

Gasoline consumption continues to decline

Gasoline consumption in Oregon continued to decrease during the month of January. Consumption was down 3.1 percent from January, 1980.

Wholesale gasoline sales figures assembled by the Motor Vehicles Division's fuel tax collections office reported a January, 1981 total of some 96 million gallons compared with 99 million gallons in 1980.

Declining gasoline sales figures contrasted with preliminary volume counts which show an increase in driving this year.

The causes for opposing trends may be improved fuel efficiency for the vehicle fleet, changes in driving patterns, a compensation by dealers for over-purchasing in December and improved weather for January, 1981.



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But never help them move

One person's junk is another's treasure

Every person's house needs a certain aesthetic quality to separate it from the appearance of a bus station.

The value of the nonessential items will vary distinctly depending on the person's income and taste. But value should not be the measuring stick.

I've been in homes decorated by finger paints and crayon drawings. Of course, these murals weren't always the owners' first choice in decor.

Children's work can cover an entire wall of sheet rock in no time at all. It can also cover holes, cracks and exposed pipes, giving a touch of love to the bleakest interior. The tunnel effect of an inside stairwell is lost when children's photos, their art and school papers are dispersed along the steps.

A role of shelf paper or butcher paper taped around the uncluttered walls of a family room gives hours of expression space to a budding young artist. One thing about such art—it's flexible and inexpensive. The colors and moods change from one day to the next. This kind of art is usually discontinued when the photos are caps and gowns and the school papers become so deep that the parents usually feel behind the times.

Doodads and knickknacks can fill up a room about as fast as relatives at a free dinner. It is highly possible to get carried away with little trinkets that look darling on the coffee table and so cute on the window sill. But some people just love to dust and it's their homes that are crammed with charm.

My cousin is one such person. I had to help my cousin

move last month and I must have used a ton of newspaper to wrap her odds and ends of glassware.



Margaret Schmale's

Bits
and pieces

When the little things were scattered around her home, it didn't seem like much, but once they were piled before me to pack, it looked like the leftovers from four garage sales.

I wrapped and stuffed until my hands were black with newsprint, then she would come in with a "few" more gadgets.

I kept asking her, "what are you going to do with all this stuff?" I packed a miniature cuckoo clock that had 10 feet of chain hanging under it and said, "well, at least this thing tells time."

"No," she replied flippantly, "it's broken, but it looks cute."

I wrapped up an empty piggy bank and made some comment about how long it would take to fill it up, but she said, "oh, I've never put any money in it. I bought it because the color matches my kitchen towels."

There was a wooden statue of a tall Tahitian woman carrying a bunch of bananas on her back that looked like it would make good kindling, or at best, a handle for a trowel. I held it high and yelled over the boxes, "is this a pepper mill, or what?"

"No," came the reply. "It's just for looks, but it balances my giant wooden fork and spoon set."

Her basket collection might have been just for looks, too, but I found a use for it. I packed her bell collection in it.

I wondered how far this fixation for looks went. I asked my nomadic friend, while I packed her china, if she ate off these or if the set was just for looks. And how about that sign, "Guard Dog on Duty," or that spare car in the drive?

"Just for looks," she said. "The neighbors think we're well off."

I told her she should go one step further and put up a sign that said "Servants Entrance at Rear."

I overheard one of the moving men say to his partner as they loaded box after box marked glassware, "if this gal didn't have so much junk, the truck would be a third lighter."

"Just be glad she does," said the other. "Remember, we get paid by the hour."

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