



Photos by Lynda Layne/Chinook Observer

An old glass former snake habitat is used as a makeshift greenhouse for lettuce plants.

Plot: 'It's my sanctuary'

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Luckily, this property has a well, so daily watering doesn't break the bank. Because of the sandy base, Jensen says that water, "Just sifts through." It doesn't go down that far, though. He said that while it might look wet on top, "You can dig down a foot and it's dry."

Freezing for year-round eating

While this bountiful garden is thriving and both Jensen kids can be seen picking and eating strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and a host of vegetable varieties right off the vines, this won't last forever. The Peninsula growing season isn't that long. So, Jensen makes sure to freeze everything possible for eating later in the year. Sometimes, he has to supplement it with the occasional "store bought" produce, but growing all this at home greatly slashes his financial output.

"I pick the snap peas and put them in the freezer. I'm going to do the same thing with the beans this year," he said.

He also explained how he makes his own bags of stir fry mix for freezing.

"I can't grow broccoli here because of the white cabbage butterfly moths, so whenever broccoli gets down to about 99 cents a pound, I buy huge quantities of it." He does the



Micheal Jensen, 15, takes a break from working in the garden.

same with carrots. But then from his garden, he can add a variety of produce, including onions. "I chop it all up, slap it together and freeze it," he said.

In his garden, strawberries and blueberries are protected by a wood framed bird netting setup he made. This discourages birds and wildlife, but does not necessarily prevent daily picking by hungry teenagers, so it's a toss up if these or the raspberries on the other end of the garden will make it into freezer bags. But isn't the whole purpose healthy eating?

Farmer from the get go

Jensen's upbringing taught him the benefits of

self-sufficiency.

He recalled, "I farmed for a living from the time I was about 7 years old until I was about 35."

He had two brothers and two sisters, three of which were 13 to 15 years older than Jensen. "It was like they had two litters," he laughed. The family had to be careful about how much was spent on food. When his parents finally became financially able, they bought a 10-acre farm in La Center, Wash., for \$2,000. Grow-your-own became the family's plan.

By the time Jensen was 8 years old, he had established two gardens, each about "20 times bigger than this one," and he cared for them himself. He also

raised bottle-fed calves for meat and the family plan was to also have a couple milk cows and pigs.

That sure cut the grocery bills. He said, "We'd go to the store and buy salt, sugar and pepper. Things like that. That was the extent of our grocery shopping. We raised everything else."

Productive on a smaller scale

The early on-the-job training educated Jensen and still today, he uses the practices to grow what he can. It's not on a 10-acre farm now, but rather a 26 by 26-foot plot, but he says that even so, "I sure get a lot of stuff off of it."

Jensen's garden offers more than just filling stomachs and freezer bags. He loves gardening. He flashes a contented smile and says, "It keeps me sane."

Sometimes, when the teens are in school or off doing other activities, Jensen will plop a chair down in the middle of his garden and just sit for a while, looking around at what is growing.

"It's my sanctuary," he admits.

Lynda Layne is a contributor for the Chinook Observer.

Should I stay or should I go?

Dear Annie: My boyfriend and I are coming up on our sixth anniversary. A few years ago, his mother was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. His parents live on the opposite side of the country from us. Their eldest son lives near them and can help them out. However, my boyfriend doesn't think his brother is doing enough. Ever since he went home for Christmas and saw how much his mom's health had deteriorated, he's been talking about moving back to live with his parents so he can take care of his mother and help out around the house.

mind made up to take this journey alone.

Stay where you are. See how things play out once he's settled back at his parents' house. He may be more open to talking then. By the way, if neither of you has raised the question of marriage, it's worth asking why.

Dear Annie: I'm 54 years old. I've worked in business for 30 years.

I started working in sales, made my way to telecom and currently sell security software to companies. I wear a suit to work. It's a big job with a big company on the East Coast.

Throughout the years, the people around me have gotten younger and younger. I have been pretty good at adapting to the ever-changing business landscape. However, recently, I feel as though technology changes daily and my co-workers and bosses are kids.

I can muddle my way through Excel and PowerPoint, but my strength is connecting with people. It seems as if everything is trending toward technical know-how, and I am feeling outdated. I am not sure I can keep up.

How do I keep pace with such a fast-paced world? — *Old Guy, Young World*

Dear Old Guy:

Why not use those people skills to get to know some of your more technologically savvy co-workers? There is bound to be at least one person there who would be happy to teach you some new tricks. And that person could probably learn a thing or two from you, too. After all, it's an increasingly rare skill to be able to connect with people, spark conversation, inspire curiosity and change minds — and that rarity makes it all the more valuable, not obsolete.

Annie is on vacation. First published in 2016.

DEAR ANNIE



ANNIE LANE
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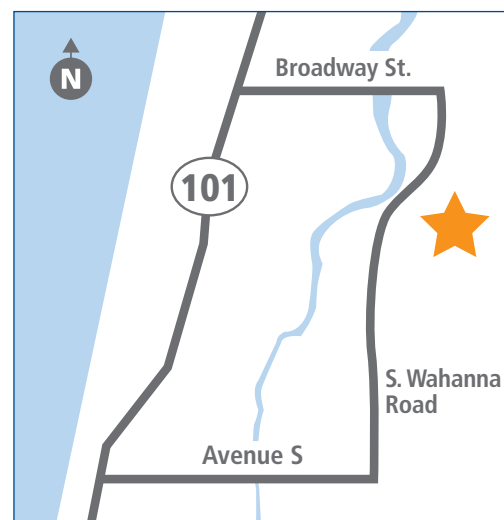


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Going to the Dogs!



Welcome to

the
Astorian's

National Dog Day
Photo Contest!

Grab your collars and your cameras, **National Dog Day is Aug. 26** and we are on the prowl for the bestest, cutest, snuggliest pups on the coast.

According to www.nationaldogday.com, the day celebrates all dogs, mixed breed and purebred, and works to promote the many dogs that need to be rescued.

In 2016, we fetched 103 photos; in 2017 we romped home with 207 shots of more than 230 critters. Last year we had more than 180 photos.

Submit your photo(s) before midnight Sunday, Aug. 12 here:
<http://bit.ly/Vote2019DogDays>

Then, come back and visit the pooches all that next week and vote on your favorite **before midnight Saturday, Aug 17.** Vote once a day.

The top vote-getters will be featured in the annual **Going to the Dogs** section on **Saturday, Aug. 24.**

Share with your friends and family: **#Going2TheDogsNW**

Now, who's a good boy? Who's a good girl?

For more information, call The Astorian at (800) 781-3211