



Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn W. Watkins
(Register & Tribune Syndicate, 1961)

Barn Owl is About the Quietest Bird in all Birddom
A really more descriptive name for the barn owl is "Monkey-face owl," for its furry face, great round eyes, and downright peculiar actions, closely resemble a genuine monkey that is mentally disturbed or terribly neurotic.

The barn owl is not adverse to building its nest in a church steeple, even in the very heart of a big city, or in a hollow tree in the deep woods. It will exist wherever its favorite food of rats and mice is present. Of the 18 kinds of owls in the U.S., the barn owl is probably the most widely distributed. Hardly a section of the country exists that doesn't have some of these strange acting and looking owls.

Odd Technique
The barn owl is just as odd in its nest building technique as it is in looks and actions, for many times bones, pieces of hide, as well as feathers from some luckless victim, become a part of the crude nest. In one nest examined by a student of owl actions, several tails from rats were woven in the loose structure which held six "almost perfectly round white eggs."

Because the place where this owl prefers to nest is actually "as cold as a barn," the situation often boomerangs, for the owl usually nests in February, and at times the female must sit on the eggs continuously to keep them from freezing.

It must be a great satisfaction to her, while she incubates the eggs, to know her husband will be true and faithful, as the barn owl mates for life. Seldom will the husband wander very far away from his nestside. Even when he does, it is only to secure a rat or mouse. Once he catches the rodent, he will hurry back to her, bringing the carcass back with him. He is a good provider as well as a devoted husband.

Baritone Calls
The barn owl has a wide and diversified series of strange calls and sounds. When angry they hiss like a steam radiator; they growl, cough, rattle and chuckle; almost laugh right out loud.

When angry or excited the barn owl puts on a strange performance. He leans far forward until the bill almost touches the ground or the floor, then the weird head is thrust far forward and moved slowly from side to side, like the pendulum of a funny looking clock.

All things considered, actions, facial expression, and calls, the barn owl is about the quietest bird in all birddom. No wonder they prefer to live in a church steeple, or any other place colder than a barn.

Missiles May Help Fight Forest Fires

Washington - (Science Service) - Missiles could help fight forest fires of the future.

This is the idea of Dr. George M. Jemison, deputy assistant chief of research for the U.S. forest service. Missiles on pads, placed in strategic locations throughout forest areas, might be used to control fires until the ground crews could arrive on the scene.

Missiles would be filled with fire-retardant chemicals and would be guided to the fire by heat-sensing nose cones. They would be detonated with proximity fuses at predetermined heights above the fire.

The size of the fire would determine the number of such missiles to be launched simultaneously. Meanwhile, ground crews would be going to the fire area by helicopters and landing at heliports scattered throughout the forest.

Humane Association Supervises Movies

Hollywood - (UPI) - It was horses and the often dangerous falls and tumbles they took which put the American Humane association (AHA) into the film supervision business.

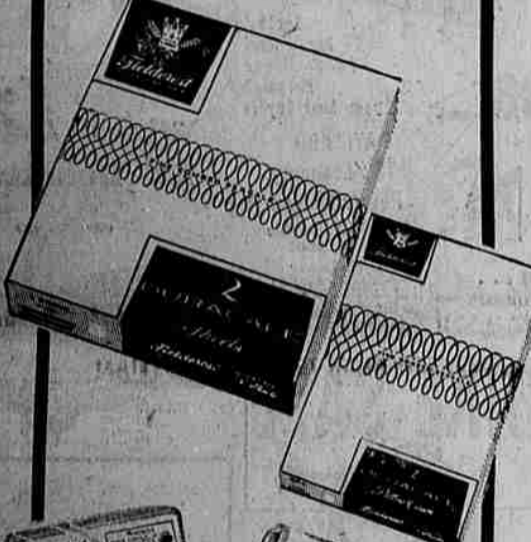
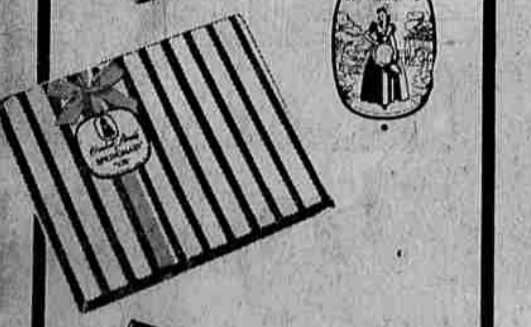
In the late 1930's Richard Craven, first local AHA director, negotiated the first agreement with film producers which provided for consultation and supervision on matters involving horses in movies.

COAL NEEDED

A ton of coal is needed to produce a ton of paper.

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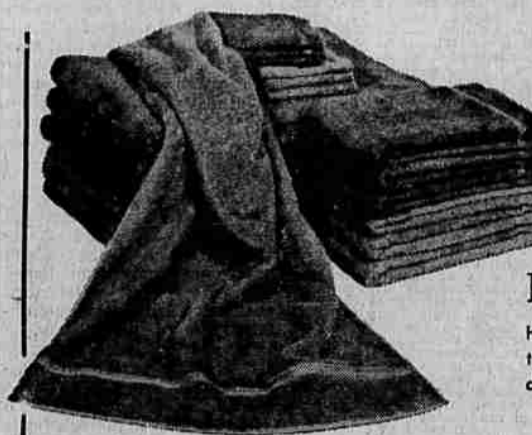
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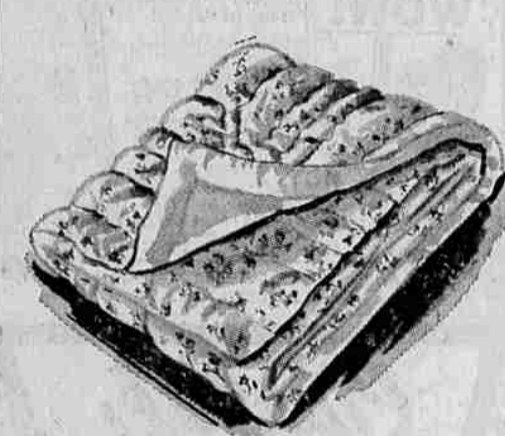


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