



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins

Yes, Fleas Do Tricks, But Not Because They're Trained

"On a recent trip," writes a lady, "we saw a troupe of performing fleas. How are they trained, or what is the gimmick?"

"Flea training" goes back a great many years and has lost a lot of ground, but possibly someone will show up with a troupe of these six-legged acrobats some night on a TV show and start the thing all over again.

Actually there is no such thing as a "trained flea." They do tricks, but only because they are agitated, or forced to react in such a way as to appear to be performing. A flea, like any of us, will jump when pricked, or move fast when pushed.

They will pull tiny carts, climb little ladders, hide in lilliputian houses, scamper up long threads, and do other surprising tricks to the utter amazement of the onlookers — if their vision is good enough to enable them to see the little performers.

The trainer of a troupe of fleas must be a very patient man, for hooking a harness onto a flea is like trying to thread a needle while wearing a pair of boxing gloves. The trainer has to use tweezers, and usually uses spider web for reins and tugs.

The jumping ability of a flea is phenomenal. One curious person figured out that if a boy could jump as far and as high, in proportion to his height as a flea, the boy could leap around the entire earth in about three hours. In scientific tests these insects have actually been found to jump a horizontal distance of 14 inches, which is about 100 times their own length.

A flea is a wingless insect, with a flat, cleverly designed body which can easily slip between the hairs on an animal's back. The flea is covered with tiny overlapping scales which give it an added advantage in close quarters.

Nearly every warm blooded animal in the world plays host to the flea. The rat-flea is known to be the carrier of the black plague, as well as many other diseases. Fleas have played a major part in the history of the world; they have helped to win and lose

wars, and have caused untold suffering. Napoleon was completely stymied in his Egyptian campaign by fleas; they did more to stop him and change the course of history than did the opposing armies.

The female flea drops her eggs wherever she happens to be, and the young hatch out and scurry into cracks and crevices, where they eat dust and lint, which usually contain some animal matter. There are about 30 species of fleas in the U. S. and many of them, or all, will prey on human blood if given a chance. A full grown flea is about one tenth of an inch long.

And the puzzling thing about the whole setup is that even the tiny flea, as small as it is, has smaller fleas that are biting him.

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Hospital Patient Total Increases

Chicago—(Science Service)—The number of cases cared for last year in hospitals in the U. S. increased 700,000 over 1957 figures, the American Hospital Association has reported here.

There were 23,697,000 hospital admissions in 1958, compared to 22,993,000 in 1957, statistics in the annual Guide Issue of Hospitals, the association's journal reveal. The information was compiled from questionnaires received from 6,786 hospitals in the continental U. S.

The hospitals reported an all-time high of 3,742,000 births in 1958. Each day last year there were more than 1,300,000 patients and 43,000 newborn babies in hospitals.

The hospitals reported total expenses of \$7,133,493,000 of which \$4,660,191,000 was for payroll. The hospitals employed 1,464,829 personnel in 1958, an average of 111 personnel per 100 patients, as compared with 107 in 1957.

Voluntary short-term hospital cases: the average patient stay in these hospitals was 7.4 days. These hospitals spent an average of \$29.24 per day for the care of each patient, an increase of \$2.43 over 1957.



RESTING IN HOSPITAL at Worcester, Mass., are David (in bed), Donna, 6; Michael 3, and Kenneth Majeau, 8, stricken with non-paralytic polio after their mother, Marie, 27, failed to have them given anti-polio shots. They were the only tots in area stricken with polio following mass polio injections for thousands earlier in year.

Most States Failed To Make Headway in Labor Legislation

Editor's note: Several leading governors tried to get their states to enact labor reform bills this year. A UPI survey shows they made little progress in the face of union opposition.

By RAYMOND LAHR
UPI Correspondent

Washington—UPI—Pressure for labor reform legislation splashed over from Congress into state legislatures this year but failed to make much headway in the face of union opposition.

In 46 states with 1959 legislative sessions, only New York has enacted a general labor reform law to deal with corruption in unions. A more limited law in North Dakota would bar convicted felons from holding office in unions.

The Nebraska Legislature enacted a law prohibiting secondary boycotts, and New Mexico lawmakers passed bills to regulate organizational and mass picketing. Proposed restrictions on both secondary boycotts and organizational picketing are involved in the congressional battle over a labor reform bill.

Labor leaders generally opposed state labor reform measures. They argued that Congress was dealing with the issue at the national level and

states should not tackle it piecemeal. There were spirited battles in some legislatures, however, before such bills were killed.

Labor opposition to the New York law was relatively mild. The law requires financial reporting by unions. It makes union officials responsible for funds handled, forbids them from having a financial interest in the business of employers with whom they deal, and bars them from taking gifts worth more than \$100 from these employers.

The New York law was passed under sponsorship of Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller's new administration. Two Democratic governors of big states—Edmund G. Brown in California and Michael V. DiSalle in Ohio—backed labor reform measures which died.

Brown supported a labor-backed bill to repeal the state law against jurisdictional strikes. When it was killed, labor moved in to block passage of his code-of-ethics bills to govern the conduct of internal union affairs.

DiSalle also favored a bill to regulate internal union conduct despite protests from labor leaders who supported him in his election campaign

last year. The bill was defeated in the House by a 58 to 54 vote.

In Indiana, a stalemate between the Democratic House and Republican Senate blocked passage of both a labor reform bill and a measure to repeal the state right-to-work law.

In Iowa and Utah, the labor movement also fought but lost battles for repeal of right-to-work laws, which outlaw contracts requiring employees to join unions to hold their jobs. The New Mexico Legislature refused to submit a right-to-work proposition to a referendum vote.

Labor reform bills were introduced in several other state legislatures but got less attention. One of them died in committee in the Washington Legislature after Gov. Albert D. Rosellini said state action was not needed.

Burglars Fail To Open Safe at Junction City

Junction City—UPI—Burglars failed early Monday in an attempt to blow open a safe at McKays market here.

Washington—UPI—The House has passed and sent to the Senate a bill to outlaw mechanized roundups of wild horses on public lands.

Dividend Payments Expected To Set New Record This Year

By ELMER C. WALZER
UPI Financial Editor
New York—UPI—Dividend payments will set a new high record in 1959, according to predictions of many of the experts in finance.

And that situation indicates that many a corporate manager is going to have to squirm around a bit to satisfy the stockholders who don't want dividends but would prefer capital gains, and those stockholders who want the absolute maximum.

Gerald M. Loeb, partner in the nationwide brokerage firm of E. F. Hutton & Co., writes on this dividend dilemma in the current "Dun's Review and Modern Industry."

To the management of a corporation with public stockholders, dividend policy is a matter of shareholder relations and status, he says. In the privately owned companies dividends primarily are a matter of taxes.

Loeb notes several tendencies in today's dividend situation:

—A tendency to reduce cash payout and supplement it with stock dividends.

—Striving for continuity of dividends by keeping cash payments low and supplementing them with year-end extras in good years.

—Smaller dividend payments by some companies to provide cash for expansion and modernization.

—Generous dividends by some companies which raise capital through equity financing.

—A growing group of companies paying monthly dividends.

—Some companies able to make tax-sheltered dividend payments.

—Some companies making no payments at all on the belief stockholders benefit more by capital appreciation.

Dividend policy of corporations, says Loeb, is largely influenced by capital requirements.

Often not Sufficient
"However," he adds, "in these inflationary days, the allowable deduction for depreciation, depletion and obsolescence are often not sufficient to pay for needed replacements."

"Many corporate managers feel therefore, that in order to provide these funds a tax-paid reserve becomes necessary. This reduces the funds available for dividends. However, it benefits the stockholder by minimizing the need for either new bond financing or stock financing which would dilute his equity."

Dividend policies of the future, Loeb feels, hinge on the possible reduction in the double taxation existing today on dividends.

Corporate growth will be aided immeasurably when management can have a low-

er dividend payout and the investor can keep more of his dividends, he holds.

More Careful Explanation
A corporation could reduce some of its problems, says Loeb, by explaining its dividend policies more carefully in its annual report. This, he finds particularly true of new, unseasoned stock issues.

Incidentally, with earnings good this year and dividends high, corporate heads aren't going to be heckled at the annual meetings as much as if they had to face the owners of the company after a dividend cut.

Up to now stockholders still consider the dividend as the big thing and woe to the chairman of the board or president who tries to explain why a dividend was reduced or omitted.

WHY?
Wareside, England—UPI—Spinster Hannah Ede celebrated her 101st birthday today and advised those who want to imitate her: "Don't drink, don't smoke, and don't get married."

CLOSE SHAVE
New York—UPI—Police rushed to the post office Sunday night to investigate a ticking package and cautiously opened it. Inside was a battery-powered electric razor.

BEN-GURION TO REST
Jerusalem—UPI—Premier David Ben-Gurion's doctors said today they have ordered him to rest for at least a week even though a checkup showed the 74-year-old Israeli leader was in good condition. He left for an undisclosed destination.

BOARD CHAIRMAN DIES
Glen Cove, N. Y.—UPI—Richardson Pratt, 65, chairman of the board of Pratt Institute and senior partner of Charles Pratt & Co., investment bankers, died Sunday.



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In keeping with this tradition it gives us great pleasure to welcome each and every member of the New Shopping Center to share in the expansion and development of a better community.

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