



**Betty Kaiser**

## Betty Kaiser's Chatter Box: Fire follows fuel — reduce wildfire risk now

nearby.

Later, we lived in Ventura, Calif. Again, fire was not a big worry. Fire hydrants were on every block and the kids were drilled at school to come home and teach their parents to put up fire alarms and agree on meeting places in emergencies.

Nothing about wildfires.

The last couple of summers, it seemed that the whole West Coast was on fire. This year's Snowmageddon really got our attention. Dangerously dry, huge debris piles are everywhere and we all need to take action. Suddenly, wildfires are possible in our own backyard.

Our daughter Kathy, her husband, their two sons and daughter-in-law live in East Ventura. Tim is a 30-year veteran of the Oxnard Fire Dept. and he was on duty the night that the largest fire in the state's history broke out — just a few short miles from their home. The Thomas Fire ultimately burned 282,000 acres and was fought by an army of 8,000 firefighters.

Thomas started in Santa Paula's Steckel Park, south of Aquinas College. It soon spread west along the foothills powered by the dreaded Santa Ana winds.

It quickly reached the city of Ventura where it destroyed neighborhoods in the hills above City Hall. The fire kept going and didn't stop for weeks, until it reached Santa

Barbara; lives were lost and properties destroyed.

That fire and others caused us to look around and plan how we could lower our own fire danger. We have a sprinkler system, have knocked down our tall weeds, keep our perimeters mowed, have taken junk to the dump and removed flammable debris.

But it takes the cooperation of everyone in the neighborhood to also keep their properties cleaned up.

Lightning strikes are beyond our control.

Justin Patten at his Grange talk pointed out these important reminders:

1) The leading cause of human-caused wildfires in Oregon is escaped debris from backyard burning:

- Check the weather forecast and call your local fire agency before burning.
- Clear a 10-foot radius around your burn pile.
- Burn yard debris only and always stay by your burn pile with tools on site.
- Make sure your burn pile is completely out when you leave.

2) Equipment fires are the second leading cause of wildfires on state-protected lands in Oregon. Spring is the time to clean up excess vegetation, not summer.

Use the right tool for the job:

- Call first to find out if equipment use is restricted.
- Use gas-powered equip-

ment early in the day.

- Use a weed trimmer with plastic line.
- Be sure your tools are in good working order.
- Keep a fire extinguisher or water hose nearby.

3) Create a defensible space around your home free of combustible material: Fire follows fuel:

- Clean up dead or dying plants, branches, leaves and needles everywhere — decks too!
- Move wood pile 30 feet from the home.
- Remove flammable plants and replace with fire-resistant species.
- Prune tree branches to a height of 6-10 feet to remove ladder fuels.
- Cut grass to less than 4 inches.
- Keep shrubs low and away from the drip line of house foundations and trees.
- Maintain driveway clearance that is free of flammable debris to allow fire engine access.

• More information at firewise.org or www.keeporegongreen.com/preventwildfires/at home.

Now we are praying for an uneventful summer. But just in case... I would appreciate it if someone would tell us an emergency escape route to London Road and the freeway.

Contact Betty Kaiser's Chatterbox at 942-1317 or email [bchatty@bettykaiser.com](mailto:bchatty@bettykaiser.com)



## Pet Tips 'n' Tales

By Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

### Owl's Miracle

Last week, Pet Tips 'n' Tales was about an owl that struck a police car and once rehabilitated, was then released.

What happened to another owl miraculously ties into that first story.

In late winter, Berneda was carefully driving 45 mph along the dark, mountainous-winding road to her farm. She had seen bears, cougars, bobcats and other wild animals cross the isolated road and did not want to hit any.

She was a mile from home when something hit her pickup's windshield — so hard, in fact, that she thought it broke the passenger window. Not wanting to stop for fear of other dangers, she continued home.

Once safely in her driveway, she climbed from the pickup and saw a dark ball caught up under the windshield's sunshade. Being a farmer, she was prepared for almost anything, donning gloves to lift the mysterious ball free.

To her surprise, she was holding a little-limp Western Screech Owl. She gently carried the unconscious feather ball into her mud room. The poor winged beauty appeared dead. Berneda, an animal lover, took off her gloves, stroked its downy-soft feathers and apologized for ending its young life.

"It was precious," said Berneda. "Then to my surprise, after 10 minutes of holding, petting and chatting to it, I felt a heartbeat and a slight breath. I continued massaging her chest. After a bit, she reached out and grasped my little finger with a one-inch razor-like talon. It reached around my finger and felt scary!"

Amazingly, an hour later, the little ball of feathers was strong enough to sit up and hold up its head. Berneda placed the owl in a laundry basket, used a towel to provide a warm covering, then left the creature to begin the process of healing.

"At bedtime, I checked in and thankfully the owl appeared stronger," she said. "The next morning it was alert, but one eye was slightly swollen."

Berneda has a 170-acre farm and cattle, so the following day was a busy one for the bird's nurse. But no worries — the owl was safe and warm in the house.

This is when divine providence that had been set in motion six weeks earlier manifested in a remarkable outcome. Berneda saw a stranger's vehicle stop at the end of their long driveway. Two people climbed out. She could not tell what they were doing, but they were up to something. Luckily, her grandson-in-law, Matt, saw the activity and jumped on his motorbike to speed down to the lower fence. He approached the people and questioned what they were doing.

One of the individuals identified herself as the Cascades Raptor Center's veterinarian, explaining that six weeks earlier a Western Screech Owl had struck a police patrol car and the officer had brought the injured bird to their center.

"Owls are territorial and this was the closest location the police officer recalled where the bird was injured," Dr. Ulrike told him. "Owls have established home ranges and returning them to their own territory is best for post-release survival."

To Matt's delight, he watched the rehabilitated Screech Owl fly into the evening.

Matt told the vet that her timing could not have been more perfect because last night another Screech Owl was struck by a car and resting at his home.

"The vet followed him up the driveway and into my mudroom," said Berneda. "She looked at the bird, declared it had a concussion and then she took it for rehabilitation at the raptor center."

Two weeks later, Dr. Ulrike returned with the healthy bird. She had called ahead so, by the time she arrived, Berneda had eight family members present for its release. The group walked to the edge of the forest, Dr. Ulrike opened the cage and the healed bird flew out and up into the tall fir trees.

"It was a happy celebration and we shouted, 'There she goes! Stay Safe!'" said Berneda. "I raised my hands and thanked God for her healing. God watches over his feathered creatures just like he watches over us."

It was a miracle that a little bird needing medical help had a specialized raptor veterinarian make an unexpected house call!

**TIP:** Meet 35 rescued raptors in Eugene: Take an hour, self-guided tour, Tuesday through Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., along two short outdoor trails on the side of Spencer's Butte. For more information, visit [www.cascadesraptorcenter.org](http://www.cascadesraptorcenter.org).

Share your fur-avorite pet memory or adventure at [angelscribe@msn.com](mailto:angelscribe@msn.com). Visit Pet Tips 'n' Tales on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/PetTipsandTales](http://www.facebook.com/PetTipsandTales) Humane Society for Neuter/Spay Assistance Program. 541-942-2789



**A specialized raptor veterinarian makes an unexpected house call to Berneda and her dog, Heidi's, farm for an owl's miracle.**

### LORANE NEWS

CONTRIBUTED BY  
**LIL THOMPSON**  
FOR THE SENTINEL

- On Friday, June 7, it's

Graduation Day for the Crow High School seniors at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come help them celebrate. The rest of the Crow-Apple-

gate-Lorane school district finish, for this school year, on June 20 with a half-day.

• Lorane Grange meets Thursday, June 6, at 7 p.m. The women will serve the men in honor of Father's Day. Many items to discuss, so grangers be there.

• Wednesday, June 12 is the Applegate Elementary spring concert at 7 p.m. in the gym; June 18, the eighth-graders will be recognized at 7 p.m.

• The boys and girls track team qualified eight individuals and a 4x400 relay team attending state. They brought home 7 individual medals and the relay also received a medal. Most placed between fourth and 11th. The boys finished 16th out of 39 and the girls were 19th out of 39 teams. Congratulations to our Crow Track Team! It says a lot about our small school.

• Everyone interested in playing football next fall, there are football warmups each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 3:30 p.m. at CM/HS.

• The ladies of the Lorane Christian Church thank all who came to their bake sale last Saturday. For those

missing it, the goodies were amazing!

• Applegate Booster Club will meet again Thursday, June 13, at Applegate Elementary. All of their events and your support have enabled them to provide new listening centers for K-2, fund a fifth-grade field trip to the aquarium, plus help provide subscriptions for third grade. They will also purchase OBOB books for next year's Oregon Battle of the Books.

• Our Crow CM/HS FFA students and the seventh-grade intro to AG students are really learning valuable information. Recently, they took part in a Forestry/Natural Resources CDE and learning event. Our students are enjoying amazing learning opportunities.

• FYI... The 16th Annual Crow Car Show is planned for July 14. Pre-registration is open. For more information, contact Marissa Cooper at 541-517-6608. They are looking for volunteers and donations for this major fundraiser by the Booster Club for all our students.



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### 6-day weather forecast

THURSDAY	FRIDAY
64°   45° Partly Cloudy	59°   46° Rain
SATURDAY	SUNDAY
67°   46° Rain	76°   50° Sunny
MONDAY	TUESDAY
86°   55° Sunny	82°   58° Partly Cloudy

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