



STATE COMMANDER—Jack Larson (center) state commander of the American Legion from Springfield, made an official visit to the American Legion office at Camp White recently. Shown with Larson are M. E. (Bud) Fisher, left, commander of Medford Post 15, and Eugene Orr, 13th district commander. —(Sanford C. Payne photo)

Is That So?

By EUGENE BURNS
Ranger-Naturalist

Nurtured as we are by many wide-held beliefs, often erroneous, isn't it about time that we looked again into the truth of some of them? And so, off we go on another fact-vs.-myth ramble.

Myth: Because of man's dominance of the earth and its many creatures, he is fairly familiar with most of the warm-blooded mammals to whom he is related.

Fact: Although enough books have been written about mam-

king of beasts! Shorn of its mane, it is not the biggest cat even—being exceeded by the North Manchurian tigers.

Nor are lions so ferocious. Although they hunt down game, they may lie back to back with antelopes during the day. Often they may go a month without making a kill. For that matter, the female does most of the killing, the males just wandering around, grunting, to drive the game to her.

Ivan Sanderson in his wonderful new book, *Living Mammals of the World*, says lions are terrified of small children and flapping laundry on a clothes line. In this most beautifully illustrated book, he adds that they won't even go within 20 feet of a certain tiny animal no larger than a badger. Quoting a famous game warden, he says that this little animal, slow-moving and fearless, has kept a pride of nine full-grown lions waiting patiently to take a meal from a freshly-killed zebra while it sniffed about for some hours, nibbling at the vast meal and even taking a nap with its back to the corpse. How come? This little animal is called the zorilla which the natives, more appropriately, call "the father of stinks." Like our American skunk, it can emit a highly odorous volatile oil and aim it with telling accuracy!



mals to stock a large library, actually we know very little about the vast majority.

And the more we study even the few mammals we presume to know well, the more we unearth facts which are unique to that mammal. As yet, man has hardly made a dent in this subject and for the serious student this field will never fail to yield new facts. Suffice it to say that we know next to nothing about 99 per cent of the earth's living species (and for every species living, many more are extinct); what's more, the average person probably doesn't even suspect the very existence of about 95 per cent of the world's mammals.

Myth: A hyena either changes its sex or is a hermaphrodite.

Fact: Widely held as this belief may be, it is untrue. The belief came about through the virtual impossibility of defining the hyena's sex without dissection—something which is by no means unique among mammals. For example, it takes an expert to tell a male from a female beaver.

Myth: Besides the two well-known large elephants, African and Indian there is a small pigmy elephant which roams the jungles of Africa.

Fact: The most elaborate searches have yet failed to disclose such a pigmy elephant although they have been spoken and written about for many years. To be sure there are elephants in the Congo which tend never to reach the average dimensions of the open-country elephants, but neither these nor the smallest races from West Africa are in any manner a separate species, or notably smaller than any others. So, of this popularly supposed pigmy race there is so far no trace.

Myth: All mammals have hair.

Fact: Not so. Of the many whales, and there are almost a hundred species, there are a few which are completely hairless; others have a few thick bristles on their chins; and one, in fact, the gray whale, has lines of hairs all over the upper part of its body.

Myth: The male lion, king of beasts, is the largest of cats and the most ferocious of mammals.

Fact: Although it may appear as the king of beasts because of its regal appearance and demeanor the lion is far from being the

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Chevrolet Claims More New Car Sales

Detroit—(U.P.)—Chevrolet division of General Motors claimed it sold more cars than any of its competitors during 1955 for the 20th consecutive year.

T. H. Keating, general manager of Chevrolet, said registration figures released by R. L. Polk and Co., yesterday showed Chevrolet sold 1,640,681 passenger cars and 329,791 trucks last year.

The figures compiled by the independent statistical agency gave Chevrolet a margin of 67,405 cars and 33,891 trucks over Ford Motor Co., its nearest competitor.

Naugatuck, Conn. — (U.P.) — Firemen came to the aid of police who couldn't put out a bonfire near a skating rink. After easily dousing the blaze, the firefighters informed the cops that you can't put out a roaring bonfire by throwing snowballs on it

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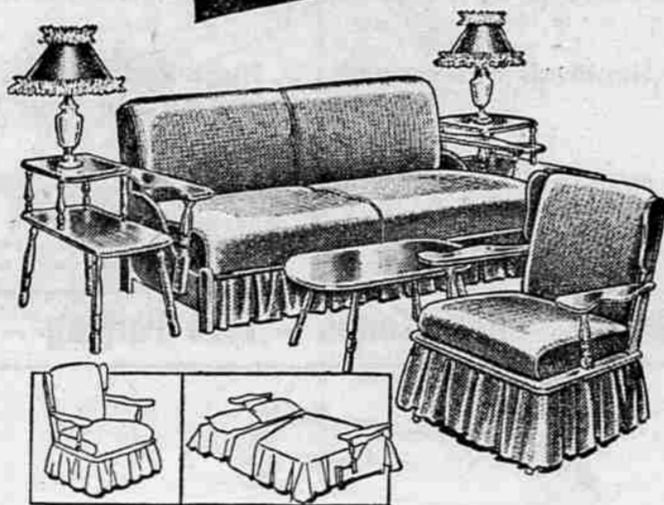
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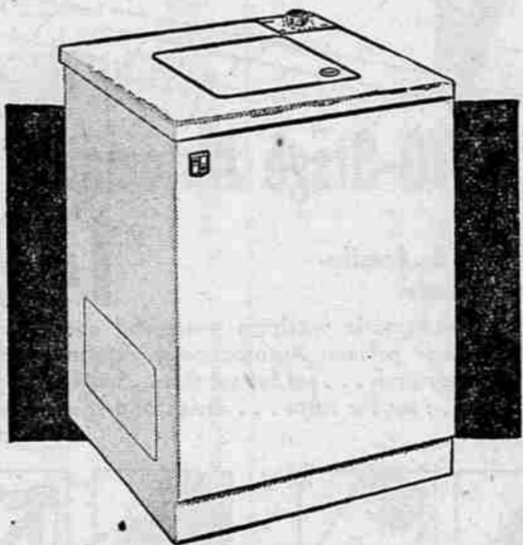
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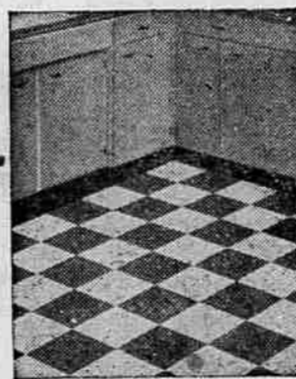
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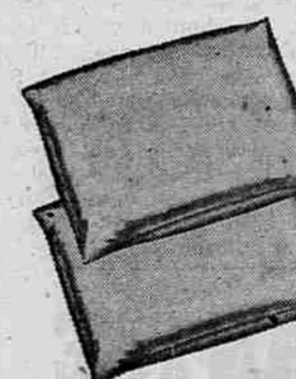
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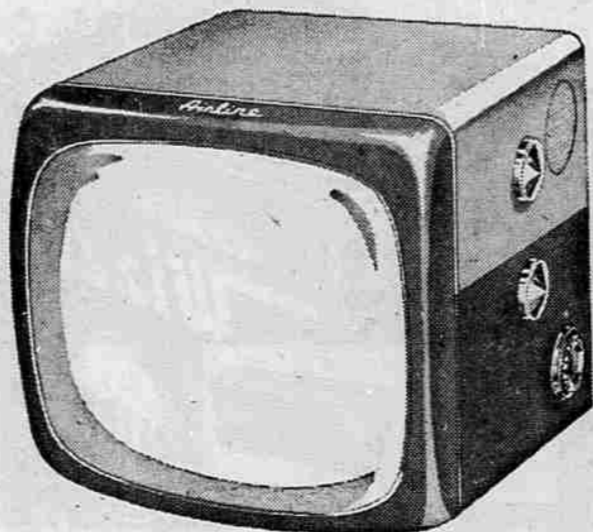
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