



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins

This Gifted Toad 'Blew Himself Up'

He had eaten too much. Just because bugs were plentiful he had stuffed himself. Now he was very heavy and very sleepy. It was an effort to move. That was why the big, fat toad remained where the morning sun found him, a few feet from the pool's edge. He wriggled down into the litter of leaves at the base of the old log the best he could. He slept.

To all outward appearances he was just an ordinary toad, little different from any of his kind. Yet later events proved he was unusual. He may have been more alert and anxious to live. Anyway he proved to be exceptional. He showed an aptitude for survival.

Hungry Snake

While he was sleeping away from home a hungry snake detected him. Some faint noise or danger sense awakened him and he looked into the cold, unblinking eyes of the approaching snake. Apparently he had faced such dangers before. Immediately he began his "blow-up." Even before the snake was close enough to strike, the toad's body became balloon-like. His little, built-in pump worked feverishly. His body swelled until the skin was drum tight. His legs stiffened and straightened until they were rigid and he was raised to his tip-toes.

As if fascinated by the unbelievable spectacle before him, the snake stopped and stared. He didn't attempt the swallowing act he had planned. The toad remained inflated - and unswallowable. The snake remained motionless. His intended prey was much too large to be handled. Fear on the part of the toad must trigger the inflationary action. By some muscular control it takes in air until the body is inflated. After the danger is passed it allows the air to escape and regains its normal shape.

Slithers Away

After the snake gave up and slithered away, the puffed up toad released the air. Then a human hand picked it up and carried it away. Placed in a cage with another snake the toad repeated the air-intake. Other toads, under the same conditions, allowed themselves to be swallowed.

The difference seemed to be with the individual.

In the wild, the possibility of being swallowed must be an ever present danger, yet the ballooning act is seldom observed. The number of these creatures who save themselves seems to be few.

So this "protection-inflation," if that is what it is, may be an accomplishment of only certain gifted individuals. Perhaps Nature ordains that these few shall survive while the majority are destined to be food for hungry snakes. Such a gifted one must have been he who stayed away from home that night. (Released by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1959)

Soil Pests Can Be Controlled Now

Bugs like wire worms, cucumber beetle larvae, white grubs and other soil inhabiting pests can be controlled for two years or longer by applying an insecticide to the soil previous to working the garden in the spring, according to Don Berry, Jackson county extension agent.

Plant injury from root maggot which attack radishes, turnips, cabbage and seed corn also will be reduced or eliminated, he said.

Berry pointed out that it is important that insecticides be mixed thoroughly with the soil to a depth of four to six inches. Either aldrin, dieldrin or heptachlor may be used effectively, he said.

Apply two pounds of 5 per cent granular or one-half pint of emulsifiable concentrate in five to 10 gallons of water for each 1,000 square feet of soil to be treated, Berry said. He warned not to overdose since plant injury could be caused by excessive amounts of insecticide in the soil.

The treatment also would be beneficial prior to setting out strawberry beds and cane berry patches as well as flower beds, especially those which contain primroses, rhododendron and begonias, for controlling strawberry root weevil and wire worms.

The state-aided Marriage Guidance Council in Britain operates centers in 100 cities and towns.

Plans for Family Counsel Agency Aired at Meeting

Plans for incorporating the proposed permanent family counseling agency for Jackson county were discussed Thursday night at the first meeting of directors and steering committee members in the county courthouse auditorium.

Those present voted their support of formally establishing the agency. Two committees were appointed, one to select temporary officers and the other to review the proposed constitution and by-laws for the agency. The next meeting is scheduled May 7, at which time further steps toward incorporation may be taken.

Raising funds from private sources for operating the agency during its first year also was discussed. The agency would have to carry on for this period on its own, it is understood, before becoming eligible for assistance through the United Medford Crusade. Only Other City

It was pointed out that Portland is the only other Oregon community having family service agency.

Mrs. John Waterman, psychiatric social worker with the state board of health, discussed the functions of a private agency's directors in terms of policy and administrative procedures.

Mrs. Henry Padgham, Dr. Harry Danielson, and Miss Celia Walker, who was chairman of the Thursday night meeting, discussed the mental health committee's activities during the past three years in exploring the need for a family counseling service in this area. Dr. Danielson reported on the committee's pilot counseling project last winter, which, he said, showed the need for such a program on a permanent basis here.

Present board members include, besides Mrs. Padgham, Leon Mulling, Dr. Alva Graham, Mrs. Chester Fitch, Dr. William Thompson, Mrs. Charles Bateman, Mrs. Robert Keeney, Mrs. Walter Bish, Charles Crary, Bob Taylor, Robertson Collins, Mrs. Leigh Gustison, Mrs. J. H. Gardner, Larry Clark, Mrs. Erle Klein, Dr. R. R. Martin, Rev. George Bolster, Dr. Thomas Rutter, Mrs. Richard Porto and Erv Hogan.

Summary Meeting Of Decisions Set

A Great Decisions summary meeting will be held Monday, April 27, at 8 p.m. in the courthouse auditorium. The session will be in preparation for a similar one on the state level to be held May 8 in Corvallis.

At the evaluation meetings there will be discussion of the subjects, the ballots, and needs for the coming year. The Jackson county television series will be discussed, and planning for next year's study will take up part of the evening. A new county chairman will be chosen. Wallace Iverson, retiring chairman, will preside.

The meeting will be open to anyone interested, and group leaders and members are asked to attend.

Present for the Corvallis meeting will be Philip Van Slyck of the Foreign Policy association, New York, who prepared the fact sheets and opinion ballots for the study series. Also attending will be William Campbell, director of the western region of the association.

Dale Carnegie Course Planned in Medford

A new Dale Carnegie course is scheduled to start at 7 p.m. May 11, in the Medford YMCA. Ray Robinson, Bill Fish and Ralph Matlack, all of Medford, will serve as graduate assistants.

Instructors will be brought in to conduct the course, which is being sponsored by the Northwest School of Commerce, Portland, and Jack Travis, owner of the Sun Publishing company, Hood River.

Travis said the course is a self improvement class. Veterans having Oregon education benefits may use them to enroll in the course, he said.



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