



The High Prairiean

"All the news that's print to fit."

Volume Eight, Number Two

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June, 2008

NOTICES

Fire Volunteers meet the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire Hall for equipment maintenance and the 2nd and 4th Tuesday for training.

Fire Commissioners meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire Hall.

High Prairie Community Council meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Taylor's church, 876 Centerville Highway.

Lyle School Board meets the next to last Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Boardroom, Lyle High School.

High Prairie Book Club meets the 4th Monday at 7:00 p.m. Contact Lozetta Doll for location and book recommendations, 365-0010.

High Prairie Needlers meet every Monday at 10:30 a.m. Contact Judi Strait: 365-5288 or Lozetta Doll: 365-0010.

Lyle Celebration Center VBS 2008, "God's Big Backyard" at the church 715 Washington St., Lyle. July 7-11, 9 a.m. to Noon. For information call 365-5148.

When requesting medical assistance or reporting a fire CALL 911

If you belong to a non-profit organization, KCLICK Radio (AM 1400) would like to announce your event on our community calendar, every weekday, five times a day at no charge.

Send your public service announcement (PSA) by email to klck@gorge.net one week in advance. Please put "psa" in the subject line.

Be sure to include: who, what, where, when, and a contact phone number.

Julian Notestine, News Director

FIREHOUSE SALE RECAP

Lozetta Doll

The High Prairie Fire House was the site of a flurry of activity during a special week in May: erecting the tents, setting up display tables, unpacking and marking the myriad of donated items. Away from the scene of the sale, there were brats being stuffed and smoked, supplies purchased, goodies baked, signs made and displayed. Chair Sharon Aleckson and her committee: Dona Taylor, Jocelyn Weeks, Martha Hamil, Karron Buchanan and Shannon Hess spent weeks planning, telephoning and advertising the sale.

Now, the big question every year is: "Will we get enough donations for a good sale?" Answer: Once again, the cars, pickups, vans and trailers streamed in with sale items. The volunteers were hard pressed to get everything displayed and marked.

The morning of May 17 dawned bright and sunny. What? No rain this year!! The coffee was brewing, the smell of cinnamon rolls wafted through the air. Let the sale begin!

This year's sale was a resounding success with a net to the Fire Department and Community Council of \$6,735.89. As welcome as the dollars though is the social event it has become throughout the past nine years. There was much visiting and laughter, hugs and handshakes, as many people come together who don't see much of each other amid their busy lives.

It would be very hard to single out those deserving special thanks. The volunteering of time and the donations this year were wonderful and it was such a community effort by so many people.



A BIG THANK YOU!

Dona Taylor

To Allied Waste for the two dumpsters they donated for our communities use, May 14-19. This is a yearly service they provide to many communities in the county. THANKS, to all community members who followed the rules by putting in the items that were allowed. THANKS to Steve and Cheri DeHart for the use of their large bus-trailer for hauling of the scrap metal. When we all work together, great things are accomplished.

SUMMER IS BOOKMOBILE TIME

Lozetta Doll

The Fort Vancouver Library System's summer schedule is in full swing. The bookmobile comes to the High Prairie Fire Station every other Tuesday morning from 9:45 to 10:20. The dates this summer are: June 24, July 8, July 22, August 5 and August 19. The bookmobile is just one of the many wonderful services of our library system. The librarian is very friendly and helpful. If you'd like a particular book, she'll even have it sent to you. Happy reading.



The High Prairian

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365-3242

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The High Prairian can also be viewed on the High Prairie web site: <http://www.highprairie.us>

Do you have a STORY to tell?

Or NEWS  of interest to denizens of
HIGH PRAIRIE?

How about a POEM, a RECIPE  or a
GARDENING TIP  to share?

Or just want to see your NAME in print?

If so, submit your offerings for
PUBLICATION in

THE HIGH PRAIRIAN

Contact Doug Taylor:

highprairie@gorge.net

or

365-3242

All the news that's print to fit.

LETTERS



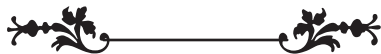
Carri Coe
146 Centerville hwy.
Lyle, WA 98635
509-637-4096

To our wonderful, supportive, loving community, family and friends,

We would like to tell everyone who has donated money, clothes, food, household items, their travel trailers, their own homes, their hearts, hugs, love and prayers to our family. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for having the spaghetti feed to help raise money.

Thank you to everyone who helped clean up the rubble with their dumptrucks & heavy equipment. thanks to the fireman who got their quickly, thank you for donating your time to help us, without everyone's donations we would have nothing. You have all came through for our family when we have needed you most. We thank you very much for everything. Our family is so thankful to you all. May god bless you as he has blessed us with so many loving and caring people in our community, our close friends, and our families.

With a very heartfelt thank you,
The Coe Family
Carri, Cameron, Carisa, Christian, and Cristani
Donations are still being accepted at
U.S. Bank to: the Coe Family Fund
Account # 153560418359



CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES

Dona Taylor

Sabrina Gosset graduated from the Lyle High School. Her folks recently moved to Goldendale but she finished High School here.

Kelly Call lives on Mott Road and graduated from the Goldendale High School

Delsie Herschbach graduated from White Salmon High School. She recently moved to White Salmon from High Prairie.

Best wishes to all the graduates.

GET WELL WISHES

Dona Taylor

Get Well wishes to **Robert Taylor** who has had three different surgeries these last few weeks, in Portland. His wife Madelon says if all goes well he maybe transferred to the Veteran's Hospital in The Dalles.

Flo Johnson near Schilling Road reported she had surgery this past winter. She has made a good recovery.

Steve Bird had recent surgery, and is doing well.

Gladys Sheeran had a heart attack in May and was hospitalized in Portland. She is home now with daughter Icey and husband Nayland on High Prairie.

Martha Hamil is continuing to have medical problems.

Speedy recovery to all.

If we've missed any of our neighbors, get well wishes to you also.

CANES CAN GET YOU IN REAL TROUBLE

Doug Taylor

My wife and I visited Rob Taylor in the Veteran's Rehab Center in The Dalles after his long stay in the Portland Hospital. We arrived around dinner time and were invited by the Taylor's to stay for dinner.

About the time we finished the meal, a nurse came by with a tray of pills for the patient. Standing beside me she asked which one was Robert Taylor; Rob in his usual jovial way pointed to me and said "he is." Course, I immediately reacted and said no it's him. Rob then said no it's him.

The nurse then said with a perplexed look O.K., I am totally confused, which is it? With a little verbal convincing and producing some I.D. Rob got the pills.

Thinking back on the situation, I realized how it could be really confusing, as I was the fellow with the cane.

Keep up the good attitude Rob; we all are pulling for your quick recovery.

TWO OF OUR HIGH PRAIRIE ARTISANS

Audrey Bentz

This community boasts great talent in nearly every expertise, including Arlen Aleckson and Tom Doll who did this sign for Morning Song Acres. Arlen crafted the sign with the metal, and Tom designed and built the canopy. Morning Song is a retreat facility operated by Myrin and Audrey Bentz, and does B&B at reduced prices for High Prairie residents who need guest space.



MORE NOTES FROM AUDREY

"Thanks" says Chris Malinga from the Lyle Hotel to all those who participated in the *High Prairie Night Out* in March.

Our High Prairie directory will be doing a "re-do" in the near future. If you are not already listed, or if you want to alter your current listing, please contact Ondine Moore at (509) 281-0444.

NOTE FROM ROGER DICKINSON

Doug: As you already probably already know, the stock market has been up and down a lot lately, with the financial markets being especially volatile. Given all the economic turmoil, I was moved to review my stock portfolio. Arising at five o'clock yesterday morn. I went to the barn and all eight head were still there. Whew! Rog.

GOATS ON THE LOOSE

Lozetta Doll

Most people recently traveling up Centerville Highway from Lyle have seen The Goats. First they were up in the pasture, then nimbly hopping around on the rocks above the highway. Cute, except for the rocks they knock down onto the roadway. Then they were on the highway itself and it could become another matter. With all the curves and precipices, someone could have a terrible accident trying to avoid hitting them. Watch out for them!

Neighbor, Bud Jester, talked to a man who lives at the place above where the goats are free. He was told that the goats just showed up one day and he doesn't know who owns them. Evidently several people have stopped by to tell him that "his" goats are loose.

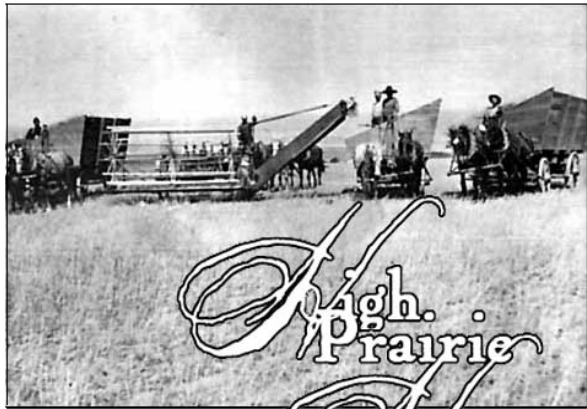
High Prairian Gwen Berry called the Sheriff's Office (Animal Control) and received a less than enthusiastic reaction although they did say they would "put it on their list!" But what list??



CONDOLENCES

Dona Taylor

Our condolences to Neil Schuster of Hartland Road. His mother passed away in May. She was a California resident. Our sincere sympathy to Neil and Carol.



Douglas Taylor

TAYLOR CHURCH BUILDING

The land first sold to the First Baptist Church of Hartland on June 10th 1898 by James and Ellen Hinnell for the sum of one dollar. The building had apparently been built in that time frame as *Sketches of Early High Prairie* by Nelia Binford Fleming mentioned in her book that two churches, the Baptist and the Methodist on High Prairie Road were both active on the prairie. The church has been used for school graduation exercises, weddings, funerals and other community functions over the years. Several times, after we first bought it, someone would stop and tell us of a community social, wedding, funeral or graduation exercise they had attended in the church.

One such time, a neighbor told us that he had been valedictorian in his school class, but then he jokingly added he was the only one in the class.

After several years of nonuse in the late 1940's, the Baptist Church decided to sell the property. I was fortunate to acquire the building and one acre of ground for \$400 in 1953.

It still stands on the original property where it was built and is still owned by the Douglas and Dona Taylor family. The building has been used by the community for the HPCC meetings for the last several years.



LARD MAKING— BEING A SHORT TREATISE ON THE ART & CRAFT

Martha M. Hamill

Lard making is not a lost craft, but it's rarely practiced and rarely used nowadays. Hydrogenated shortening precipitated lard's losing popularity. The saturated vs. monounsaturated vs. polyunsaturated fat controversy depressed lard's use even more. Diehards such I, Hispanics, and other contrarians hold to lard as an ideal fat for certain dishes. (I also use butter, chicken fat, goose fat, duck fat, olive oil, peanut oil, and grapeseed oil depending on the dish.) Because commercial lard is hydrogenated, I make my own, hence this treatise.

Lard, that now castigated fat, was an essential staple during my early years in rural Southern Arkansas. Hog meat was our main source of protein. Chicken, squirrel, goat, buffalo fish, and catfish appeared occasionally. Mother reserved fried chicken for the preacher on an occasional Sunday (he took the best pieces) or other formal guests (they took the best pieces too). We kids grew up with heads, backs, necks, and feet. Plus, I got the pipick. Mother and almost everyone else used lard for baking and frying. Hard times prevented buying shortening even when available. And, we had never heard of oils!

One of my earliest memories is watching the scalding of the hogs, dry curing and smoking most of the meat, sausage making, and rendering the lard. (I hid and stopped up my ears during the actual slaughter.) We kids also had to help because the amount of work involved demanded several men, half dozen or so of women, and all the spare kids. By age 5, I had some of the jobs, stirring lard, turning the sausage grinder crank, and bringing wood for the fire around the wash pots.

The day before slaughter we cleaned the wash pots, large cast iron cauldrons holding about 20 or 30 gallons. Filled with water and the wood laid, one match only started the next morning. As soon as the water began to boil the, the best shot aimed between the hog's eyes and pulled the trigger on our .22 calibre (I still have the rifle with its cracked chamber). Two or three men leaped into the pigpen and slit the hog's throat. Dragging the bled-out carcass to a large barrel filled with a mix of boiling and cold water, the men held it in the barrel until the hair released readily. (I have since found out that the ideal temperature is 155 degrees F. They judged it by feel.) Scraping furiously, they finished that end and of the hog. Grown-ups added more boiling water and the men reversed the hog and removed that hair. We normally had

only one or two hogs; occasionally we had 3 or 4. Thus, the slaughter, scalding and scraping continued.

Meanwhile, the best butcher working on the first carcass now suspended head down from a single-tree (a way of attaching a horse or mule to farm implements), cut off the head and hung it on a fence post to drain. The butcher would slit from the bottom to the breastbone taking great care not to cut into any internal organs while holding the viscera in place. Somehow, in this sequence, he would tie off the anus. Once done, he allowed all the innards to drop into a tub. Taking great care not to pierce the bladder or gall bladder, he retrieved the heart, liver, small intestines and the melt (our word for the spleen). The balance was discarded unless someone wanted the belly or visceral fat for making candles or soap. Belly fat has brownish color and gives a bad taste to lard. Kids threaded the melt on a stick and roasted it in the fire, a unique treat.

The butcher next cut the carcass in half lengthwise. He then removed leaf fat lining the beast's interior by pushing upward with his hand between the fat and the body. These operations sped cooling. We kept the leaf fat separate because it made better lard and it melted at a lower temperature than the back fat (See picture). Leaf lard is still the preferred product if it's to be found.

Now, for the nitty-gritty (an almost obsolete phrase). Several years ago I decided to make lard from the fat of a half pig. With memories of skills acquired more than fifty-five years ago, I divided the fat into two groups and set at it with a high heart and expecting an easy chore. Wrong! Scorched lard can be salvaged but for soap or candles. The next batch ran smoothly but took so long! After midnight is no time to be dipping hot fat into tiny containers nor cleaning the kitchen floor of dribbled fat.

Bad memories dull with time and needing more lard, my second half pig provided the wherewithal. This would be a really big batch. All went smoothly except the cracklings were slow to fall. Turning up the heat to speed things up does not work! Scorched again! Fortunately, our local hog breeder had excess fat this year. Alas, no more.

A bit of research into lard making and memory yielded an excellent product. Complete each step before starting another. These steps are:

- Collect and clean enough air-tight containers to hold all the lard. A 225 pound hog will yield approximately 30 lbs of fat. Each pound of fat will yield between 80 and 90 percent lard. A pint's a pound the world around or close enough.
- Cut the fat into chunks less than two inches on a side. Remove all fibers, red meat, and bloody spots.

The skin may be left on the fat.

- Put about 1/2" water in the bottom of a large, very heavy pot over a very low fire. Place a layer of back fat in the pot. DO NOT ADD SALT OR SPICES. Once the first layer begins to melt, add more fat but keep the level well below the top. One definitely does not want a pot of pure fat to boil over onto a hot stove. If you miraculously escape a house fire, the clean up will daunt you.
- Stir the melting fat frequently. Once the back fat is about half melted, add the leaf fat unless you have enough to make a separate batch. I now transfer the pot to a 270 degree oven so hot spots won't form (one of my conclusions from scorching the lard).
- Once the cracklings begin to rise, monitor the fat temperature closely because 255 degrees is not far behind. Most of the cracklings will sink at just about 255. When they do, turn off the heat.
- Skim any floating cracklings from the fat. Dip the fat into containers filling them to the brim. Chill as quickly as possible without covering.
- Strain the rest through layers of cheesecloth. You can either press the cracklings to obtain more lard or retain them as cracklings.
- Cover the containers tightly after the lard is thoroughly chilled and store in a cool, dark, dry place. Air, heat, moisture, and light are lard's enemies.

Salted cracklings make a great snack. Add them to cornbread or biscuits. Sprinkle over eggs, salads, soups, stews or vegetables in place of croutons. For those on a low-carb diet, crush the cracklings very finely and use in place of breading. For an unusual dip, saute chopped onions and green peppers. Add chopped cracklings and spices to taste. Simmer in broth until thick.

Have fun and revisit your ancestors ways.



HIGH PRAIRIE NEEDLERS NEWS

Judi Strait

A while back, Martha Hamil came up with a good idea. We all have food in our cupboards, pantries, and freezers that, although still good, is getting a little old. So why not get together some Monday morning, our regular Needlers meeting time, and cook up that food. Monday, June 2 was the day.

Several of the Needlers brought food they wanted to use up (I think that Martha brought half her kitchen!) and we started cooking. I thought my kitchen was big until four of us, with all that food, started working together. We had a great time though, and came up with some great soups, stews, etc. What a lunch we had that day!

Brigitte Free made a delicious vegetable soup with sausage, Keiko Thornton made wonderful spaghetti with ground turkey meatballs, and I made a beef stew. Martha made a fantastic gumbo using every meat imaginable plus okra and several other ingredients. She also made a vegetable "melange." I have never seen a dish using so many different vegetables. It too was incredibly good.

If you have a Monday morning free, come join the Needlers. We have a great time together and you don't have to do handwork to be a part of our group. Just come for the good fellowship and fun. Besides, you never know what the Needlers might cook up next!

more by Gwen Berry

One of our Needlers wrote the article in this issue about the Klickitat County Fair. Others of our group are also involved with the Fair. In particular, Loretta Lindsay is the Goat Barn Superintendent, which means she sets up and organizes the whole Goat Barn operation and sees it through the four days of the Fair. She also exhibits her own goats every year. Last year she had three dairy goats and five non-dairy goats entered. She smiles when she talks about Cinderella, her Sonnen cross, who always walks away with Best Doe in Show. :-)

Another Needler Food Tip: Do you hate wasting the long part of the asparagus stalk that's too tough to cook up and eat? (This happens often if you grow your own and turn your back on the patch for a day or two.) Just cut off the tough outer layer and eat the inside the way you would a carrot stick. It's tender and slightly sweet.

AUGUST IS COUNTY FAIR TIME

Terry Chabbert

Klickitat County Fair is around the corner, August 21–24. It's loads of fun! Come check out the livestock, horses, 4-H, horticulture, sewing, baking, assorted needleworks, and quilting, to name a few. Also come to the Rodeo, and of course sample the great fair food. And if nothing else you may even run into your neighbors or meet someone new.

If you really want to do something exciting and also fun, enter something you like to do in the Fair — anything from animals and plants to sewing and crafts to baking and preserving to fine arts and photography, and everything in between. For all the information and entry forms, just pick up a Premium Book at your post office. This is a newspaper section put together by the Fair Board and the Goldendale Sentinel that has all the entry categories and prizes, rules, dates, and other information. If you need more entry forms than are in the book you can make copies. The book also tells when and where to take your entries.

The best part of fair week is having fun. So, Come one, Come all to Klickitat County Fair! I'll see you there.

Editor's note: *Having participated in previous Klickitat County Fairs, Terry knows what she's talking about. She says, while she's enjoyed going to the fair just to see everything, having an entry of her own makes it even more fun. Last year she entered a basket of eggs from her Guinea fowl, and the Fair administrators created a whole new category just for her eggs.*

What: KLICKITAT COUNTY FAIR

When: Thursday, August 21 – Sunday, August 24

Where: Klickitat County Fairgrounds at 905 Fairgrounds Road, Goldendale

Daily Admission: Adult \$6/Senior \$5/Age 6–12 \$4/Under age 6 Free

Season Pass: Adult \$12/Senior \$10/Age 6–12 \$8/Under age 6 Free

How to get there: Coming from the south on Highway 97 – Take the third Goldendale exit, turn west into town. That will put you on Broadway Street. Follow Broadway most of the way through town til you come to Mill Street. Turn right and go about ½ mile. Mill Street turns into Fairgrounds Road. The Fairgrounds are at the top of the hill. First gate is for general admission; second gate is for exhibitors.

SMART IN THE COUNTRY, PART II

Ted McKercher

I've been asked to record this essay not because the person who had a country living experience couldn't but because I may be "King of the Stupid Stuff" and can relate.

"King of the Stupid Stuff" is probably a dubious distinction that should be willingly passed on but its attention and some of us will satisfy that need in peculiar acts.

Now I don't think the hero(?) of this story is stupid or an attention grabber but in this election year he may be taking a run at my title and throne.

This is evident to me because he has taken to firing (not a salvo), mud slinging (actually) and bending (but not the truth).

My opponent (we'll call him "Bud") and his wife (let's call her ummm—"Becky") lived most of their married life in one home hoping to one day build a dream house of Bud's design.

A few years back they purchased acreage in High Prairie and began work on their dream.

They lived in a small 5th-wheel trailer until the house was inhabitable even though not quite finished.

Now to off set the cost of running an energy efficient heat pump they also installed a wood stove which of course needs periodic cleaning.

Bud is into doing proper maintenance so one day he set upon the chore by borrowing his contractor's vacuum cleaner to simplify the operation. He was pleased with the out come. That is until a short time later he and Becky smelled something like burned plastic with just a hint of wood essence!

They discovered a partially melted vacuum cleaner and a burned spot on their sub floor. Thank goodness it was only a burned spot and only on the sub floor (AND only the CONTRACTOR'S vacuum cleaner!!!)

Now Bud wasn't through. He began to feel he should be "King" (at least that's what I believe).

Bud is a great lover of nature enjoying feeding the deer, turkeys and birds that come to visit. He has several bird houses stationed on his property which he knows need cleaning in early spring (here's that maintenance gene popping up again!)

To make the ritual easier he decided to bring all the bird houses to one central location so off—across—the—field—he drove. Can you say "High Prairie Mud" and "Axle Deep"???

Bud claims he was just testing the manufacturer's claim for the four wheel drive.

Undaunted Bud knew he had made a correctable mistake that could be rectified by borrowing his generous neighbor's tractor.

Up to the neighbor's shop he went, rolled up the overhead and backed the machine out. Well almost out. The door was just a little shy of being open far enough.

Two days later his car was unstuck, the shop door was repaired and Bud was free to continue his run for my throne.

Bud says he regrets firing, mud slinging and bending but has to do what ever it takes to be the "Chosen One".

We'll see and I'll bet we don't have to wait until November!



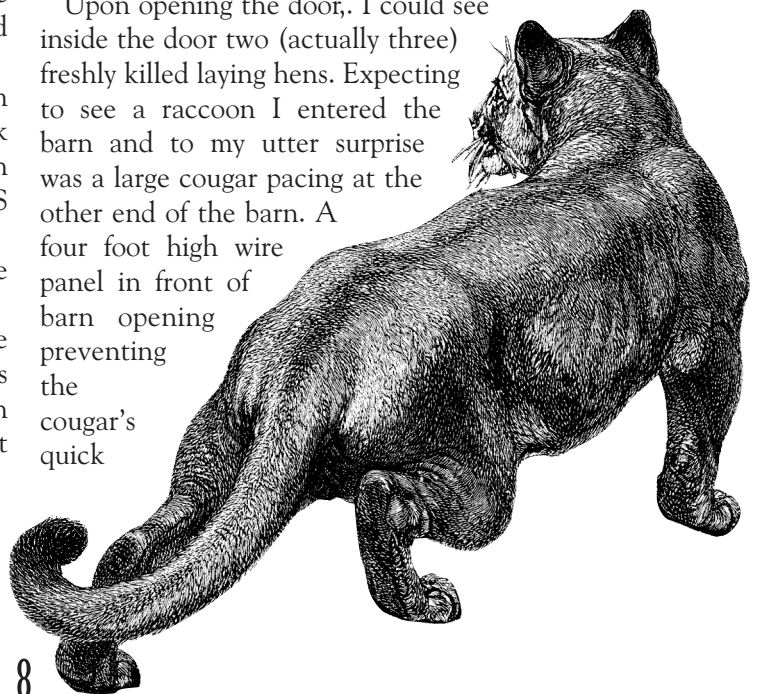
COUGAR

Doug Taylor

March 24, 2008

Seeing a cougar in your barn around 9:00 in the morning is something about as rare as being alive for seeing Mt. St. Helens blow. It is an event that one never expects, much less anticipates. This morning crossing the road to my old barn driving around the back on my ATV, I got off and was opening the door to feed my cats. As I did, I heard a big thump like a large animal hitting the side of the barn.

Upon opening the door, I could see inside the door two (actually three) freshly killed laying hens. Expecting to see a raccoon I entered the barn and to my utter surprise was a large cougar pacing at the other end of the barn. A four foot high wire panel in front of barn opening preventing the cougar's quick



escape it ran back and forth two or three times, occasionally looking at me. Deciding this was not an easy exit it just gave a short hop and cleared the wire panel and escaped around the barn. Not being able to see where it went I got on my ATV and drove around the front and Julia our border collie had by this time came on the scene. She apparently followed its tracks for a short distance and decided that it was either futile or stupid and came back.

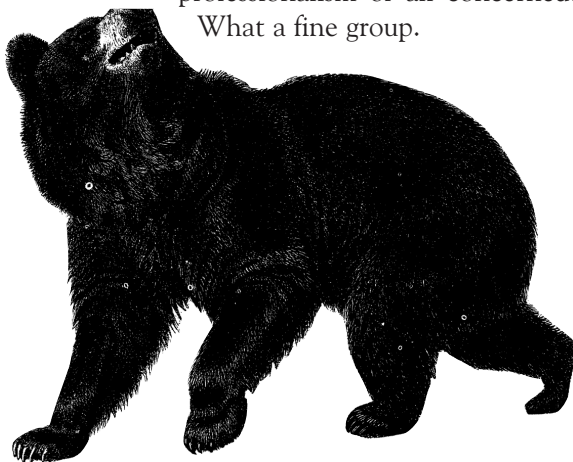
On further inspection I found four laying hens and all three roosters dead. I found a couple of the hen chickens partially eaten.

Where it was eating the chickens, the cougar was not more than 6 or 7 feet from the door I opened, was glad it decided to go the opposite direction. I was amazed that it did not try to escape as I had come around the barn before opening the door.

I contacted the game department and they informed me that a sheep had been killed on Stacker Butt Road the previous week. They stated that if predators were killing domestic stock that it was a policy to try and dispense with the animal. Around 5:30 the warden and Mr. Whitmire with hounds came and within an hour they had the cougar treed only a couple hundred yards off our property. The department always likes to get adjacent property owner permission before a game chase.

An example of the fine public workers we have: I called the sheriff's office of my problem, the dispatcher there said I needed to contact the Washington State Patrol and she connected me with their office. The lady there took my call and said she would contact the game officer. Within minutes of hanging up the phone, Dan Bolton, Fish and Game Officer called and as I told him the situation he took over from there.

Needless to say we were very pleased with the professionalism of all concerned.
What a fine group.



BEAR TALES

Mike Chabbert

While outside enjoying the sunny day there seemed to be peace and harmony in the prairie until our alpaca's became nervous and alert while focusing their gaze toward the South. I couldn't see what all the fuss was about but my wife Terry noticed some movement about 400 yards away on the hillside. She checked out the oak tree laden area with the binoculars and was shocked to see a brown colored black bear on the hillside. When I looked there was a black cub in view, probably one year old and about the height of a large size dog while on all fours. I approached toward the pair and closed the distance in open pasture to 200 yards while pausing to keep an eye on the twosome. My intentions were to observe and make sure the bears had good intentions, but I did carry two fire sticks, one in hopes of persuading Mrs. Ursa to reverse her approach if necessary, and one to protect the fire stick holder if option one failed.

Jr was searching for cub treats in the fallen tree/rotten stump pantry, showing a complete lack of interest in our critters who were nervously observing from a safe distance. The large sow was moving slowly in and out of view because of the tree leaf cover. I whistled a few times to make sure they were aware of human presence (although that was entirely unnecessary). The cub slowly meandered up the slope occasionally glancing back in my direction as it retreated. I lost visual contact with the sow, but realized they were not interested in our critters or us, so I decided to return to the house, occasionally glancing back in the bear's direction as I retreated, knowing full well that I couldn't outrun a bear even in my prime which was 40 years and 40 pounds ago. Even though I lost visual contact with Mrs. Ursa she was fully aware and was silently observing my actions.

It was an honor to have the opportunity to observe these magnificent animals in wild areas/spaces that happen to be between home sites — coexisting in a responsible/respectable manner. Hopefully future encounters will be mutually beneficial. Awareness and avoidance (leaving garbage and food items in inaccessible locations, trusting your animal's instincts) may be the keys to success. Remember that no one has a magical barrier, just because you don't see them doesn't mean they're not there. If you see the little black one be on the lookout for the protective big brown one.

FLYING HIGH ON HIGH PRAIRIE

Gwen Berry

Wind surfers. Wind generators. Wind fences. Wind warnings. Here in the Gorge there's one thing we know we can expect, especially in the spring and summer, and that's WIND. Though annoying at times, it lends itself to one of the oldest and most colorful activities in the world – KITE FLYING.

The Chinese have been flying kites for perhaps as long as 3,000 years. From China, kites spread throughout Asia (although some areas apparently developed kites independently). These were tools, not toys. Kites were flown with a payload of fireworks to terrify enemy troops, or used to lift observers before a battle. They were used to raise construction materials to the tops of buildings, to keep birds away from crops, and to carry baited fishing lines to where the fish lurked out in deeper water. Some countries developed fiercely competitive sporting events with fighting kites and in others the kite held considerable religious or ceremonial importance.

Traders returning from Asia brought kites to Europe, but for a long time they were mainly considered novelties or toys for children. Beginning in the 1700's, though, western scientists started employing kites as scientific instruments, initially for studying weather phenomena (like Ben Franklin's dangerous proof of electricity in lightning). As the scientists used kites, their attention turned to the kites themselves, and they began to observe and codify the aerodynamic principles that are the basis of modern aeronautics — and to put those principles to use. The Wright brothers spent years experimenting with kites and gliders before being ready for their famous flight in 1903. Airplanes, jets, rockets — even automobile design — all make use of the aerodynamic principles first understood by flying

and experimenting with KITES. (See http://www.aka.org.au/kites_in_the_classroom/history.htm for a more complete history, and <http://www.blueskylark.org/zoo/uses.html> for an amazing list of all the practical uses kites have been put to.)

We got some really improved kites out of the deal, too. Today's kites range from the familiar diamond shape and other basic designs to elaborate multi-dimensional fliers, powerful stunt kites, power kites, and modern fighting kites. The availability of strong, lightweight materials such as rip-stop nylon, and carbon or fiberglass for frames, has allowed kite designers to go far beyond what was previously possible. (Explore this kite supplier's website (and others) and you'll be astonished at what's now available: <http://www.cobrakite.com/>)

It's important to have the right kite for the wind conditions (or the right wind conditions for your kite). For beginners flying basic kites, a wind speed of 8 – 12 mph is ideal; that's when a small flag would stand out in the wind. Wind speeds above that can be dangerous, especially if the wind is gusting. Keep in mind that wind tends to be faster as you go higher. (For a chart of wind speeds and kite types, go to <http://www.kitesandkids.com/kite-flying-weather-tips.htm>)

Location is important, too. Look for large open areas away from buildings or other large objects that can cause wind turbulence. Avoid power lines (!) and trees, stay clear of roads or vehicles,

and avoid flying your kite above or around people, since it's easy to lose control and crash at any time. Use common sense to stay safe: don't fly your kite in a storm or rainy weather. Never use metallic or wet flying line. Never try to free a kite caught in a power line. Wear gloves to prevent burns or cuts from the kite line. Never cut and release a kite.



Now you're ready to fly! Step 1: getting it into the air. Instead of running with your kite like we used to as kids, have a helper hold it loosely facing into the wind. Let out about 100 feet of line. If the wind is strong, bring in a few yards of line quickly and the kite will rise into the air. In lighter wind, try alternately bringing line in when the kite falters and letting line out as it goes up. Your kite will zigzag upward until it reaches the stronger wind and flies freely.

The only thing better than a kite sailing against the sky is multitudes of kites in the sky. We're lucky to have some wonderful kite festivals in our part of the country. The biggest one is at Long Beach, Washington – the Washington State International Kite Festival, held this year on August 18 – 24 (<http://www.worldkitemuseum.com/index-wsikf.html>). The Southern Oregon Kite Festival is held at Brookings, Oregon, on July 19 & 20 (<http://www.sokf.org/>). Lincoln City hosts three kite festivals – the Indoor Kite Festival (in March), the Summer Kite Festival on June 28 & 29, and the Fall Kite Festival on October 11 & 12 (info for all of them is at <http://www.oregoncoast.org/pages/festivals.php>). Don't miss these visual extravaganzas!

I encourage you to dip into the websites I've included. Maybe you'll be as fascinated as I was. I haven't even mentioned things like traction kites or line laundry! The library has books on kites, and here's a start on the web:

- ◆ Good information overview: http://www.aka.org.au/kites_in_the_classroom/student.htm
- ◆ Kites & kids: <http://www.windpowersports.com/kites/kids/kid.html>
- ◆ Types of kites including stunt & power kites: <http://www.kitesrus.com/>
- ◆ Printable Kite Safety Card: <http://windstarkites.com/KiteSafetyFieldCard.htm>
- ◆ How-to kite videos: http://www.expertvillage.com/video-series/276_kites.htm
- ◆ Kite aerial photography: <http://www.windpowersports.com/guides/kite-aerial-photography.php>
- ◆ NASA on Kites and Aerodynamics: <http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/K-12/airplane/kite1.html>
- ◆ Wikipedia (follow links to lots of kite topics): <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kites>

BONES MAY RAIN FROM THE SKY

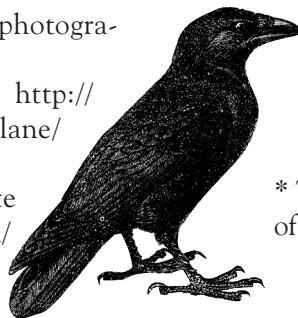
Martha M. Hamil

Ravens' aerial displays will enthrall you on High Prairie. During their playful modes, they outperform the Blue Angels and the Thunderbirds. Other times, ravens eat eggs of any kind, baby birds, and do other things that humans don't appreciate. They are noisy, insistent, clean up carrion, and are very smart. Their diet also includes shellfish (they fished all the mussel shells out of my covered compost pile), seeds, fruit, rodents, and insects. Plus, ravens cache food for hard times. Their hoarse, raucous call grates on human ears. Captive, tamed ones have been known to talk; 'Nevermore'.

Knowing that ravens are carrion eaters, several years ago I built a raven feeder. It consists of a rimmed platform about 2' square mounted about 6' off the ground on a post. Thereupon, I no longer sneaked meat scraps, bones, and fat or oil into dumpsters and garbage containers in The Dalles and Tigard. The ravens will eat what is not transportable and take everything else with them. They even take big bones flying a few feet off the ground. Whether back to their babies or to cache or to the rookery to share, I can't tell you. Thus, things that I can't put into my septic tank or compost pile serves a useful purpose. Nuthatches and the like also come to the raven feeder, particularly in winter.

If their depredations tempt you to take drastic action against them, ravens are both state and federally protected. The regulations prohibit one from pursuing, chasing, harassing, or killing them among other things. So, one must think of clever ways to deter them without violating their protected status. Good Luck. They are very smart birds.

Protected status also extends to most birds on High Prairie including such perceived pests as the bronze-headed cowbird. Starlings I forgot to check. One can kill birds classified as game birds in season with a valid license.



There were three ravens sat on a tree,
They were as black as they might be.
The one of them said to his mate,
'Where shall we our breakfast take?'

* *The Three Ravens* from the Oxford Book of Ballads.

Our continued gratitude to Klickitat County EDA
for their support in publishing *The High Prairie*.

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FIREWISE PROGRAM UPDATE

Emily Randall, Firewise consultant with the Central Klickitat Conservation District

In February 2008 and again in April 2008 Central Klickitat Conservation District attended Fire Wise Training. The National assessment form estimates your risk by a point system and can help you target areas around your home that would lower your risk in the event of a wild fire. Since then we have performed nine Home Assessments scattered throughout Klickitat County and attended meetings in both Box Canyon and High Prairie to spread the word about our Firewise Program and explain some of the benefits to join with your neighbors and create a Firewise Community.

On April 19 we participated at Earth Day. We gave away Ponderosa Pine Trees donated by Lava Nursery and were available to schedule assessments and hand out information pamphlets. Wyatt Leighton from Department of Natural Resources was also on hand to answer questions.

On May 9 we partnered with the Department of Natural Resources and Rural 7 Fire Department

to hold a Fuels Reduction Workshop that was performed in Ponderosa Park. We would like to thank all the volunteers that assisted with this workshop. The community was invited to visit the project to visualize steps individual home/landowners can perform to reduce the risk of damage to their property caused by wild fires. Central Klickitat Conservation District would like to remind everyone that we received a grant to assist interested individuals or communities by conducting Firewise Assessments and assistance for Communities to develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans. This is a strictly voluntary program. Please contact our office if you are interested in scheduling an assessment or if you have any questions at all (509) 773-5823 ext. 5. With a grant from Northwest Service Academy we have hired Emily Randall to oversee the Firewise program. Call Emily if you have questions or to schedule your Firewise Assessment.