of large animal tack and supplies such as saddles, bridles, bits, blankets, pads, etc.; sheep, goat, cow halters and show equipment, etc. etc.; as well as small and medium sized animal care items such as crates and grooming equipment; small animal cages accessories, etc. So when you're cleaning out the barn, shop or garage, consider this easy way to earn some extra cash. BONUS: any proceeds of the sale of a donated item will go directly to Bailey's Pantry to support needy pet nutrition in our community! Contact us directly for more specific information. 503-429-7387

Natural Path to Health ~ Chinese Five Element Theory: Part Two, Wood

By Dr. Carol McIntyre

In this article we will visit the Wood element in detail. I do hope this is helping to stimulate your interest in Chinese medicine. Ask more questions, make more connections and learn more about yourself and how this medicine can serve you.

Wood: Wood is related to the Liver and Gallbladder. It represents Spring. The beginning. New. Movement. Initiative. Decision making (this is specifically related to the Gallbladder). It is symbolized by bamboo because it grows so quickly, sometimes a number of feet over night. The emotions related

are all- but specifically anger and depression. Any physical manifestation of imbalance would be that of stagnation and explosive movement including arthritis, stroke, Parkinson's, epilepsy and depression. A quote from the classics relating to this element is: "The softest and the hardest"; represented by the living wood (softness, living, sap wood). Sour is the taste. Harmony is the desired outcome. Desire to be straight and spreading. Its color is green/blue.

Wood element organs are the ones that start you off on a task and give you the strength and energy to get through it. The Gallbladder starts you off and the Liver provides endurance. As

mentioned previously, wood is governed by metal, gives earth strength and is engendered by water. It signifies the beginning of the journey. The rhythm of wood is what provides endurance and planning as the Liver plods along a task. The Gallbladder initiates the rise of yang energy and the Liver continues to embrace the yang rising. Again, another start/beginning.

This begins the process a human being must go through to reach complete oneness. In this sense, you could start at the Gallbladder and work your way around the respective of the twelve organs clockwise until you end up at the Triple burner, relating this to the cycle

of human life. The Gallbladder is birth, Triple burner being the creation/thought/conception of life. This signifies the oneness of two human beings coming together to start the cycle of life once again.

In clinic, I see many pathologies relating to the organ system of Wood element. Many people have been exposed to toxins throughout their life. The Liver filters toxins and becomes stagnated with exposure to too much. Also, the Liver is the only organ in Chinese medicine that is related to two jiaos, both the middle and lower jiao. In the middle jiao its function is related

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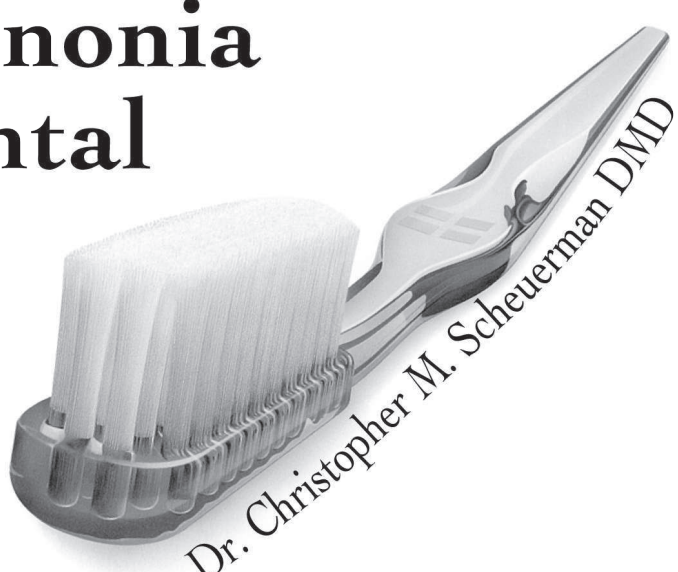
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