

Natural Path to Health: Happy Spring!

By Dr. Carol McIntyre

It is quite obvious we have had amazing weather this spring. Most everything is in bloom and we should have a longer growing season this year because of the blessed weather. There is much to see and collect when you are out walking.

Nettles (*Urticaria*) are sprouting up. This amazing herb is packed with nutrients. You may remember them fondly after a "sting," but they are a wonderful source of vitamins and minerals and should not be overlooked as medicine just because of their "sting." Many nutritional supplements contain nettles in allergy formulations because of its wonderful ability to reduce symptoms associated with allergies.

You may prepare nettles as a tea or eat them. Harvesting nettles when they are young is best for eating. I generally will wait to harvest them when they are older for drying and tea preparation. Around here that is usually late August into September. The young plant

can be harvested now for eating.

A wonderful preparation I enjoy uses nettles, dandelion leaves and beet greens together. Using just a touch of olive oil in a pan, throw in a handful of chopped garlic and then add the greens. Lightly sauté them until the greens are wilted and season with salt/pepper if you like and some extra olive oil. It is a wonderful side dish! Give it a try. Take care to sauté the nettles long enough to reduce the sting; some people may have a slight reaction if they are sensitive without proper preparation.

If you're not a gathering type then get outside to see the Trilliums! They are in bloom right now and are beautiful. This is one of my very favorite flowers that presents itself for only a short time in the spring. You will find it in more shaded areas with a nice bed of pine needles as their cushion.

A quick note regarding Chinese New Year which began on February 19th. This is the year of the Ram/Sheep/Goat. Particularly it is the Wood Sheep.

The sheep is thought to be one of the kindest and most beloved animals. It is associated with the Earth element and Yin. Wood sheep brings a good balance because of the sheep's ability to balance the forward motion with an anchor.

There has been a new fee schedule put in place at the office effective April 1, 2015. Please inquire if you have any questions. I have added ½ hour acupuncture slots for those needing acute treatment or those who are on a specific treatment protocol. Jeff Dolan is practicing Reiki at the office and has had wonderful feedback from people. I look forward to him growing his practice here in Vernonia.

I am still taking new patients but be aware that my schedule is now booked into May and new patients have a potential of a 2-3 month wait. Life is busy. Life is good. This is the year to find balance with help of the Wood Sheep. As always, thanks for joining me. Be well~

Voices From the Crowd: The Boot Leather Bull

By Dale Webb

The sky was still dark when I left the pickup and felt my way up the steep bank and slowly but deliberately made my way up onto a little side ridge that would lead me to a road a few hundred yards away. It was opening day of the second bull elk season. I waited patiently for the sky to gradually turn to lighter shades of gray and finally my eyes began to see some distance from me.

I had spent the three previous days scouting for elk; frankly I didn't have what I would call a hot prospect. I had spent several of those days scouting out a new-to-me spot to hunt. This area was not new to me in regards of a place I hadn't been, I knew all the roads,

but I had never hunted it before. There is a big difference between knowing the roads and knowing where the elk like to hang and learning the topography so you can learn how to sneak up on where the elk like to be.

The day was going to be a little blustery with some rain and since I hadn't found any good hot tracks in my usual hunting area, I decided to move to the given area where there is almost always some elk - yep the steep finger ridges with nothing but reprod. These reprod areas are tough to hunt and that is why I needed the wind and rain to help cover up my noise. I spent all day in the reprod patch and surprisingly I didn't find a fresh track. Late in the day on my way back to the pickup I was on a

high point and glassing way off in the distance when I saw the object of my desire, elk. The elk were simply too far away for me to accurately tell just how much horn the two bulls I could see in the herd of around twenty cows had, they looked like spikes, but could be small branch bulls. It was too late to hoof the two miles to get to them, I would wait until the next morning; they were in a good spot and they wouldn't be far in the morning. It was day four of being on my feet all day and I could feel the stiffness as I climbed back into my old Ford truck and I knew it could be a long season.

Day two was a dry day; I was once again standing on the little finger ridge waiting for daylight to arrive. I would take a new route today, traverse up a steep timbered side hill and hook up to a road system and then drop down through some more timber to hook up with the road that would lead directly to where the elk were the night before. It pays big dividends to know the shortcuts. I had expected the elk to be in another small clear-cut on the way to the one I had seen them in, but there was no sign of them. I eased around the last corner in the gravel road and scanned the clear-cut they had been standing in the night before. There were fresh elk tracks at my feet, but no blonde bodies standing in the clear-cut.

I started dogging tracks to see where they had gone. Well that was a chore, it appeared they had gone everywhere! Finally I found where they had moved out of the clear-cut and much to my dismay, it was onto some private property that I didn't have permission to hunt. I was mystified at why they had left the clear-cut; it was obvious nobody else had bothered them.

With the elk gone and no good leads in my area, I did something that was a first for me; I bailed. I got back to the old red Ford and headed back to Vernonia and then up to my new spot.

When I got to the gate I was amazed, nobody was parked at it. I had no illusions that this area would not be hunted; probably hunted hard, so this was quite a surprise to me. I had finished off my Mini-Mart lunch and was somewhat rejuvenated so up the rock road I went. It was a long steady climb to the area I wanted to check out.

Once on top I noticed the boot tracks in the road. I hadn't been the first person in this area. There were some

pretty good clear-cuts in this area, but I had no thoughts that I would catch a herd out in the middle of the day, but late evening maybe. I caught a hog back ridge and noticed some fresh elk tracks; it looked like they had been there in the morning. Cruising along I looked over about a quarter of a mile away and hold it! On a little winding road up through some older reprod stood a bull elk.

Well, I didn't get too excited, it was a spike and then another spike and then a cow. I watched them for quite a while, waiting for an older bull to step out. I had planned my route, climb up on the backside of a knob that lay halfway between the elk and myself and shoot across the gap.

Only problem, no bigger bulls showed. I made my way up the hog back ridge towards the top and now I had a herd of elk on my right. These elk were within shooting range as they gradually moved into the clear-cut below me. Again, two spikes and around a dozen cows made up this herd. Well, at least I was into elk.

Giving up on the herd below me I started to scan the adjoining areas as the daylight was starting to fade. "Hmm, that looks like an elk," I muttered to myself as I gazed at an object way off in the distance on the edge of a steep hillside clear-cut. "Oh, that is mister bull," I exclaimed in my mind when I thought I saw the sweep of dark antlers against the background he stood against. Way too late in the day now, I had already started to plan the next day attack in my mind. Darkness came and my boots grew heavier as I plodded back down the hill to the pickup.

Day three the old bones were telling me I am getting older as I pulled up to the gate with not another vehicle in sight. I wasn't really as early as I wanted, but heck I would gladly take point on the way up the hill! I knew the bull the day before was probably going to be a late in the day affair, there was logging traffic in the area and he would have been spooked out in the morning, but once the logging died off for the day, maybe he would come out to feed again on the edge of the clear-cut.

I found the herd from the day before in the same clear-cut, no new bulls had joined them, so I headed off into a promising old road system and grown up reprod to snoop around. Not finding much I made my way out and cruised

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The Power of Play: Promoting Health and Creativity

A free conversation with play activists Jonathan Blasher and Tara Doherty

Tuesday, April 21

6:30 pm at the Vernonia Library

Research shows that play and physical activity can have positive effects on children's health, well-being, and education; they also boost health and creativity in adults. What is the value of play? Please note: this session will include interactive play for all levels of ability.

Blasher and Doherty are both from Playworks, a Portland-based national nonprofit that transforms schools by providing play and physical activity at recess throughout the school day.

Guns in America: Exploring the Second Amendment

A free conversation with Reed College professor Pancho Savery

Wednesday, May 20

6:30 pm at the Vernonia Library

The topics of gun violence, gun control, and the right to bear arms are constantly in the news. The Second Amendment guarantees Americans the freedom to own guns. Why wasn't this freedom incorporated into the First Amendment, along with freedom of the press, speech, religion, and right of assembly? What special circumstances made the freedom to own guns important enough to merit its own amendment?

Savery is professor of English, humanities, and American studies at Reed College, where he teaches courses in American literature post-1850, African American literature, and modern and contemporary American and European drama. For the past twelve years, he has worked with Oregon Humanities on the Humanity in Perspective program.

This program is made possible by the generous support of Oregon Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Oregon Cultural Trust.

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