

Dennis the Menace



Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS

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Shepherd's Weather Glass Is Unusual Flower

Just about everywhere here in America—alongside country roads, in sandy areas, in waste fields, even in vacant city lots—lives a common plant so sensitive to weather changes that it makes a piker out of a mechanical barometer.

It is very aptly named shepherd's weather glass or, perhaps ever more appropriately, poor man's weather glass.

This plant, usually considered a noxious weed, is not only sensitive to changes in the weather, but also seems conscious of time, as the flowers can be depended upon to

close up tight by 3 in the afternoon.

For a plant so common, it possesses some highly unusual characteristics. The flowers, for one thing, are small and a peculiar shade of reddish copper—more aptly described as terra cotta. To be terra cotta, an object must be brownish-orange, like that of unglazed earthenware of fine quality, or as fancy-work used for architectural decorations or for statuettes.

This color makes the blossom of this common plant about the most unusual of any flower color. It is unlike any other flower, wild or tame.

'Weather Glass'

Next time you walk afield or follow the twists and turns of a little-used country road, or stop for a spell beside a sandy field, locate a "poor man's weather glass." If you have trouble locating one, ask any farmer where any red chickweed is growing, for many folks know it by that name.

Some folks who do not realize this plant's capabilities as a weather forecaster call it shepherd's clock or scarlet pimpernel.

When you locate the plant, watch the blossom. If it is closing, you can be assured it will rain within the next few hours. Of course, if you find the flower closed on a sunny day, look at your watch. It will be after 3.

Open After 9

The flowers open shortly after 9 a.m., on a bright, sunny day. They will remain open unless a storm is coming, or unless the day becomes cloudy. So sensitive are the flowers to the light of the sun, they often will close if a cloud passes overhead. You can fool the plant by holding a newspaper or an umbrella in such a position as to cast a shadow on the plant.

Wild birds of many species, themselves pretty good weather forecasters, always are ready to eat the seeds of the scarlet pimpernel. A few centuries ago housewives in the Old World, believed the leaves and fruit of the plant were corrective medicines for any or all diseases affecting the liver.

The supposed healing qualities of this plant were so firmly believed in by folks throughout Europe and Asia that some unknown poet paid his respects to the scarlet pimpernel by writing:

"No ear hath heard, no tongue can tell
The virtues of the pimpernel."

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Accuracy Provided By Courtroom Aid

New York — (UPI) — A new kind of witness has been cropping up increasingly in courtrooms these days.

This witness has no tongue, but it talks. And what it says is helping make the course of justice swifter and less fallible.

The witness is a machine and it signifies the extension of electronics into the field of jurisprudence.

Courts in many American states, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas, Canada, New Zealand and Israel now use electronic equipment to record every word uttered during important trials.

Outside interviews for possible court use also are being taken on the machines (Dictaphone Distacord) on an increasing scale. Judges, other court officials and lawyers favor the automatic recorders because they provide an unchangeable, verbatim log of testimony, with no chance of misquotation.

Tone Is Recorded

Plastic recording belts (Dictabelts) recorded in court or at other sites may be played back to impeach a witness or refresh his memory. The fact that the manner or tone in which testimony was given also is recorded was cited by legal experts as important in that the inflection often is a key factor in evaluating testimony.

The electronic setup is used as a double check on stenog-

raphers in the federal and county courts of Charleston and Florence, S.C., and the South Carolina Public Service commission, which uses it for hearings.

Shortly after installation in the federal court at Omaha, Neb., an electronic recording was used to discredit the main witness in a \$30,000 insurance suit.

The court reporter at Portland, Ore., circuit court uses the system to backstop his manual recording and says it removed the feeling of constant pressure because, if he misses anything he can clarify it later.

A transistorized machine called D.I.R.S. (Dictaphone Interview Recording System) is used extensively by claims investigators of insurance companies desiring verbatim interviews with policyholders, claimants and witnesses. Such recorded interviews are now accepted as admissible evidence in most states.

PLANT GROOMING

New York — (UPI) — A good thing to remember when entering plants in garden club competitions is that good grooming gets them better recognition. Select plants that have enough buds to last two or three days and are free of unsightly leaves. Use new or freshly scrubbed clay pots that have been set in water for several hours so they can store extra moisture.

Barbecue Slated For Thornton

Delegations from several Oregon counties and from Portland and Salem plan to attend the Jackson and Joseph counties' barbecue honoring Attorney General Robert Y. Thornton, Democratic nominee for governor, scheduled for the William Davidson ranch in the Applegate, Sunday, Sept. 30, from 1 to 4 p.m., according to Mrs. Ralph Poston, chairman of the local Thornton for governor committee.

Mel Ottis and Mrs. Dorothy Gates are co-chairmen for the Josephine county committee.

Democratic Congressional Nominee Robert B. Duncan will introduce Thornton, who will be the main speaker at the barbecue. James A. Redden, Democratic nominee for the house of representatives, will be master of ceremonies.

Tickets and reservations may be obtained by calling Mrs. Poston at 773-4760 or Democratic headquarters, 779-1351. Tickets may be obtained in Grants Pass by calling Mrs. Dorothy Gates at Greenwood 6-4205 or Mel Ottis, Greenwood 6-4622.

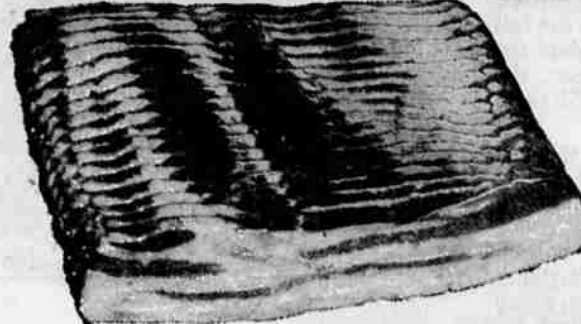
Children will be given pony rides and music will be furnished by John Lusk, Medford.

Signs will lead guests from the town of Applegate to the barbecue grounds.

Former President Harry S. Truman was a membership salesman for the Auto Club of Kansas City in the early twenties and turned in a record total of 1,550 members during a drive in 1922.

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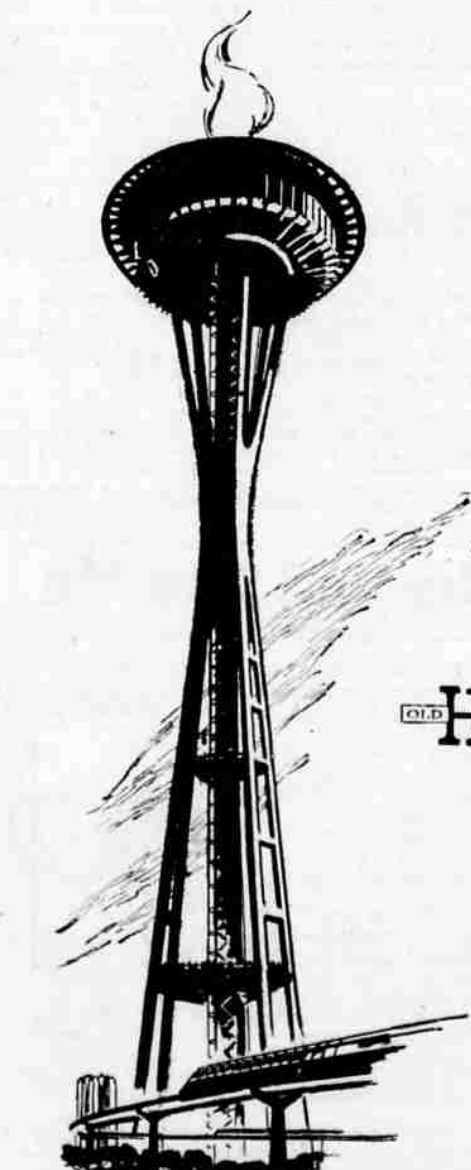
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