

# JUNE'S GARDEN

Statues of Greek goddesses, unicorns and gargoyles or a fountain decorated with Puck playing the flute do not seem quite the right style of garden art to use here along the N.W. Pacific coast; however, neither does the collection of cement and ceramic angels that decorate my garden. Mermaids, fish, whales and sea birds might be more appropriate.

In all the years I've lived here at the coast I've never seen a real live angel. I also have a rather large collection of cement and carved wooden frogs in various sizes. Some resemble the small green tree frogs and one large cement one looks like a huge Bull frog. I did have live frogs when the lawn turned into a swamp after a heavy rainfall, but after I put in a drainage system the frogs disappeared.

My garden is also filled with many birdhouses and birdfeeders. I stopped feeding the birds as I found out that the sunflower seeds attracted rats. I have enough birdhouses for the entire bird population to use for nesting, but so far only one sparrow family has used one. The Barn swallows have found a perfect place to build their nest on each spring, the light fixture above the back door.

Back to angels and frogs. I originally only intended to place just a few statues throughout the garden, but can't seem to stop collecting more. Also my family and friends through the years have gifted me with more for Christmas or birthdays. I'm not complaining; it's just come to a point that a nice card or telephone greeting for those occasions is sufficient to keep me content and happy.

It's only recently that I've become aware it's time to stop adding any more statues or other garden art.

A visitor seeing my garden for the first time commented, "My you don't believe in leaving any bare space do you? Your garden is quite colorful and you must feel protected you have so many angels placed in every corner. If all the frogs were real they could take care of the bugs and you'd have a croaking chorus."

I replied only kidding, "I guess all I need now is to add statues of Greek goddesses, a unicorn or a gargoyle or two." I hope my grandsons who gave me my first angel won't buy me the fountain they'd seen and been taken by, a fountain that has a half human and half beast spouting water out of its mouth. Besides, the "beastie" might scare off the raccoons. They are perfectly content drinking water in a large container that is filled with sea shells and each morning I find a shell placed on the deck next to the container.

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If you can start the day without caffeine,  
If you can get along without pep pills,  
If you can always be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,  
If you can resist complaining to and boring people with your troubles,  
If you can eat the same food every day and be grateful for it,  
If you can understand when your loved ones are too busy to give you any time,  
If you can overlook it when those you love take it out on you when, through no fault of your own, something goes wrong,  
If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,  
If you can ignore a friend's limited education and never correct him or her,  
If you can resist treating a rich friend better than a poor friend,  
If you can face the world without lies and deceit,  
If you can conquer tension without medical help,  
If you can relax without liquor,  
If you can sleep without the aid of drugs,  
If you can honestly say that deep in your heart you have no prejudice against creed, color, religion, national origin, gender preference or politics,  
THEN, you have ALMOST reached the same level of development as your dog.

"Power may justly be compared to a great river; while kept within its bounds it is both beautiful and useful, but when it overflows its banks, it is then too impetuous to be stemmed; it bears down on all before it, and it brings destruction and desolation wherever it comes."  
Andrew Hamilton

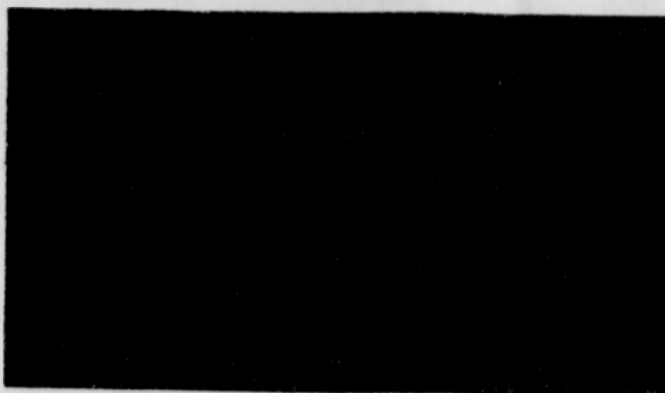
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## From The Lower Left Corner Victoria Stoppello

Weather is something we talk about, but...  
Victoria Stoppello

If there's one thing I want the new Mayor of Ilwaco to do, whoever he is, is change the weather. I don't mean the winter weather, either. A couple weeks in a sunnier clime in November gets me through the winter. It's the blasted rainy, cloudy, fog-infested summer that gets to me. I'm psychologically predisposed to expect warm afternoons, meals outdoors, balmy walks on the beach, and they just can't happen. It's not that I don't try—the weather just doesn't cooperate.

It's not that I'm unaccustomed to the cold and wet. I was born in Astoria and raised on one bank or the other of the Columbia downstream from Portland. I'm used to drizzle, but I'm not used to the kind of weather we've been having the last several summers. Perhaps it's just that from the ages of 10 to 17 I lived in Clatskanie and Vernonia, coast range towns that escaped summer fog. Now it could be that, despite my childhood memories of Ilwaco being a relatively dark and damp place, this really isn't typical weather—or not typical of the last 50 years. It could be that the weather is changing and those scientists who say we're not only having global warming, but climate change as well, could be right. I tend to put my money on their pony, because they've been collecting information from polar ice cores that indicate things are getting a lot warmer, a lot faster, than they have before, going back thousands of years.

One presentation I saw recently at a renewable energy fair showed that one or two degrees difference in ambient temperature has big impacts on the number of salmon in rivers and forests growing. Without arguing about the source of the earth's warming temperature, I figure the conservative thing to do is not enhance the change. Whether it will be ultimately a good or bad thing almost doesn't matter; we humans are pretty adaptable, but not necessarily as quick to change as the weather seems to be.

One set of data I saw said the earth's climate has been in a period of stability, preceded by a much longer period of incredible instability. The beginning of stability was quickly followed by the development of agriculture. How about that? No wonder I can't get our tomatoes to ripen, even under glass, and the boysenberries are molding this year: it's the frustrating weather. This is a case, however, when besides talking about the weather I want someone to do something about it. That someone is George W. Bush.

Turns out he is, but only privately. Maybe that's part of the reason he's taking a four-week vacation right now. Texas in August, especially at Bush's new Eco-friendly ranch house, has got to be more comfortable than muggy Washington, DC. Eco-friendly? Yes, you can read all about it in the

April 13, 2001, issue of USA Today. The house described in the article is a passive solar house, augmented with a geothermal heating and cooling system. Water is pumped 300 feet underground to take advantage of the earth's constant temperature of 67 degrees, then circulated through the house to warm and cool it. Big overhangs keep summer sun out, letting winter sun in to warm the concrete floors (solar mass in solar design talk). There's no air conditioning, just natural ventilation. Rainwater, kitchen, bath and toilet water are all collected, purified, and reused for irrigation. The building uses local materials, including limestone discards. Outdoors, there's a re-constructed wildflower prairie. In other words, Mr. Bush doesn't walk his talk.

The talk he isn't walking is that global warming is a questionable concept and the American people aren't ready or willing to conserve energy. His own ranch house, however, uses 25% of the electricity a similar, 4,000 square foot house would use. As politicians go, we don't expect them to be able to deal with things like the weather, but G. W. Bush could have an impact on the weather by getting us on the program to support the Kyoto global warming treaty. He could develop a national energy policy that looks more like his own house than his rhetoric. I like his house and why wouldn't I? Mr. Bush has beaten me at my own game: We reduced our electricity use by 67%, but he's using 75% less. So, although the Mayor of Ilwaco can't impact the weather, the US President can, and G. W. Bush even knows how. Or does he? Maybe it's all Laura's doing.

Victoria Stoppello writes from Ilwaco at the lower left corner of Washington State.

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