

Bob's Corner

Having four house cats and two house dogs is more than a little interesting. Which is like saying, I suppose, that quite a few people live in China. One aspect of having all those critters underfoot, underbed and everywhere else, is that other animal lovers recognize us instantly by the hair and fur on our clothing.

There's a constant battle perpetuated by Grouchy Maui, the matriarch of the crew. She dislikes all the other animals, cats included, and especially her son, Bubba the Grand Sumo. Maui hisses like a disturbed rattlesnake, and likes to make her ferocious feline feints -- with claws out -- at Charlie Kaplan, the smallest of the quartet. However, Charlie fears nothing, which gets him into lots of trouble.

He's best buds with Flint Eastwood, who is quite gentle, which gets him into lots of trouble. Especially when Charlie decides to attack him "playfully." He's so playful that Flinty is forced to make tiny sounds of pain. Eventually, he'll either make a mad dash for the nearest exit, or he'll fight back, but gently. Periodically, Charlie will challenge Bubba, and he always loses.

At 16 pounds, you can always tell in the middle of the night that Bubba is walking on you in bed. He demands attention, and if you don't comply, he'll use one of his catcher's mitt paws (six toes on each) to pat your face until you give up and start petting him.

Bubba is always trying to get into the pots and pans storage. Before we installed a child-proof latch on the main cabinet door, he was always in there lying on the cookware. He still remembers how to get in, but the latch keeps him out. He never gives up though. He just can't figure out why that door no longer opens. One time we caught him lying on back, studying the door like a mechanic under a car. Scary intelligence.

Our dogs, Bingo and Rocky, get along with the cats. Mostly. Except when Charlie makes attack runs to snag their tails. Having these entertaining creatures is often better than TV. All their antics are funny, especially when the cats play King of the Cat Tower.

They also have contests to see who can contribute the most to our oversize litter box. There's an old expression about "fighting like cats and dogs." But at our house, the fights are minor. However, the hair and fur are major. Oh well, I just keep thinking about all creatures great and small.

Got a clothes brush I can borrow?

Letters to the Editor

Lorna Byrne items appreciated by family
From Barbara Vitto
Grants Pass

"Illinois Valley News" provided great coverage of the 100th birthday celebration for Lorna Byrne. It was much appreciated by Lorna and her many family members and friends.

Evergreen Elementary fund-raisers important
From Eleanor L. Jones
Cave Junction

We have been reading in newspapers and hearing on television about lack of money for our schools.

They are talking about millions of dollars to repair schools. Do you imagine that Cave Junction schools will be a top priority?

Cave Junction residents have been wonderful supporting the students' sports activities through raffles and other fund-raising events.

I was wondering if most people know that the PTA is raising money to replace the playground equipment at Evergreen Elementary; 25 percent from each fund-raiser goes to that fund. Plus 100 percent or 20 percent designated on the fund-raiser: Playground equipment is not cheap.

So it will take more than one year. At this time the children are having a Penny Drive, and we hope that every parent and grandparents will get involved. The winning class will have a party, so if you bring money in, designate a class.

Do not roll the change -- yes, we will take change or dollar bills.

The fifth-graders just had a quilt raffle, and they plan on using that money to buy paint for the gym walls.

Evergreen Elementary, as well as some other schools, is still collecting Campbell Soup labels, empty computer cartridges and General Mills Education Box Coupons. These items cost the giver nothing except time. I know time is important, but so are our children.

Get involved. I hear that a lot of people respond that our government should provide more. Let Cave Junction residents get involved in their schools.

Agency reps response called unprofessional
From Greg Walter
Cave Junction

I attended a wildfire research symposium by the forest service and others in Gold Beach on Feb. 8 on the last day of a three-day workshop.

Everything seemed to be fine as researchers presented their research or continuing research findings, until the last presentation. This is where things took a turn.

The last presenter was a panel of three headed by Dan Donato regarding his paper published in the journal "Science" as a one-page article in January that has placed question on the merits of salvage logging

after wildfire. These three had done their research well, as their presentation was impeccable.

Upon opening for questions, I got to see how some of the forest service and others took what I thought were some cheap shots and stabs at trying to discredit and obfuscate the findings of their work.

Our own Illinois Valley District ranger was one of the ones I feel was at first attempting to confuse certain points of the paper and then attempting to politicize the issue by questioning the timing of the release of the research.

Others were peppering the panel, but they held their ground well.

What was disappointing was that none of these so-called professional foresters inquired about how

logging could have been done differently to reduce the loss of seedlings or to reduce the logging so as to mitigate the fuels buildup and reduce fire danger.

Also, that to think they had not taken the time to read the above-mentioned one-page article and then to criticize the work was in my opinion, very slippery.

In summary, it was quite surprising to see otherwise trained professionals behave so poorly towards meticulously documented research that had had to stand up to a lot of scrutiny.

To me, the behavior of some of the public land managers and professionals during a science symposium represented that day the very antithesis of "Caring for the Land and Serving the People."

Want to avoid bothersome critters? Don't feed them!

Skunks, opossum, raccoons, coyotes, deer and elk often are lumped into the unofficial taxonomic family called "nuisance wildlife."

Actually, any kind of wildlife perceived to be a problem by a human can fit this description, from rattlesnakes to woodpeckers and even beavers.

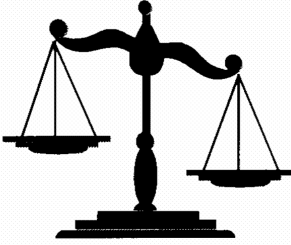
Most often, however, problems caused by so-called nuisance wildlife can be managed or avoided.

The vast majority of nuisance wildlife problems

can be drastically reduced, experts say, by taking one easy step -- eliminate their food source. Eliminating any food source usually gets rid of even the most chronic problems with raccoons, skunks and even bear, according to Scott Ziegenhagen, a biologist with Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW), and Brian Tuck, an Oregon State University Extension crops and small farms faculty member.

(Continued on page 3)

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