

Off The Wall... By Marilyn Robinson

Among other reasons, some senior citizens may chose to live in assisted living facilities because they, too, are electronically challenged. It used to be that with a screwdriver, a pair of pliers and a hairpin, I could fix anything from a rusty gate hinge to a broken bridle rein.

Modern gadgets function at the push of a button. They light up and produce gurgling noises and loud beeps that signal the end of cycles. Nowhere in an instruction booklet does it say that a computer can belch smoke and die without a whimper soon after the warranty has expired. The problem, it appears, is that this operator is not P.C. compatible.

That same day the television decided to take a brief nap without so much as a tiny bleep. When I opted to run errands a gremlin had left a rearview mirror light turned on that caused the car battery to also play dead. Unwilling to tempt fate, I ignored the vacuum cleaner only to have the broom handle come off

At snack time (which is all the time) I cautiously peered in the refrigerator in search of salad material. While munching on those winter veggies such as broccoli and cauliflower, the cost seems rather high. It could be that these California crops are grown on sacred ground that may soon sprout condominiums or become wildlife habitat. (Gotta have somewhere for those urban coyotes and cougars to roam.)

I didn't meet any rich vegetable growers on my visit to that productive area last fall. But I do prefer foods grown in the U.S. to those imported ones such as pesticide peppers or Mexican jumping beans

Recently I read where increased acreages of U.S. vineyards have created a glut of wine grapes. Growers left acres of grapes un-harvested, while grocery store prices on eating grapes remain high. A boost in wine consumption may come from the latest research that recommends increased consumption of alcoholic beverages for the blood-thinning and cholesterol-lowering properties of ethanol in alcohol to ward off Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. And I thought the best use of ethanol was as a gasoline substitute. There are choices when it comes to tanking up.

The paradox is that excessive alcohol consumption can be toxic to the brain contributing to dementia, it says. So whether you're driven to drink or not, eventually that gray matter is going to dissolve into mush anyway.

Now if you've visited California, the land of fruit and nuts, you know that plums (the politically correct name for prunes) is a major crop. However the USDA is paying plum growers to destroy some 20,000 acres of trees because of a glut on the market. Also the USDA mad scientists are trying to invent new ways to utilize plums and testing these products on unsuspecting school children.

Prune burgers, a mixture of ground beef (imported no doubt) and four percent prune puree, ought to be tested on slow-moving seniors. However the article says that there's too little of the fruit in these burgers to have the laxative effect for which prunes are known. Moreover they claim that the fifth and sixth graders gave thumbs up to those prune burgers, along with sweet potato pancakes and a raisin and tomato barbecue dip for chicken nuggets. Since chickens don't have nuggets, I wonder what other substitutes they gave these poor kids who balked at eating the broccoli or asparagus guacamole concoctions.

Since the USDA is looking for ways to get rid of these surplus crops, why don't they feed these experimental delicacies to Taliban detainees, since taxpayers are footing the cost of that food. The three meals a day provided to these rebels is far more nutritious than meager handouts of moldy bread or wormy rice given to American prisoners during WW II. Food for thought expands minds not waistlines.

Holly Rebekah Lodge elects officers

Lexington Holly Rebekah Lodge elected new officers for 2002-2003 on Feb. 21. Elected were Dorothy Jackson as Noble Grand, Marilyn Allison as vice Grand, Luella Taylor as secretary and Marlene Gray as treasurer.

Also selected by the men's branch of the IOOF were Wilber Jackson as Noble Grand, Clarence Buchanan as vice Grand, Lyle Peck as secretary and Cecil Jones as treasurer.

A bake-less fund raiser is planned in the near future to benefit Dave Matheny. Donations will also be accepted from the public.

In keeping with tradition - February being the men's month to provide refreshments - cake, cookies and ice cream were served to those present.

The monthly card party at the IOOF Hall will be held Saturday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$3. This month's proceeds will be donated to the IOOF Friendship Fund, which is used to provide emergency assistance such as rent, medications, etc., for members of the order. The card party is open to the public and everyone is invited for an evening of fun and refreshments.

Karen's Korner By Karen Masshoff Items of Health - Tobacco Prevention

It has been a very interesting month that has taken me on the road. Much of this activity has been to visit industries and businesses throughout the county regarding the new smoke-free workplace law, and to deliver information and resources.

I am heartened by the positive responses to complying with the law and the graciousness of the folks I have met during my visits. There were those individuals who were choosing this opportunity to quit smoking and those who wanted specific information on cessation from chew tobacco.

Another part of my travels included taking advantage of trainings offered by the state that included updates on the physical effects of environmental tobacco smoke and "The Science of Nicotine Addiction." This topic was by Davis Gonzales who is a researcher at Oregon Health Sciences University. Another speaker was James Repace who has a very interesting website: www.repace.com regarding information on secondhand smoke.

We have heard for many years about smoking and lung cancer; increasingly however, medical science is learning more of the specifics of how active smoking and secondhand smoke affect the heart. To begin with, smoking decreases "good" cholesterol (HDL); raises "bad" cholesterol (LDL); constricts arteries; and raises blood carbon monoxide levels, which increases the risk of injury to the arterial wall lining. These are considerations for all of us to note because, as you know, they just do not happen all at once. It is a process that can begin when we are children. Secondhand smoke can increase the risk of heart disease by about 30 percent.

I will continue to add information from these trainings in future columns, plus continue to research and comment on the tobacco industry's promotion for "safer cigarettes." In the meantime, if you have comments, concerns, questions, contact me at these numbers: 676-5421, 481-2112 or 922-4103.

Boardman Chamber Holds General Membership Meeting

The Boardman Chamber of Commerce will hold its monthly general luncheon meeting on Wednesday, March 20, at the Port of Morrow's Riverfront Center, Riverfront Room at 12 p.m. Everybody is invited to attend the

meeting, members and non-members.

Guest speakers include Gilbert Ontiveros, Days Creek Postmaster. Ontiveros has held several positions in the postal service, including a long-time bulk mail clerk. He will be explaining the "ins" and "outs" of the bulk mailing process, including the proper way for area businesses to fill out their permits.

Lunch will be catered by the Riverfront Hotel and Lodge Restaurant. The cost is \$7, to be paid at the door. Call the Chamber by Monday, March 18, if you plan to attend, 541-481-3014. Reservations are very important to insure the proper count for lunch.

Willow Valley Service Club to meet

Hospice in Heppner, available library services, and a business meeting highlight the Willow Valley Service Club's meetings in March, held from 12-1 p.m., at John's Other Place, Main Street, Heppner.

On Thursday, March 7, the club-at-large will conduct business.

Thursday, March 14, Molly Rhea, Pioneer Memorial Home Health Agency director discusses an upcoming new health care option, "Hospice in Heppner." A native of Heppner, Rhea was a staff R.N. at Pioneer Memorial Hospital until 1986 when she moved into her current position.

Barb Orwick, branch manager, Oregon Trail Library, Heppner, will speak on current up-dates and library services on Thursday, March 21. Orwick came to Heppner in 1979; left; then returned in 1989. She has been in her current position at the library since June 2001, and was full-time and part-time March-June, 2001. Prior to that, she was a teacher at Heppner Elementary School, full-time the last three years and part-time as a Title 1 teacher for nine years, prior.

As a service, WVSC continues to collect personal care items to be donated to the Domestic Violence Center in Hermiston.

Anyone interested in joining WVSC may attend any no-host luncheon as listed above.

Chamber Chatter

By Claudia Hughes Chamber Executive Director

Welcome to new Chamber member Brenda Sherrell, of Sherrell Insurance Agency. Stop in to say "hello" between Klamath First and The Shoe Box. Also joining Chamber is Kay Fowler of Hair Expressions. Not only can you find Kay doing hair, you will see her all over town as she puts in hours as the new St. Pat's Auction co-chair. The auction keeps the celebration going so that many organizations benefit financially each year. Auction proceeds go toward the Saturday night Lads and Lassies Teen Dance, partial funding of The Trail Band, all other entertainment, buttons, advertising, parade, stationery, brochures, and the list goes on.

New and renewing Chamber of Commerce members are reminded to get their 2002 dues in for inclusion on the Chamber website and in the business directory. Chamber looks forward to partnering with you to promote business in Heppner.

If you were out and about on Main Street last week, you saw an energetic quartet composed of Bob Jepsen, Ralph Walker, Ed Struthers and John Edmundson taking down the shamrock banners and putting up courthouse centennial banners. Soon to be added will be the traditional Irish family flags, which the Hollomon family now hangs. As the hundreds of volunteers are well aware, the wearing o' the green is just a few weeks away and preparations are under way. "Tis a great group ye be!"

Next week will be the monthly business meeting at Chamber where all entities report, community concerns are addressed and open discussion takes place. Remember, the Chamber currently meets at noon at John's Other Place.

Thought for the week: "If a man alone in the woods speaks, and no woman is there to hear, is he still wrong?"

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School Calendar

Heppner Elementary School

Friday, March 1-no school;
Monday, March 4-site council, 6:30 p.m., parent club, 7:30 p.m.;

Wednesday, March 6- advisory committee at Heppner High School, 7 p.m., end of magazine sale;

Friday, March 8-no school;
Monday, March 11-school district board meeting at Lone High School, 7:30 p.m.;

Friday, March 15-no school;
Tuesday, March 19-student body assembly, 2 p.m.;

Thursday, March 21-end of third nine weeks;

Friday, March 22-no school;
Monday through Friday, March 25-29-spring vacation.

Heppner High School

Friday and Saturday, March 1-2-state basketball tournament;

Monday, March 4-senior parent meeting in the library, 6 p.m.;

Tuesday, March 5-junior high and high school basketball awards, 7 p.m.;

Wednesday, March 6- advisory meeting in the library, 7 p.m.;

Monday, March 11-school district board meeting at Lone High School, 7:30 p.m.;

Wednesday, March 13-site council meeting in the library, 6 p.m.;

Thursday, March 14-JV baseball at Pilot Rock, 4 p.m.;

Friday, March 15-track, Umatilla Icebreaker at 2 p.m., varsity baseball, Mac-Hi at Milton-Freewater, 3:30 p.m.;

Saturday, March 16-softball, Mac-Hi at Heppner, 1 p.m. (two games);

Monday, March 18-JV baseball, Mac-Hi at Milton-Freewater, 3:30 p.m.;

Tuesday, March 19-softball at LaGrande, 2 p.m. (two games), varsity baseball, Riverside at Heppner, 3:30 p.m.;

Thursday, March 21-end of third nine weeks;

Friday, March 22-softball, Mac-Hi at Milton-Freewater, 3 p.m. (two games), track, Cherry Festival Invitational at The Dalles, 4 p.m.;

Saturday, March 23-varsity baseball, Alesa at Dufur, 11 a.m. (two games);

Monday through Friday, March 25-29-spring break;

Saturday, March 30-varsity baseball at Colfax, WA., 11 a.m. (two games).

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