

4th of July tips given for animal safety

4th of July celebrations might be a lot of fun for people, but the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association and its member veterinarians remind you that the holiday can be downright scary for our animals, especially cats, dogs and horses.

"The sights, sounds and commotion of Independence Day can confuse animals and make them nervous, which can cause them to run away or place themselves in harmful situations," says OVMA president, Rob Shimek DVM, of Hoffman Veterinary Clinic in Salem.

To help keep your animals from becoming overly stressed this 4th of July, consider the following tips:

- Keep pets indoors and away from crowds so that they feel more protected.
- Consider boarding your animals in a safe place that is farther away from the holiday action. If you plan to travel during this time, boarding your animal might be a better option than leaving it at home.
- Your veterinarian may choose to prescribe a sedative for your animal if it tends to become easily spooked by the fireworks. Remember that your animal must be seen by a veterinarian in order to receive any prescribed medications.
- If you have horses, be sure to keep them indoors and away from the sound of fireworks.
- Early behavior training can

desensitize your animal to holiday commotion.

If you have any concerns or questions about helping your animal make it calmly and safely through the 4th of July holiday, please talk to your veterinarian.

If your dog or cat does become spooked and runs away, check your neighborhood thoroughly as your pet may not go far, and may be hiding close by. You can also check your local humane shelter or animal control agency to see if your pet was brought in. July 5 is usually a very busy day at these agencies. The OVMA Web site has more tips for finding a lost pet.

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Bits & Bites

By Jacqueline Ramsay



In taking my walk down memory lane the past two weeks it's been quite a trip. Nooks and crannies that haven't been thought of for years and, all for what? To decide to keep the tangible or toss it and keep the memory in my mind. That is a hard choice to make. Things to consider at this point does it mean anything to others in your family or is it just clutter?

I also ran across an article I started the last time Vernonians had to make a school bond issue. Remember? Well, it's that time again. You must weigh the facts and decide – educate or just let the kids run wild. Fact – to educate children it takes many buildings, lots of good teachers and a wide choice of subjects to keep kids interested in learning; like music, drama, art, shop and sports. A one-room school house with a pot belly stove and a little brown house out back won't cut the mustard anymore. Yes, times are HARD but, as I see the problem, it's bite the bullet and build the schools or bus the kids out of town for an education.

20 Years Ago This Month

The July 27, 1989, issue of *The Independent* included the following news story on the front page:

Vernonia will anchor one end of the first new state park to be built in Oregon in ten years, with the legislature's approval of \$130,000 in initial funding for the development of the Banks-Vernonia Linear Park, along approximately 15 miles of an abandoned railroad line from Buxton to Vernonia.

The Oregon Parks Division will now complete negotiations for the purchase of some properties wanted for full development of the park, and continue negotiations for property trades with some of the landowners along the old railroad grade.

"We haven't put the finishing touches on the development plan," said Joe Paiva, who managed the project for the parks division. "We have the money, but haven't decided yet just how it's going to be spent."

Approval of the park came about fifteen years after the initial proposal, which was defeated by a concerted uprising of fearful property owners adjacent to the old Burlington-Northern Railroad line.

The final approval came after a group of Vernonia residents spent most of two years gathering support for the park. They provided research from a large number of similar parks around the nation, rebutting the emotional, and sometimes ran-

corous objections of opponents.

A feasibility study by Klein & Associates of Forest Grove, a consulting firm hired by the state, recommended the project for development after additional research that confirmed the findings of the citizens' group.

Two advisory committees, one on the regional level and another at the state level, approved the project. It also received a favorable recommendation from the state Transportation Commission, which oversees operations of the Parks Division.

Opponents lobbying both legislators and the governor's office, delayed the appropri-

tion of funds for the park, but the overwhelming support it garnered finally tipped the scales in favor of development.

Six land owners adjacent to the right-of-way, three in Columbia County and three in Washington County, have filed suit against the state in an attempt to secure the property for themselves and block development of the park, but Paiva says there is little concern about the litigation.

"That always has the potential from problems," he said, "but we have faith in our attorneys and we're going ahead with development plans."

The total amount of property involved in the law suits is slightly under 22 acres.



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St. Helens site of Oliver! musical

ShoeString Community Players will present *Oliver!* for their Summer 2009 production. Performances are scheduled for July 16-18 and 23-25, at 7:00 p.m. In addition, one 2:00 p.m. matinee will be held on July 25.

The classic family musical retells the Dickens tale of an orphan who asks for more, escapes oppression, and runs with a gang of thieves before finding a loving home.

"After just two weeks of rehearsals, I am very impressed with the work of these actors; they are sure to provide a wonderful performance," said director Caleb Thurston, who has directed five children's musicals

with River City Children's Theater.

Mr. Thurston is documenting the *Oliver!* experience in a production journal, located on the web at <http://olivermusical09.blogspot.com/>.

All performances will be held at the St. Helens High School Olmscheid Auditorium. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$8 for students and children. See the ShoeString Community Players web site at <http://www.sscpmusicals.com> for ticket sales information.

This production is presented by special arrangement with Tams-Witmark Music Library, Inc.

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