



Just a few miles to go

THREE WET, cold backpackers trudged down Sandy's streets last weekend after hiking a portion of the Pacific Crest Trail. The trio was headed for the home of Jeff

Youngbluth near Bluff Road. From left, the hikers are Youngbluth, Jeff Whitson of Portland and Scott Wright of Gresham.

Staff photo

Perfect for retiree

Her job is the berries

by KAYE BARTON

Julia Latimer says she has the ideal part-time job for a retiree—one that allows her time for travel in the winter and for work outdoors in the summer, one that provides a supplementary income and decorates her yard as well.

Mrs. Latimer grows blueberries. She maintains 100 of the 300 plants her husband tended until his death eight years ago.

Mrs. Latimer's 9-acre plot on Kelso Road also supports a few fruit trees and some raspberry bushes, but the blueberries provide the income which enables her to travel.

"Blueberry blossoms look and smell like lilies of the valley," she said. "In the spring the air around my house is so fragrant—and in the fall the bushes put on a spectacular show of autumn colors.

"That was the main reason we put the bushes in—because they are so decorative," she said. "It certainly wasn't for the quick profit—it takes five years before they produce any berries to speak of."

3,000 Pounds Of Berries

Now that the bushes are well established they produce an average of 3,000 pounds of berries per season. For years the berries from the Latimer farm were sold on the fresh market, but the last two seasons she has sold them to freezing operations.

"It took so much time to get the berries ready for the fresh market," she said.

Fresh-market berries must be sorted by the grower and packed into hallocks, or medium- and late-

"After sitting at the sorting table and watching five or six or seven thousand blueberries go by, you sort of welcomed the chance to stand up and go pick for a change," she joked.

Preparing the berries for the freezing plant is much less tedious and there is less travel involved, she explained. "We had to haul the fresh berries to warehouses in Clackamas and Milwaukie, but the freezing plants are right here in the Sandy area. It's just easier all the way around."

30-year life span

With good care, blueberry bushes will remain productive for 30 years or more, according to Mrs. Latimer. But the attention they require is neither constant nor time-consuming. "I really don't have to do a great deal to them—they sort of take care of themselves," she said.

During the winter the bushes require pruning and some spraying to prevent blight.

"The year before last, I pruned for nearly 100 hours," she said.

In early spring she enriches the soil with fertilizer to replace the nitrogen her sawdust mulch leaches from the soil.

Picking season starts in July, and for the next two months she estimates her berry farm is a half-time job.

"I have a long picking season because I grow early-medium- and late-producing berries," she said. "From July through September this year, we picked 32 days—which means that every other day I was working."

Once the picking season ends, the berries require no more than an occasional

spraying until the following February. The schedule allows Mrs. Latimer plenty of time to travel and to work with community groups.

Writes her memoirs Her winter travels in recent years have included trips to New Zealand, Alaska and the Hawaiian Islands, the Caribbean and the Canadian Rockies. After each trip she writes a summary which she binds into a separate folder for each journey. She is also working on her memoirs and has accumulated a thick sheaf of typewritten pages which tell the story of her life up to the most recent years.

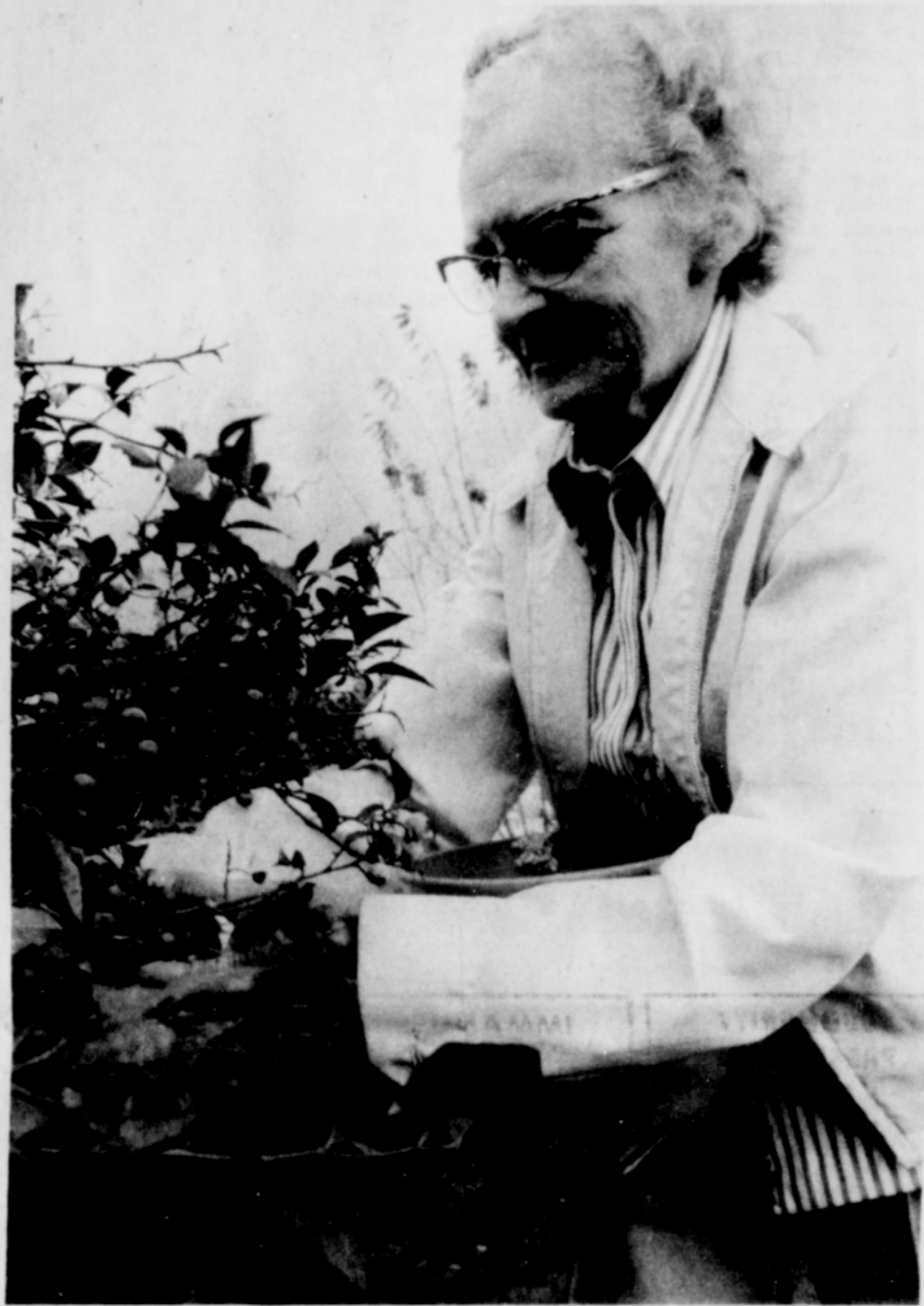
"The scenery looked just like western Oregon. They even grow blueberries there—not too many areas around the world can grow

fresh blueberries, so that was special to us."

In addition to travels and her berry farming, Mrs. Latimer finds time for active involvement in several organizations. She is a member of Order of the Eastern Star and the Rebekah Lodge. She is treasurer of the Golden Age Club and president of the Ladies' Aid Society of the Presbyterian Church. She also works as an RSVP volunteer at the Sandy Senior Center.

In spite of what appears to be a very full schedule, she says she welcomes the diversion her small blueberry farm provides.

"A lot of retired people need things to occupy their time," she said. "My berry patch gives me something to do."



Julia Latimer, busy with the harvest.

For possible learning problems

Boring students screened

BORING — The usual atmosphere of students taking a test was missing Monday and Tuesday at Boring Grade School. Missing were the faces of frustration and anxiety. In fact, the 50 or so first-graders seemed to enjoy having their visual, auditory and motor skills tested.

For two days, volunteers from the Sandy Retired Teachers Association and the Boring Parent-Teacher Association screened incoming first-graders to determine possible learning problems.

The test is aimed at skill levels, not intellectual levels, explained Superintendent Dave Gillespie.

The test is designed to help first-grade and kindergarten teachers recognize developmental areas where kids are having trouble that teachers normally wouldn't be able to pick out in a classroom, said Gail Griffiths, testing coordinator.

The test, which is being administered for the first time in the Boring district, is divided into seven areas, each one evaluating an area of motor, visual, auditory or conceptual skill.

For example, to test motor coordination skills, a student is asked to crawl, walk, run, walk on a balance beam and jump rope. To test auditory memory, a student is asked to perform three commands, repeat a sentence, repeat numbers and recall story facts.

This screening will help teachers design a program for particular students to correct weak areas, Griffiths said.

"It's really effective at preventing reading problems later on," she said. The children are still young and so much can be done at their age, she added.

Griffiths said a child may start out with a serious problem, but after working 20 minutes a day in a specific area, he or she should be able to function normally in a classroom by the end of the year.

A teacher can prescribe individualized activities for a student, she said.

"Our ideal is in three years, every child will read at or above grade level by the third grade," said Gillespie. "This (program) gives us a road map from which to start."

He said the district decided to start screening first-graders in this manner because it didn't have a good instrument to pinpoint where children were in terms of ability.

He said first graders all have different ability levels when they first enter school.

Gillespie said the district is not foolish enough to think this screening will answer all its needs, but the program will help.

"What I like is the community involvement," he said, referring to the help of retired teachers and parents in the testing.

Griffiths said students have to score a certain percentage of correct answers in an area, and since

the tasks are specific, the score gives a pretty accurate picture of a student's skill level.

County commission supports Measure 11

Greater property tax relief for homeowners is one of the features of Ballot Measure 11 that makes it superior to Ballot Measure 6, according to the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners.

The board, in a prepared statement released last week, gave unanimous support to Measure 11, the property tax relief proposal developed by the Oregon Legislature as an alternative to the 1.5 percent limitation.

"Ballot Measure 11 is by far the superior product," the board said. "It provides greater property tax relief to Oregon homeowners and renters; it provides for the responsible continuation of essential services by local governments, and it places a limitation on the growth of government."

On the other hand, Measure 6 eliminates local control and choice by forcing local governments to go to the state asking for money, the commissioners said.

They also said Measure 6, if successful, would mean the end of serial levy support for basic services such as law enforcement and libraries. Measure 6 gives the state

primary authority to decide who gets what, the board said.

According to commissioners, figures from the legislative revenue office show that homeowners in the school districts of Sandy, West Linn, Oregon City, Molalla, Canby, Milwaukie, Gladstone and Lake Oswego would pay substantially less taxes under Measure 11 than they would under Measure 6.

BANG to meet Thursday

BORING — Neighbors opposed to a proposed 12-acre industrial zone in Boring will seek support of the Boring Action Neighborhood Group at the Thursday meeting.

The zone change was denied recently by the Clackamas County Planning Commission, but the developer plans to appeal.

A planning commission representative also will be at the meeting.

The Bang session begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Boring Fire Hall.

Boring students receive high ratings

BORING — The Boring School District has been given a standard rating (the highest possible) as a result of a state evaluation done last March, the school district board was told last

week. Superintendent Dave Gillespie said the rating was in all areas of minimum standards.

In other action, the board discussed a proposed sup-

plemental budget of \$10,000. The money would be used to work on the old gymnasium for lighting, painting and changing some floor work, Gillespie said.

The board also heard a comparison on Ballot Measures 6 and 11. Gillespie said Measure 11, as the lesser of two evils, would be better for the district.



CLASS ACTION

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CATCH

At the Glass Butterfly . . . Downtown Gresham

Mon. thru Fri. 9:30 until 9:00 Sat. 9:30 until 6:00 Sun. noon until 5:00