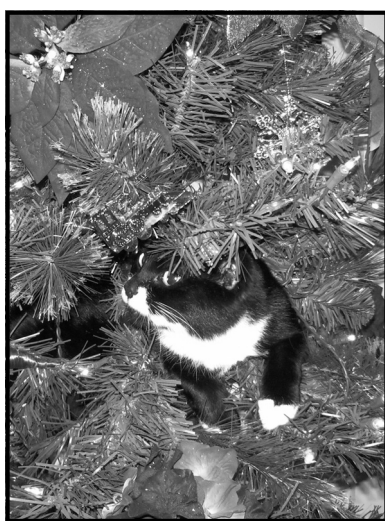


## Bob's Corner

Besides having Charlie the Cat decide that our Christmas tree is a wonderful climbing adventure and perfect place to perch, we have of late been the hosts for our daughter, Vicki, and grandkids Natalie, 4, and Ella, 18 months.



I know that Ella was eyeing the tree with the thought of clambering aboard. Instead, she chose to simply smack the ornaments within reach, enjoying the way they fall to the floor and make noise. She also left an amazing trail of cracker crumbs and raisins here and there about our house. Hey, what are grandparents for, anyway?

I don't think that any of the compact discs she tried to cram into our tape player actually went in. Close, but not in. She also worked real hard to rearrange all our knick-knacks; probably going to be an interior decorator.

Natalie, although somewhat jealous of attention paid her little sister, helped Ella in a number of endeavors, not the least of which is called, "Feed the dogs your food, and then you don't have to eat it." Bingo and Rocky especially miss the girls because of that.

What with four cats, two dogs and our young visitors, we had some exciting adventures involving ... well ... let's just say that Vicki at one point proclaimed, "We're having a poop, pee and throw-up extravaganza."

Santa made a surprise visit two days before our guests departed for home in San Diego County. He filled their stockings and that of our granddaughter Kimberly, 10, who lives in Cave Junction with Dad Mike.

The guests enjoyed a couple outings. We took them to Foris and Bridgeview wineries, plus Wildlife Images in rural Grants Pass. Of course, Ella at her age doesn't often last long on such excursions before becoming a little screaming machine. But we got used to it. Amazing what crackers or cookies can do.

Then, for some reason, Vicki and the girls again were singled out for extra checking by TSA at Jackson County/Medford International Airport. Yeah, they look real dangerous. Same thing happened earlier this year when they visited. Profiling?

Anyway, they arrived home in good shape. We're looking forward to seeing them again, the extravaganza notwithstanding.

## Letters to the Editor

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact, are strictly those of the letter-writers.)

\*\*\*  
 Typed, double-spaced letters written solely to this newspaper are considered for publication. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and legible also can be considered.

'Thank you' submissions are not accepted as letters.

\*\*\*

### Depleted uranium information 'fiction' From William Reid Cave Junction

Webster's Dictionary defines fiction "as a making up of imaginary happenings." Kristine Strohl in a letter to the editor last week wrote a masterful piece of fiction concerning depleted uranium.

Fact: Depleted uranium (DU) is approximately 40 percent less radioactive than natural uranium. DU emits alpha and beta particles and gamma rays. Alpha particles, the primary radiation type produced by DU are blocked by the skin, while beta particles are blocked by clothing.

Gamma rays emitted by DU are very low. When fired or after "cooking off" in fires or explosions, the exposed DU rod poses an extremely low radiological threat as long as it remains outside the body. Taken into the body via metal fragments or dust-like particles, DU may pose a long-term health hazard if the amount is large.

A 120mm cannon shell as used in the M1 tank contains approximately 5 kg of DU in the penetrator rod while the 30mm A-10 anti-tank round contains ap-

proximately 0.3 kg of DU. The impact of DU ammunition against a hard target creates a fine DU dust that contaminates the impact site, though small amounts of DU dust drift downwind.

Test data demonstrate that normally, approximately 20 percent of a DU penetrator is aerosolized on impact with a tank. The impact of one 120mm DU tank round could therefore create approximately 950 g of DU dust. During a single attack by an A-10 aircraft shooting a burst of 30mm ammunition, between five and 16 DU bullets will likely hit the target creating 300 to 960 g of aerosol.

In the last gulf war, aircraft accounted for approximately 86 percent (by weight) of the DU shot. A strafing attack from an aircraft typically results in few DU rounds (5-10 percent) hitting the target. Tank rounds accounted for approximately 14 percent (by weight) of the total DU released, but more than half this quantity was shot on practice ranges in Saudi Arabia.

In combat, 80 to 90 percent of the tank rounds fired will hit the target and remain in or near it. Rounds that hit a soft target or the ground tend to stay intact or break into a few large fragments.

In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is plausible that considerably more than 80 percent (by weight) of the DU shot during the war did not hit a hard target, thereby minimizing the creation of respirable-size DU dust and reducing the immediate post-war health risks posed

by DU in Kuwait and Iraq. Approximately 286,233 kg of DU was used during the 1991 Gulf War.

In the current Iraq war the military estimates that 300,000 rounds of 30mm anti-tank ammunition was expended. With a standard 5-to-1 mix, then approximately 75 tons of DU was used.

The voluntary Veterans Affairs DU Medical Follow-up Program is an important source for identifying potential untoward health effects in friendly fire victims who have retained DU fragments. Approximately a quarter of the more than 60 level 1 exposed individuals who have been evaluated still carry DU fragments in their bodies, and they have elevated levels of urinary uranium nine years after the Gulf War.

The present health status of this group shows that they have not developed kidney abnormalities, leukemia, bone or lung cancer, or any classical uranium-related adverse outcome.

For male, active-duty military personnel in the U.S. military, the average frequencies of hospitalization for malignant disease are: leukemia (all types) two per 100,000 per year; and all cancer, 60 per 100,000 per year.

Lueren Moret, the scientist Strohl quoted in her letter claims "11,000 troops have died from DU poisoning, and 518,739 more veterans have been added to the permanently disabled list from out current war contaminated with DU poisoning." These figures have no basis in fact.

As of 2004 we had

slightly more than 500,000 total in the Army and 1.4 million military on active duty. By her numbers everyone in the Army is permanently disabled!

As far as Moret's credentials as a scientist on radiation issues, she is sadly lacking. She earned a bachelor of science degree in geology and a master's degree in Eastern studies. She worked two years at Livermore Labs, quitting in 1991. In the past she has been caught making false claims on DU-caused birth defects in children of Mississippi National Guard members.

This false claims was made years after the Center for Disease Control (CDC) had investigated the issue and found it not true.

There are many uncertainties about the use and effects of DU munitions, but the growing body of scientific research points to the conclusion that the use of DU munitions creates environmental contamination that can affect the health of people. The most prudent course of action for Kristine Strohl is to press for scientific studies, and not science fiction.

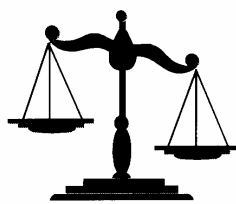
### Dr. Joe, staff, others noted for compassion From Amy and Jerry Schell-Lapora Cave Junction

On Wednesday, Nov. 29 my husband and I were on Hwy. 199 between Selma and Kerby, when two dogs ran onto the road.

One dog made it across the road -- the other was struck by a car. The poor people driving the car that hit the dog had no chance to react.

(Continued on page 3)

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