

Off the Wall By Marilyn Robinson

Holidays do sorta' seem to sneak up anymore. I didn't find time to scatter artificial grass while stuffing Easter baskets. And the kitchen didn't develop pink blotches or that muddy color after mixing together all the leftover Easter egg dyes. I hurriedly bypassed the beautiful Easter lilies in the store. And I slapped my hands to prevent grabbing those yummy chocolate bunnies because the candy dish full of speckled malted milk eggs seemed to disappear while I was intently typing a story last week.

So I wasn't prepared for the acquisition of a fuzzy, little Easter pet. However I've always had a soft spot for cuddly cute kittens, downy baby chicks or sundry live creatures.

No more house pets, I said, after the family was grown. Somehow sofas seem more inviting when not decorated with cat hair. But the kids weren't the only ones who adopted so-called defenseless kittens. I once wagged home a loveable Siamese cat. Not only was his blond hair quite visible on a dark-colored davenport, but that fat cat chewed up two handmade afaghans.

It always seemed like the shaggier the dog, the more cuddling said canine required in the warmth of the basement; especially after becoming muddy and wet. But somehow our home always seemed to accommodate one or more live bodies, including on occasions, a weak, newborn calf.

And though some of the smaller creatures were supposed to be confined in cages, I remember the white rats that had a heyday with a new sleeping bag. And then there were gerbils and guinea pigs, nice quiet fellows that often slept with their heads buried. We also catered to goldfish that were supposed to find a home in a watering trough when they got bigger; however the cat had other plans.

Baby rabbits didn't become permanent house pets due to a population explosion. But the big turtle was quite an attractive fellow, looking somewhat like an ornamental rock and he didn't move all that fast.

Slimy salamanders and leaping frogs weren't the most popular house pets. But unknowingly, I helped Freddie the Frog become a house guest as he had his home in a large flower pot that I had brought inside. But when he warmed up and began croaking in the middle of the night, he also, found himself disposed.

An unusual house occupant was a sand-loving Kangaroo rat captured by our oldest son. But he was a regular Houdini, for he could escape any confinement. His mobility was something to marvel at, since like his namesake this diminutive creature could leap three feet off the ground from a standing start.

So in spite of being creature-conditioned, there were some heart-stopping experiences while hurrying to the freezer in the basement without bothering to turn on a light. Perhaps to avoid being stepped on this fuzzy fellow would literally fly in my face. But his repeat performance helped him regain his freedom in the wide open spaces after a fateful trip that resulted in an armload of produce for the freezer lying mangled on the concrete floor.

Now I have to admit that this new little pet is kinda cute considering his bug eyes and soft gray fur. However he didn't seem to take the hint that an open door was the best avenue to his longevity. And I'd welcome anyone fast enough to capture this quick-moving speedster. Meanwhile I'm still searching for the missing mouse trap before he invites all his friends to lunch.

Washed-out shrubs need fertilizer weeds compete with garden

It's time to muster the home garden weed patrol. As newly planted garden vegetables begin to grow, weeds will start coming up in the garden too, says Ray McNeilan, Oregon State University home gardening agent. It's important to remove this weedy competition if the vegetable plants are to flourish.

As you contemplate weed removal don't be too quick to rely on herbicides.

"Applying chemicals to control weeds in such a small area isn't efficient or cost-effective," McNeilan says. "Removing the weeds with a hoe may be hard work, but it's more effective and cuts down on the amount of

chemicals used on the garden."

Other means of controlling weeds include using mulches, both organic and non-organic. For example, a one-inch layer of bark dust or sawdust will deter most annual weeds. A mulch of newspaper, five sheets thick, covered with bark dust, clean straw or compost, will help control weeds plus help conserve soil moisture.

Also, plastic material, such as clear or black polyethylene sheeting will help with weed control and moisture conservation. Landscape cloth stops the growth of most weeds, but allows water to pass through.

Donations sought for sale

Donations are being sought for the Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home Auxiliary garage sale planned for May 16.

Those donating should do so by May 11. For donations or more information contact Mary Vanden Haak 676-5042 or Tonia Adams 676-9616. Proceeds will go to the

nursing home.

The auxiliary is in need of some special items for the nursing home. TV trays, stacking patio chairs and small pillows for wheelchair patients would be greatly appreciated. If anyone would like to donate these items call VandenHaak or Adams.



Easter Bonnets--L-R Tommy Steagall, Shelby Dyer and Alvin Jones model their Easter hats they made at the Pioneer Memorial Nursing Home Easter Parade last Thursday. Everyone was a winner and received ribbons.

Students to compete in Citizen Bee

Heppner High School students Ryan Pence, Pete Pearson and Joseph Healy are among 33 high school students from 11 area high schools who will participate in the regional Citizen Bee competition, Saturday, April 11, at 10:30 a.m. at Eastern Oregon State College's Hoke Hall. Shawn Cutsforth is the alternate. Linda Dutcher, Heppner High School teacher will accompany them.

Besides Heppner, local schools include Baker, Hermiston, La Grande, Ontario, Pendleton, Powder Valley in North Powder, Boardman, Stanfield, Umatilla, and Vale. The students were selected through school competitions held earlier this year.

The competition, sponsored by the Close Up Foundation in Washington, D.C., will place the students in several rounds of written and verbal questions. Points are awarded for correct answers, and the students with the greatest number of points will be declared winners. The questions will be based on American history, geography, economics, politics, culture and current events from a study guide prepared by Close Up.

More than 150,000 students, representing 3,500 schools across the country, will participate in the Citizen Bee this year.

The Citizen Bee in Oregon is sponsored by the Albany Democrat Herald, the Confederation of School Administrators, the East Oregonian, First Interstate Bank, La Grande Observer,

Nike, Inc., the Oregon Association of County Clerks, Oregon Education Association, the Oregon Newspaper Foundation, the Oregon School Boards Association, the Oregon State Bar, Pamplin Foundation, Portland General, The Oregonian, The Samuel S. Johnson Foundation, The Statesman Journal, U.S. West Communications, Western Communications Inc. David Culiffe, a teacher at LaGrande, is serving as the regional coordinator.

On the national level, the Citizen Bee is sponsored by the Burger King Corporation, the Milken Family Foundation, KPMG Peat Marwick, and Kraft General Foods.

The students will vie for savings bonds of \$500, \$300, and \$200 and the top seven students will advance to the state competition set for May 2 in Salem. The national competition will be held June 29 in Washington, D.C. where the students will compete for scholarships totaling \$48,000 provided by the American Honda Foundation.

Close Up also sponsors local government studies programs in communities across the nation, produces academic publications and videotapes, telecasts public affairs programming nationwide via C-SPAN (Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network), and conducts the Civic Achievement Award Program for students in grades five through eight.

St. Jude's bike-a-thon planned

By Anne Morter

Sunday May 17 is the date chosen for the annual St. Jude Bike-a-thon in Ione. The course, which includes a 22-mile scenic ride from Ruggs to Ione for those old enough to undertake it and an in-town route for small children, will be the same as last year. Times and exact course details will be released later.

The Wheels for Life Bike-a-thon is for the St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. Coordinator Loa McElligott reports that past year's turnouts have been impressive and she hopes to continue that trend. She notes that the hospital has always been most appreciative of the efforts and, in fact, they were very surprised that such a small community raised

such a generous amount.

Founded by Danny Thomas in 1962, St. Jude Research Hospital is the largest childhood cancer research treatment education center in America. It is non-sectarian, interracial and provides medical care for over 3200 active patients. Currently, an average of \$215,000 per day is needed each day to keep the doors open. These funds come primarily from public contributions.

This year's bike-a-thon is dedicated to Brooke Simon of Delcambre, Louisiana. When she was three years old, Brooke developed a malignant tumor in her abdomen. She had surgery at St. Jude to remove the tumor, followed by radiation and chemotherapy. She is now seven years old and off therapy. She returns to St. Jude for regular check-ups. Brooke's fight is representative of all of the St. Jude patients.

Pledge sheets will be available at businesses in Ione, Lexington and Heppner. Participants collecting \$30 or more will receive a special St. Jude T-shirt. Those collecting \$75 or more will receive a sports bag in addition to the T-shirt. Refreshments and supervision will be provided for the riders.

For more information on this worthy cause, contact Loa McElligott 422-7228.

St. Patrick's Senior Center Bulletin Board



The Easter dinner April 15 at the Senior Center was preceded by an Easter parade. Pretty hats, and some zany ones were worn by the ladies and the four gentlemen who joined the fun. They sang a parody of "Put on your Old Gray Bonnet," accompanied at the piano by Irene Anhorn. The ladies from the nursing home also wore pretty Easter hats that they had made.

There were 129 present for the Easter dinner, and eight dinners were taken out. There were five out of town guests. Grace Buschke won the meal ticket, Eva Griffith the door prize from Murray's Drug Store, and Jean Crawford of Portland received the guest prize. Members of the Christian Life and Mormon Churches did the serving. The Senior Board met after dinner.

The menu for the birthday dinner April 29 will be chicken nuggets, oven fries, salad, banana bread, cake and ice cream. Members of the Seventh Day Adventist and Nazarene Churches will serve. Certificates of appreciation will be given to RSVP volunteers following dinner.

The Red Cross Blood drive, sponsored by the Forest Service will be held in the Senior Center dining room Monday, April 27 from 1 to 6 p.m.

The Senior focus group will meet at the Senior Center Tuesday, April 28 at 10:30 a.m.

Remember, quilting Monday 1 to 4 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, Exercise 10 to 10:30 a.m.; Friday Bible study 10:30 a.m.; Saturday Bus to Hermiston Dance 6:30 p.m.

Lexington News

By Delpha Jones

--Bertha Sager is a patient in the Oregon Medical Hospital in Portland where she underwent surgery.

--Connie Eng returned Sunday from St. Vincents hospital where she underwent major surgery.

--Bob Lovgren was a patient in St. Vincents hospital last week in Portland.

--Ron Olsen and son David visited Easter Sunday from Pasco, WA. with Eldon and Barbara Gilbert. Other dinner guests were Alta Cutsforth of Heppner, Lisa Cutsforth of Portland and

Cecil and Delpha Jones of Lexington.

--Betty Marquardt had Easter dinner at her home on Sunday. Her father Truman Messenger from Lexington, daughter Carlita and Jim Bloodsworth and their children from Hermiston along with her other daughters Pam and David Piper, Debbie and Ray Miller, Joyce Hughes, Jana Marquardt, Sheree and Bob Smith and their children were all present. After dinner the grandchildren enjoyed an Easter egg hunt.

Forest seeding project planned

The Heppner Ranger District, in cooperation with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, will share the costs of a 1500-acre seeding project. Orchardgrass and native grasses, legumes, and forbs will be seeded using a helicopter. The improved forage base will lengthen the grazing season, promote forage diversity and help control thistle.

Seeding of natural varieties will provide a larger forage base that

can be used to help break the monoculture of wheatgrasses that currently exists in all seeded areas. Seeding of the clearcut units will also help control a thistle problem that has developed on the District during the past few years.

The availability of an improved forage base will allow the elk to stay on national forest lands longer and help minimize any damage problems that may occur on adjacent private rangelands.

Alcohol cited in youths' accidents, deaths, crimes


The United States surgeon general held a press conference recently in which she cited that alcohol is leading the country's youth into emergency rooms and jails. In the press conference Dr. Antonia Novello cited figures showing the problems caused by young people abusing alcohol, including accidents, deaths, assaults, rapes, bad grades in school and dropouts.

Rev. Stan Hoobing, convener of the Oregon Together Group says that among the statistics cited by the surgeon general were: about one third of the youth committing serious crimes consumed alcohol before the offense; more than 70 percent of teenage suicides involved frequent use of alcohol or drugs; alcohol is a factor in more than half of the rapes among college students; 55 percent of the alleged rapists and 53 percent of the victims were under the influence of alcohol at the time; nearly 40 percent of drownings and 75 percent of fatal accidents will all-terrain vehicles involved use of alcohol; for every injury death, there are 16 hospitalizations and 381 injuries requiring medical care; some 350,000 children in the eighth grade are binge drinkers and that the number climbs to 690,000 when they reach sophomores.

Hoobing adds that an article in 1987 medical journal, the "Journal of Counseling Psychology" showed information on alcohol's role in rape: "Among high school female students, 18 percent, almost one in five, said that is OK to force sex if the girl was drunk."

The Oregon Together Committee realizes that drinking is a socially accepted norm in our county and country. "We do not oppose adults over the age of 21 who are social drinkers, but we are deeply concerned about those under 21 who do drink either at home, at school sponsored events or anywhere else," says Hoobing. "We are concerned and urge adults, parents and friends of our youth to engage in healthy wholesome activities and relationships so that the "bottle" does not become a "friend", he continues.




If any individual or organization would like to know more about the purpose of Oregon Together and its program, please contact Rev. Stan Hoobing. "Let us work in Heppner and Lexington to make our environment free of drug and alcohol abuse among our youth," Hoobing says.



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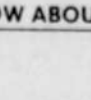
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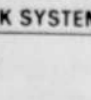
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Tank D 10 Years - No air space Drainfield full of solids May need replacing