



Betty Kaiser

Betty Kaiser's Chatter Box: Surviving the unexpected (with prayer and toilet paper)

dered as I jumped through all the necessary hoops to restore my arm function. I truly feared that healing and restoration wasn't possible. Family, friends and strangers prayed.

I was in shock for weeks. My condition was described as "fragile." The first two surgeries I barely knew what was happening. The skin graft was a real eye opener. I always wondered how they transferred skin from one place to another. In layman's terms, they shaved a large area of skin off my thigh and stitched it over the skinless wound.

Both the leg and arm were bandaged and the healing began.

I wore a wound vacuum attached to my arm and around my neck 24 hours a day for weeks. Eventually, it and the stitches were removed from the arm. I wore a compression sleeve for months to continue the healing.

The thigh skin removal was like a severe sunburn as it slowly healed. The ugly, crater-like hole of the arm wound area looks and feels like shoe leather.

Many thanks to modern medicine and an army of medical personnel who did everything they could to restore my arm. Along the way, I learned how to be brave and

calm; to follow directions, endure multiple procedures, operate a wound vac machine and trust my husband to change bandages.

One of the frustrating parts? It was two months before I could take a shower. Chuck washed my hair in the sink and I took sponge baths. Oy!

So much tissue was lost that I remained under the surgeon's care until this year. The wound area is still tender and ugly as sin and there is residual nerve damage. Everyday life is hard on the arm and wrist: lifting, typing, stirring, opening jars, digging in the garden are all painful. But thanks to great care and hundreds of prayers, I survived and I am a grateful woman.

Now, you would think that would be enough medical trauma and drama for a little old lady in one year. But there's more. In August, a routine exam showed that I had a non-malignant tumor of the parotid gland.

The tumor was sitting on the facial nerve making it difficult for surgery to remove. More prayers were sent up and thanks to God and a great surgeon, I again survived the unexpected.

Finally, just before Christmas, when life was starting to get normal, more trouble was brewing. My husband has a long history of heart disease

dating back to a 5-way bypass in 2003. In Dec. he began having difficulty breathing outside in cold air. No one thought that was a problem. "They" were wrong.

He ended up at RiverBend, after a heart attack and stroke that resulted in more surgeries and weeks of Home Health Care. Many tears were shed and prayers were offered. Chuck survived the unexpected.

This year, for one brief month in January, life was looking up. Then came another surprise. A coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) arrived in America.

Unexpected? You bet.

So, to everyone out there who is wondering what the world is coming to...I don't know either. Only God knows, so we pray. Please know that I'm following the rules, worrying right along with you. We will get through this. However, we are just about out of toilet paper.

Kleenex, anyone?

Many thanks to all of you for your encouragement and friendship throughout my journalism years. May God bless you with hope, joy and good health as we plow through the year 2020! Keep looking up, praying and believing that we will survive.

This, too, shall pass!

Contact Betty at 942-1317 or bchatty@bettykaiser.com



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

By Mary Ellen
"Angel Scribe"

Cozy Cat Companions



Volunteer cat companion Nicki comforts a nervous shelter cat while it awaits a new family.

(Originally published in The Sentinel April 4, 2019)

I am jealous of my friend Nicki's purr-fect hobby!

"A family member is allergic to cats, so I solved the dilemma of not being able to have one by volunteering at the animal shelter as a cat companion," said Nicki.

Every Sunday, she leaves her busy work week behind and heads to the shelter to pet and cat-chat with kitties looking for homes. Many shelter cats arrive with no purr-vious hiss-tory.

Are the felines: Loving? Cuddly? Shy? Bold? Do they like being held, petted, played with or have a hidden injury? Nicki helps the cats settle and, often, teaches them how to trust again.

Learning what the kitties like when and how to pet and play, who wants to be brushed and for how long, helps paw-tential pet parents meet calmer cats and speeds up placing the homeless animals in their paw-fect homes.

If we love cats and dogs as children, we will at any age. The following is one of Nicki's observations:

"Last week, an eight-year-old child arrived at the shelter carrying a \$10 bill and a bunch of change. She had saved the money to donate to the animals' care," said Nicki. "She had also learned how to make a cat toy out of a roll of toilet paper on the internet. She cut and curled the ends of the roll, added a piece of yarn that extended two feet out and tied this to a wooden skewer — all for the cats' entertainment. Her wish to make a difference in the lives of others and volunteering shows that one is never too young to start.

"The shelter staff gave her a pair of wire cat ears, and then I introduced her to some cats wanting to play. This wasn't her first donation, and I'm sure it won't be her last. I bet she won't forget her trip to cheer up the kittens for a long time. Neither will I."

Shelters are always in need of volunteers' time, help and compassion. Some of their needs include: dog walking, fund raising, organizing events, feeding, animal socialization, cleaning, laundry, children to read to dogs, office help/answering phones, the pet food bank, writers and photographers to post incoming pet bios on the website, adoption counseling, making cat posts/animal beds.

Whatever your skills, they will find a "job" for you. Check out a shelter's volunteer website page and see if you or your family can help in the bunny/hamster room, cat cattery or dog kennels.

"A few loyal volunteers wake up early to drive our dogs to radio and TV stations for the, 'Pet of the Week' segment," said Megan Brezovar at Greenhill Shelter.

"Sixteen years ago, I began volunteering in the shelter's cat quarters," said Nan. "The day I arrived, they had 25 cats and loads of kittens. I cleaned, washed and refilled litter trays. It was not a glamorous job, but a much needed one. I also washed and dried cat towels for their kennels and lookout posts.

"The jobs were more fun than they sound like. The entire time I had a room full of cats to talk to and pet. It was lovely meeting and chatting with the public searching for a new furry family member. One thing we volunteers always needed were donations of good mops, brooms, etc. to clean the place. It was a lot of work keeping the cats' rooms and cages clean, but the cats were wonderful and I loved every minute."

TIPS:

- "I loved the 'Saving Jimmy' article on the senior dog," said Dick. "Years ago, I rescued an elderly Airedale. He was one of the most devoted and loyal pets I ever had. I am currently looking to rescue another dog. The time and love that we devote to our furry friends comes back many times over and we are richer for it."

- "The best way people can help with animals is to neuter and spay their own pets or the strays in their area. If this was done, then we'd be gratefully out of a job," said Janetta Overholser, president of the Humane Society of Cottage Grove.

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

LORANE NEWS

CONTRIBUTED BY
LIL THOMPSON
FOR THE SENTINEL

Another week and we're still staying home and practicing social distancing. Some people are enjoying extra time with family and

children, while others are catching up on all those projects "We'll get to when we have time."

- The district has been working on distance learning since the students are home until April 28. For information on Rules for Grads

and School Work Packets visit www.cal.k12.or.us/article/216684?orgcal. You may also check the school website.

- Need some great reading? Pat Edwards will donate up to 10 of their "Groundwaters" anthologies to Lorane residents who would like to have one.

These annual books are filled with wonderful stories, poetry, essays, memoirs and much more — written by more than 60 local writers. A number of Loranians have contributed. Let Pat know and you can pick them up at

the Lorane Family Store.

- While so many things are closed, the Lorane Family Store is open to get your necessities without having to go to town. The Lorane Deli is open for take-out only from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Call 541-942-2074 to place your order. If you check the Lorane website, several people have offered to shop for others.

The Post Office is also open.

- As we continue on, stay strong, keep your faith strong and if you can't see family, call or text. This, too, shall pass.

Preserving Your Pet's Memory

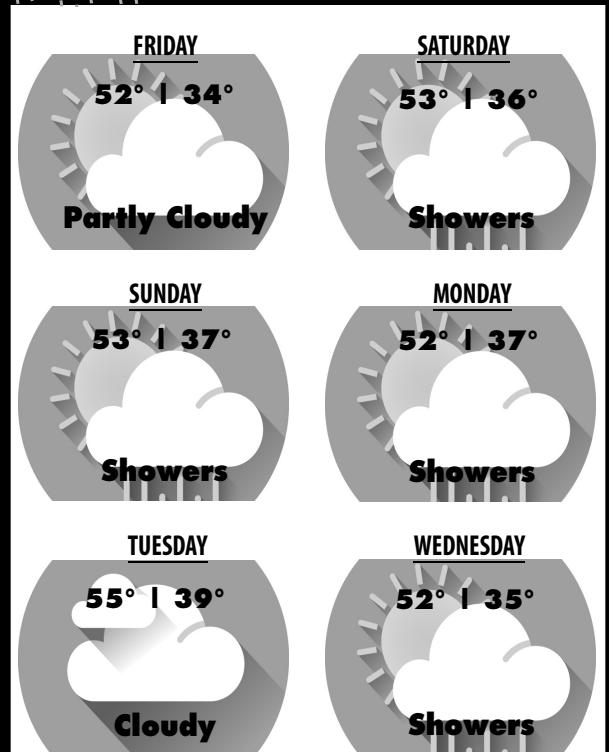


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We are committed to keeping our customers our staff and our community safe during this Corona Virus outbreak and to that end we have been wiping down commonly touched areas such as door handles, steering wheels and shift knobs on every vehicle before and after getting in them. We are also disinfecting the office and shop at every opportunity throughout the day.

Due to the Corona Virus outbreak we will not be able to maintain regular business hours for at least the next couple of weeks. If you need your vehicle serviced or repaired, please leave a message at 541-942-8022. We will be checking messages throughout the week and will return calls and schedule work as we can. You can also email us at autospecialties@hotmail.com. We will do what we can to help.

Intoxalock customers in need of recalibration, installation or removal, please leave a message and we will coordinate a time with you.

We are looking forward to life returning to normal once this national emergency is under control.

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