



Ned  
Hickson

## Remote-controlled husbands part of scary 'brave new world'

As I've mentioned before, because of our home's proximity to the local wharf, from time to time we have a problem with rodents. Now, when I say "rodents," I mean rats; and when I say "problem," I mean finding mysterious entries scrawled on our grocery list that read:

### Git mor cheez

However, I know that we aren't alone in this, and that our neighbors undoubtedly have the same rodent prob-

lem. I know this because 1) They are our neighbors, and therefore live as close to the wharf as we do, and 2) Because we routinely lob assorted cheese curds into their yards before going to bed.

[**Note to neighbors:** We are NOT trying to entice the rats from our house into yours; we're simply trying to entice you to eat more cheese.]

That said, some recent discoveries could change the way we go about solving our rat problem. According to a recent article in the journal *Nature*, researchers at the State University of New York

have created the world's first living remote-controlled rat. By implanting tiny electrodes in rats' brains, scientists can command the rats to turn left or right, climb trees, navigate mazes and, in some cases, stage dramatic light saber duels while dressed as tiny Star Wars characters.

The science involves three electrodes, implanted at specific locations in the brain, which are then triggered by a remote device which produces controlled responses in the rat.

Interestingly enough, this very same technology is utilized by many wives, who use the TV remote to trigger con-

trolled responses from husbands by switching the channel whenever they get up to use the bathroom...

"Hey, what happened to the game?"

"You weren't watching it."

"I was in the bathroom for 30 seconds!"

"Did you put the lid back down?"

[**Controlled response:** "...I'll go check."

Understandably, there are those who think that manipulating rats (or husbands) is inhumane, and that it is only the first step toward an "Orwellian" world of human-control technology. While this

is certainly possible, others argue that we can't dismiss the many practical applications that Robo-rats offer.

For example, Professor Howard Eichenbaum of Boston University says the research "holds the promise of using animals as couriers to reach trapped victims."

I don't know about you, but when trapped beneath a crumpled overpass, I can honestly say a rat is just about the LAST thing I want coming in after me (not counting someone from FOX News.)

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that Robo-rats don't have their place. It just

doesn't happen to be anywhere near ME.

Or my house.

But at my neighbors' is fine.

To be honest, it wouldn't exactly come as a shock.

Especially with all of that cheese they've got lying around.

*Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, Humor at the Speed of Life, is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com.*

## Calling all artists for 'Love of Animals'

The month of February will include the second annual "For the Love of Animals" exhibit at Florence Events Center (FEC).

This highly successful event is a chance as an artistic community to support the local Florence Area Humane Society (FAHS).

By renting a rod for \$20 for up to three paintings or photographs, artists can help get the word out about the importance of supporting shelter animals.

Beside each rod will be a photo of an animal up for adoption at the FAHS.

Artists will receive the proceeds of any artwork sold, minus FEC commission. All proceeds from the reception on Friday, Feb. 12, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., will be donated to FAHS.

While at the reception, guests can buy raffle tickets to win a voucher for a portrait of their pet to be painted by well-known local artist John Leasure. The drawing will be held at 2 p.m. Also, there will be a photo booth set up for pet photos, to be developed



Oil painting by artist Ron Hildenbrand

almost instantly.

Complimentary refreshments will be served to delight pet owners and their pets, and there will be a bin for donations of pet food for the FAHS.

This exhibit will be a win-win for all involved in this annual event.

Artists are encouraged to sign up for a rod by Monday, Jan. 25, at the FEC. Display cases will be available for 3-D

items relating to the animal theme at \$20 for up to three items, space permitting.

Application forms are available weekdays at the FEC office, or on its website at [www.eventcenter.org](http://www.eventcenter.org).

## Rotary fellowship applications due Friday

Are you a teacher or nonprofit professional looking for a chance to increase your skills? Do you want to bring an exciting new program to your students or clients that will require specialized training?

The Florence Rotary Club's Continuing Professional Education Fellowship program is offering two \$2,000 fellowships to support local people who serve the community.

The simple application is due by Friday, Jan. 15, at 4 p.m.

To apply, visit [www.theflorencerotary.org](http://www.theflorencerotary.org), select "Club Links" from the left menu and select "Fellowship Grant."

Seven years after the Rotary Professional Education grant first began, more than a dozen local teachers and nonprofit professionals have received training and education.

Here are some of the results:

- A middle school science teacher attended a graduate-level course at Portland State University focused on engineering and design education.

- An elementary-school teacher who was struggling to engage the highest and lowest achievers in her classroom used Rotary funding to attend a national conference about using tablets to manage differentiated learning.

This approach advocates the use of small workstations throughout a classroom where students can learn in different ways — using a computer or tablet, touching or interacting with objects, engaging in discussion or pursuing individual study.

- A counselor received training to teach women and children how to deal with and prevent domestic abuse.

Anyone engaged in serving the community is eligible, and complete details about the program are available online.



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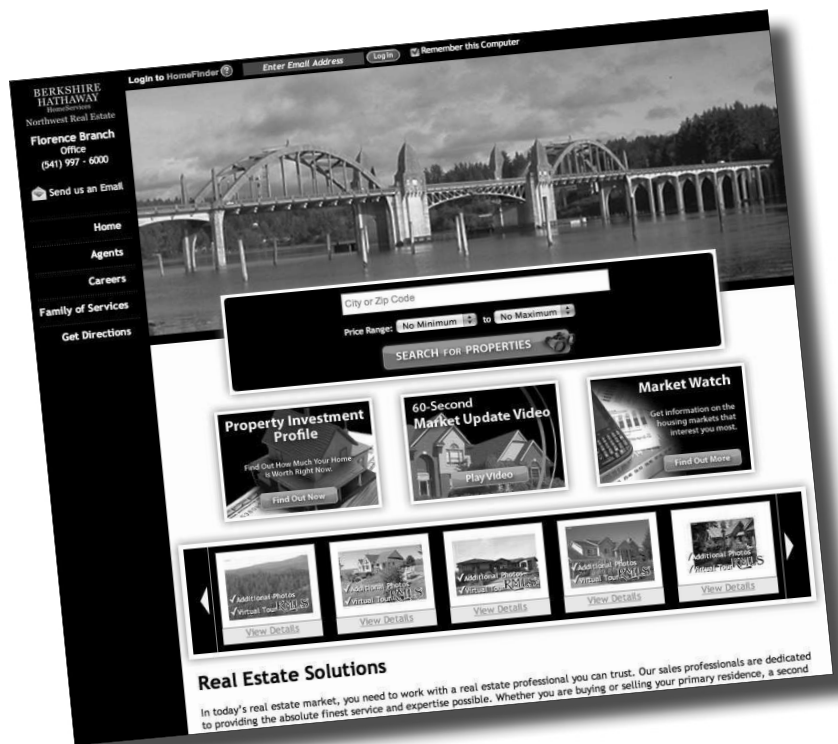
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### FEATURED LISTING

Beautiful in-town home. Cook's kitchen, lots of counter space & storage. Living room + spacious bonus room. Enjoy backyard privacy with patio.  
3 Bdrm, 3 Ba 2288 sq ft  
**\$359,500** BH7033 ML#15063759



### JUST REDUCED

Spectacular home with amazing Siltcoos Lake views. Rows of windows to enjoy the views!  
3 Bdrm, 2 Ba 1751 sq ft  
**\$349,900** BH6758 ML#14075289



### FEATURED LISTING

Private community fishing & crabbing pier on the Siuslaw River! A gated place for your RV. Home is clean, neat & squared away. 2 car garage.  
**\$223,000** BH7093 ML#15464027



### NEW LISTING

Fisherman's Paradise! Siuslaw River frontage...build your dream home or put on a manufactured home .8 acre City water avail, septic approval  
**\$149,000** PP7154 ML#15423872



### FEATURED LISTING

Country Beautiful 5.48 ac fenced, 8+ horse stalls, arenas, 40 x 40 shop plus garage/shop. Remodeled home w/hickory cabinets, wood floors. Hot tub overlooks pond  
3-4 Bdrms, 2 Ba 2404 sq ft  
**\$499,900** BH7086 ML#15676288



### PRICE REDUCTION

Lovely home for so many reasons, located in a peaceful Beach area neighborhood  
4 Bdrm, 3 Ba, 3400 sq ft  
**\$389,900** PP6624 ML#13189622



### FEATURED LISTING

Enjoy gated community convenience. This beautiful home, room for all your treasures. Large patio area.  
3 Bdrm, 2 Ba, 1620 sq ft  
**\$184,000** PP7077 ML#15491034



### FEATURED LISTING

Come see this beautiful home, look out your back door and see the green grass of the golf course.  
4 Bdrm, 2 1/2 Ba, 3131 sq ft  
**\$474,900** PP7053 ML#15664540



### FEATURED LISTING

Beach area custom home with 3 car garage on over 1/2 acre in Idlewood  
3 Bdrm, 2 1/2 Ba, 2234 sq ft  
**\$335,000** PP7146 ML#15624932

Florence Branch | 1875 Hwy 101 | Florence, OR | (541) 997-6000 | [www.RealEstateFlorence.com](http://www.RealEstateFlorence.com)