

## SAVE THESE DATES

**Community Council Meetings**, 4th Thursday of the month, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

**Needlers** Mondays, at 10:30 a.m. Call 365-5288 for more information.

**Fire Volunteers**, 1st, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

**Fire Commissioner Meeting**, 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Visit the community website ([www.highprairie.us](http://www.highprairie.us)) for additional scheduled events and meetings.



## STAY IN THE LOOP!

## EMAIL:

Put your name on the HP info list by emailing [bbparish@embarqmail.com](mailto:bbparish@embarqmail.com)

## WEBSITE:

Check us out at [www.highprairie.us](http://www.highprairie.us)  
Calendar, blog, High Prairian, history, and lots more!

## FACEBOOK:

Stay up to date with community happenings and join the discussion:

[www.facebook.com/groups/180735785338230/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/180735785338230/)

Don't forget to \*like\* the page.

## HP DIRECTORY:

Trade contact info just with friends and neighbors. Add or update at:  
[www.highprairie.us/general-information/community-directory/](http://www.highprairie.us/general-information/community-directory/)

(We can't invite you if we don't know how to reach you!)



## TIDBITS FROM THE 2015 FIREHOUSE SALE

Gwen Berry

2015 Firehouse Sale figures (as of 6/20/15): Gross \$18,616.86 Net Profit \$14,794.88

Every Firehouse Sale is different, and this year saw some new happenings added to the old favorites.

In the "planned" category, the big tent got a new home closer to the rest of the Firehouse Sale action. The site was graded and gravelled before a crew of volunteers took down the big tent's framework and reassembled it on the new pad. It worked much better for the sale! As a bonus, it's now available for other activities, like picnics.

In the "unplanned" category: High wind hit High Prairie right after all the sale tents had been set up. It sent the two food booth tents sailing, and twisted their structures into pretzels. A major rescue effort managed to get the parts back down from the power pole and kept them from hurting anybody, but the tents were totalled. What a setback! Discussions at an emergency meeting narrowed available options down to just one that was practical under the circumstances – have the food inside the community center this year.

It turned out that having the food inside was popular with workers and customers alike. Prep and serving were much simpler, and eating inside was more comfortable – not too hot, not too cold, and nobody had to hold onto their plate to keep the wind from snatching it away. The menu was a hit, too. Myrin's famous bratwurst is always a #1 draw, and our veggie option (this year it was Tofurky beer brats) seems to be more and more popular each year. Fruit turnovers, cinnamon rolls, pies and other goodies flew out the door, as they say; but we can't blame the wind for it this time.



A new event this year was the Drop-in "Show-and-Tell" Car Show. Enthusiastic owners brought in old, interesting, and/or collectible cars and trucks on Saturday morning. They shared information and traded stories, while appreciative sale-goers took in all the interesting details of the twelve vehicles.

This year's Needler raffle quilt was widely acclaimed as their most beautiful yet, and it certainly was gorgeous displayed in the community center. The raffle brought in \$1,417. The

winner was Pat Moore, who for many years would buy tickets on quilts, hoping to win one but never did. Her husband Frank came out from Hood River again this year and helped Myrin grind

(continued p. 2)

## THE HIGH PRAIRIAN

"All the news that's print to fit"

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Contact the editor with news or comments:

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## 2015 Firehouse Sale (from p. 1)

150 lbs of meat for brats for the Firehouse Sale. Frank and Pat both came to the sale; Pat talked Frank into buying \$30 of quilt tickets and SHE WON!

Another successful effort was the raffle of the Savage Bolt 17 HMR rifle, which brought in \$1,440 after expenses.

The hard work and dedication of the Silent Auction crew paid off once again. A wide variety of interesting bid items and a hundred Buy-It-Now items gave buyers a lot to choose from. The gun raffle, quilt raffle and the Silent Auction were the sources of major revenue for the Sale. We can't thank the donors enough for their generous support. The Silent Auction crew deserves huge appreciation, too. One unsung hero is Barb Parrish, who puts in untold hours on behind-the-scenes paperwork, including tracking the donations, creating bid sheets and sending out thank-you notes to all the donors after the sale. Thanks, Barb!



At the end of the sale, almost everything went to a good home. Twin Bridges Museum took some of the remaining items. A whole lot of stuff went to a shelter in Bingen. A Native American family, who had lost everything in a fire just the night before, found many things they could use or share with others in their community. Then Deborah Fenwick took the little bit that was left to a thrift store in The Dalles. Voilà! Firehouse Sale benefits spread into the wider community.

## SCHILLING ROAD FIRE HALL PROGRESS REPORT

Jake Jakabosky

High Prairie's hard-working Fire Commissioners have obtained county approval of a second driveway to access the planned fire hall. That determined the orientation of the building and allowed them to complete the final site plan.

A list of building specifications has also been completed and was approved at the Fire Commissioners' meeting on June 16. They planned to put the building out for bids shortly thereafter. Once the bids come in and the costs are known, they can apply for a low-interest loan through the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Community Development Program.

The next step involves applying through the State Legislative Representative for grant money for a well on the site to serve the restroom. Water for the fire apparatus will be provided by three 10,000 gallon tanks filled by precipitation runoff from the building's roof.

Fire Commissioners James Amery, Philip Haner and Arlen Aleckson welcome questions or comments. Contact them individually or come to the next Commissioners' meeting at 7 p.m. on July 21, 2015.

## GOODBYE TO ROCKY SCHULTZ

Roberta Cockeram



Rocky showing off her birthday present.

Rocky Schultz, a very special lady, and a dear friend to a lot of us will be moving from the High Prairie Community this month. Rocky will be starting a new venture and re-locating to La Pine, OR, so that she and her fiancé Jeff can be together along with their 4 dogs, 2 horses and many chickens.

The High Prairie community would like to thank Rocky for the many hours she dedicated unconditionally, as the Chairman of the Firehouse Sale for the past two years. In those two years, she has been instrumental in the planning, labor and reorganization of the sale to the new location at the High Prairie Community Center. Rocky also helped cook our last two Christmas meals for the HPCC. She is a fantastic cook. Rocky always gave 110% and is admired for her "let's get it done" attitude.

Thank you, Rocky, for all your hard work on the community's behalf, and also to Jeff for his many hours of volunteer work at the HPCC events.

We wish Rocky well; she will be missed. May our paths cross again....who knows, at the Firehouse Sale next year!!!!

## High Prairie Community Council

Mike Richards, HPCC President

What a busy three months it has been since the last edition of the High Prairian! It seems like just yesterday I was penning an article and remarking about the early arrival of spring. Since that time, we've had our first 100+ degree day. My how time flies!

The High Prairie Community Council has been very busy the past few months, with our annual Firehouse Sale, joining the Mt. Adams and Goldendale chambers of commerce to promote our community center to more potential renters, and applying for and receiving monetary grants from some private organizations to benefit our fire department!

Every year, our Firehouse Sale brings people from far and near. This year (from my perspective as parking lot attendant) I can attest that we had people from all over Klickitat County and as far away as Portland, all coming to the community center for a brat and to find a deal on whatever priceless item they could dig up.

As you may have heard, it was another big year for the sale, with gross proceeds topping any other sale in our history. Thanks to the efforts of each and every one of our volunteers, we grossed more than \$17,000! We netted slightly less than in some other years, but it is clear that the sale remains a very popular event in our county.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our many volunteers for helping to make the sale such a smashing success. I also want to thank the organizers, Rocky Schultz and Roberta Cockeram, for their selfless contributions to this year's sale and the community council in general. If you haven't heard, Rocky is moving to central Oregon to pursue interests there, and we will surely miss her smile and sense of humor up here on the prairie. Thank you and good luck in the future, Rocky.

That being said, if you or someone you know might be interested in organizing next year's sale, please call or come to the next community council meeting and let us know! This is a great opportunity for you and a friend, if you like, to make a big difference in a great cause. I should also say that the option of hosting a fundraiser different from a rummage sale was brought up at the most recent meeting. If you have an idea for an alternative to our sale you'd like to promote, we are all ears.

As if all that weren't enough, another item that came up recently is the \$5,000 grant from Legends Casino in Toppenish to High Prairie Fire District 14. Tim Darland wrote a proposal for a \$5,200 grant to obtain 13 new pagers compatible with the county's new emergency dispatch radio system. In order to process the grant, it was submitted using HPCC's 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.

Using the reasoning that the Yakima Nation has several hundred acres of tribal lands within FD 14, the district was able to show a compelling reason for the donation, as well as a direct benefit for the tribe. The applicants were not expecting to receive the full amount requested, but on May 15 the casino came through with all but \$200 for the pagers! This was a very welcome surprise and it serves to benefit all of us within FD14! (see <https://highprairiecommunitycouncil.wordpress.com> for more of the story)

So that covers some, but not all of the highlights of the summer so far. To learn more about the goings-on going on at the High Prairie Community Council, you will just have to attend one of our upcoming meetings. For our June meeting, Chris Sattlem has arranged to have Margie Fickett of Columbia River Gorge Beekeepers Club come and give a presentation on apiculture, or beekeeping. Plus, elections will be held for next year's board members and officers.

You won't want to miss this one. The meeting is Thursday, June 25, at the High Prairie Community Center starting at 7 PM. See. You. There!



# HAPPY SUMMER SOLSTICE



## HIGH PRAIRIE GROUNDWATER SUPPLY

John Grim PE (John Grim & Associates)

Note: This article was originally published in 2013 and includes some recent updates.

### Background

It seems like just about anywhere there are people who live in rural areas with their own private water systems there are as many opinions about the water supply as there are about the best way to grow tomatoes. One bit of wisdom I have gained in 20 years of water resource engineering is that there are no guarantees in well drilling and you never really can fully understand a groundwater supply source, aka an aquifer.

We are lucky to have a County that has the ambition and foresight to have put in place a well monitoring network on the High Prairie and hired expert consultants to study the results of the monitoring data and also prepare an evaluation of the local geology and hydrogeology. For all the gory details you can find the study on line at the following link:

<http://www.klickitatcounty.org/NaturalR/Content.asp?fC=35&fD=3>

Scroll down the page to the WRIA 30 Assessments and Reports, item #8, titled, "[Hydrologic Information Report Supporting Water Availability Assessment: High Prairie Study Area, WRIA 30, June 2011](#)". There are some great maps in this report that show all the monitoring wells, the location of geologic structures (folds, faults, etc.) and the groundwater flow directions. It's interesting stuff; did you know there are avalanche deposits on the Columbia Hills and deposits from the Missoula floods?

### Our Water Supply

The groundwater that supplies High Prairie wells is almost entirely located in the Columbia River Basalt Group. These basalts are lava flows that are up to a mile thick in places and up to several million years old. Just about anywhere there are eroded canyons, like in Dillacort Canyon, you can see exposed basalts. Geologic activity created the Columbia Hills. The massive forces that compressed the land into these hills also resulted in many faults and folds throughout the High Prairie area. These geologic structures make the aquifers in our community extremely complex and variable. Because the geology is very complex there is no regional aquifer. Instead there are dozens of small aquifers of many different sizes each with its own characteristics. For this reason it's very hard to make any general conclusions about the HP aquifer. It is safe to say, however, that the groundwater comes completely from the rain that falls on the High Prairie. So when we have lengthy droughts you can expect the water level in all the wells to decline and vice versa.

Rainwater infiltrates through the soil and down through the basalt rock via fractures caused by geologic activity and weathering. When the water hits an impermeable boundary, like unfractured basalt, it pools and fills all the voids in the fractured rock. A completely saturated geologic layer is an aquifer. Our wells tend to produce water

### DON'T BE A WATER HOG! USE WATER CONSERVATIVELY.

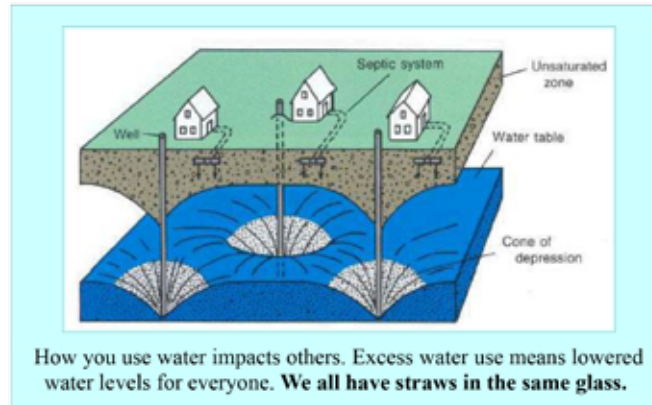


Illustration from USGS publication, "Groundwater and the Rural Homeowner" by Roger M. Waller  
[http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/gw\\_rural/homeowner/](http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/gw_rural/homeowner/)

from these fractured basalt layers. Some of these pools of water on the High Prairie are shallow and some are deep, and some wells tap into more than one of the pools. Some of the very shallow pools (less than 200 feet in depth) may be extremely isolated and small. It is not unusual for a single well to dewater one of these pools and go dry.

The High Prairie groundwater system is small and bounded by the Columbia Hills, Swale Canyon, and the Klickitat River. Generally the groundwater flows from the

Columbia Hills toward Swale Canyon or toward the Klickitat River. A small area (about 1 square mile) of the High Prairie groundwater aquifer around milepost 8 is even further bounded by Dillacort and Knight Canyons. A good analogy is a bathtub. If you filled a bathtub with broken basalt and filled it up with water, the saturated rock represents an aquifer. The faucet represents rainfall and the drain represents the flow of groundwater out of the aquifer to the Klickitat River, etc. The bathtub represents the boundaries. The wells are straws stuck into the rock and sucking out water. Without rainfall (turn off the faucet) the tub (aquifer) would eventually empty. The County has been monitoring our wells since 2007 and there are now about 23 wells in the monitoring network.

The 8-mile area of the High Prairie has experienced a severe and dramatic decline in groundwater levels. A total of 8 wells have gone dry and 7 have been deepened. More wells are expected to dry up soon. The County has recently done additional study of this area in an attempt to answer two questions; 1) is the deeper aquifer sustainable, and 2) how long does it take to recharge the aquifer from rainfall. The County has also indicated it will consider a temporary moratorium on building permits in the 8-mile area to prevent the drilling of new wells.

*Unlimited groundwater is not guaranteed. You can impact the aquifer by wasting water or by modifying the landscape, for example by damming up creeks. This can lead to problems for you and for your neighbors. Since there are no other water supply options it's only prudent and conservative to use our groundwater supply wisely.*

## RECYCLE YOUR EGG CARTONS

Audrey Bentz

Do you toss your used egg cartons? Seems like more and more HP residents are raising chickens and selling/giving eggs. And it appears that they could use egg cartons. So if you have any to contribute, please bring them to the Community Center at our monthly meeting (4th Thursday evening of every month) or put them in a plastic bag and drop them beside the door of the HPCC's storage container there.

## VACATION RENTAL PROFILE #2

In our last issue we reported that there are two vacation rental facilities operating on High Prairie and included a profile of one of them, Morning Song Acres. In this issue the second facility, Counting Eagles, gets the spotlight.

### The Castle: Counting Eagles

Diane Cazalet



*One of the unique features of the castle is the "aerie" in the tower, with 360-degree views and two comfortable hammock chairs.*

Years before we ever moved in, our house on High Prairie was named "The Castle" by some of our neighbors, perhaps because we have a tower and a dungeon or because it sits perched high at the top of a 100-foot hill. Douglas Lynch, an artist who worked on Timberline Lodge, named the house "Counting Eagles" after hearing our story about the old Klickitat Indian who first told us where to look for this property. The Indian was doing an eagle census. He had been counting eagles for many years and was watching the eagles come back to this area. We feel very indebted to him as he knew exactly the location we were looking for.

We love the views from our Great Room, Cupola and Aerie, and despite some days with strong winds from the Gorge, we enjoy watching the weather sweep by and witnessing many fantastic sunsets. The top of our tower, the Aerie, has two hammock chairs for viewing mountains, watching birds or stargazing. It's so comfortable

with armrests, footrests, and even pillows, you can sit for hours with iPad, book and drink and soak up the views.

For over a year now we've been renting out our downstairs apartment as a vacation rental through [VacasaRentals.com](http://VacasaRentals.com) and [AirBNB](http://AirBNB), and it has proven to be a rewarding experience. We continue to occupy the house but turn over the apartment – four extra bedrooms including the Cupola – to our renters. We're not a B&B but guests can make their own meals here using our large kitchen or outdoor deck with barbeque.

Counting Eagles would be perfect for a family reunion or a holiday gathering. We would hope to host a rehearsal dinner here someday for a group of up to 32 people. Call us if you have any questions or would like more information on using the house for a special occasion. We love to be able to share our home and antique art and collections with our guests. Our house comes alive with many young folks and children's voices. A surprise for the children is a small Lego room hidden away under the cupola. The pool table next to the apartment is enjoyed by all ages.

We're here if you have guests or extended family who need a place to stay, and local neighbors get a 20% discount. Call Diane or Bill at (509) 365-5016 so we can reserve either a room, several rooms, or help you plan a special event.

## YOGA PRACTICE IN OUR OWN BACK YARD

Audrey Bentz

We are so fortunate here in High Prairie to have an outstanding local yoga teacher giving of her time and expertise to take us through yoga practices every Wednesday from 6 to 7 p.m.

Why yoga? Results can improve memory and concentration, can reduce anxiety and depression, can lower blood pressure, can improve posture, and maybe slim down the waistline. But the best is how wonderful you feel after following Jennifer Wykstra through the exercises at our Community Center. You don't have to be young and agile (as some are!). One of us is 79 and maybe can't do every move, but Jennifer is so open to just "doing your own thing," especially when you are a beginner. So everyone is welcome to participate at their own pace.

Come and see for yourself the amazing benefits yoga can bring into your life physically, mentally and emotionally! You will enjoy the interaction with other wonderful participants. You'll find both men and women "yoga-ing". Some mats are provided, or bring your own. And just wear comfortable clothing. There is no charge (!) but a donation is welcome.

## BOOKMOBILE SUMMER SCHEDULE

Lozetta Doll

Summer is fast approaching and that means that Vancouver Regional Library's bookmobile will be coming to High Prairie every other week. The Bookmobile comes to the old Fire Hall (on Centerville Highway) every other Tuesday from 9:45 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. The schedule is as follows: June 9 and 23, July 7 and 21, and August 4 and 18. Put those dates on your calendars and come see what is being offered for children, meet up with your neighbors, and check out some good books.



## POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS FIRE SEASON IN 2015

Outdoor burning was banned a month early by the Klickitat County Commissioners. The County Interagency Fire Association cited the "potential for extreme drought conditions, fire hazard, increased fuel loads, and potential for lack of sufficient precipitation" in their recommendation to initiate the ban on June 1. The county ban normally runs July 1 to September 30 each year.

On June 12, the Washington Department of Natural Resources announced an increase in the fire danger from "Moderate" to "HIGH" in most south central counties (including Klickitat) and also instituted a "partial hoot-owl" limit on forest industrial activities on DNR protected lands. That means that, even though most of us are not doing commercial logging, we must now follow certain rules when using spark-emitting equipment in the forest, including firewood cutting. Chainsaws must have approved, working exhaust systems. After using the saw, a fire watch must be maintained at the site for 1 hour. A shovel and an 8-ounce or greater fire extinguisher must be close at hand where the saw is used.

On June 17, a burn ban was initiated on all DNR-protected lands east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains. This applies to all outdoor burning on DNR-protected forestlands east of the Cascades with the exception of recreational fires in approved fire pits within designated state, county, municipal and other campgrounds. Fireworks and incendiary devices, such as exploding targets, sky lanterns, or tracer ammunition, are illegal on all DNR-protected forestlands. Charcoal briquettes are also not allowed.

These announcements show just how severe this summer's fire situation is becoming. By mid-June High Prairie firefighters had already provided Lyle Fire District with automatic aid two days in a row for fires resulting from open burning by irresponsible individuals. One fire was caught in time to prevent it from

climbing out of the Klickitat River canyon and onto High Prairie. High Prairie is notorious for strong winds that can quickly fan any flame out of control and threaten your property and that of your neighbors.

Burn bans always preclude any type of combustion in any open fire or open container. In addition, please be extra cautious when welding or grinding metal, or operating any machinery that could produce sparks, such as a mower cutting dry grass. Please insure that your spark arrestor is in good working order.

For further fire prevention information and resources go to DNR's website: [http://www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/PreventionInformation/Pages/rp\\_prevent\\_wildfireprevention.aspx](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/PreventionInformation/Pages/rp_prevent_wildfireprevention.aspx)

### Preparedness is the Key

There are many things you can do to help the Lyle and High Prairie fire volunteers protect your home from a fast-moving wildfire.

The first is to make your home easily located by installing reflectorized house number signs at your driveway. Volunteer Fred Henschell (509-365-5283) will be happy to order and install the sign for you at a nominal fee. Homemade signs can be decorative and unique, but we have found they fade with time or are often invisible at night, resulting in a delayed arrival of help when you most need it.

Once volunteers are on scene, they expect to find a home that is defensible. If it's not, they may be forced to move on to a home they can successfully protect.

So what is defensible? A home with no exposed combustibles just waiting for a hot firebrand. Do you have an accumulation of dry leaves or other debris under your deck or porch and in the gutters, or cardboard boxes and firewood next to the house? Untreated shake roofs are also susceptible to ignition. Have you mowed short the dry grass within 30 feet of the house and removed trees and other vegetation close to the house? In addition, your driveway should allow ready access for fire apparatus by providing clear-

ance 12 feet wide and 15 feet high. Trimming back trees and brush is essential. Help your fire department help you!

Watch how defensible space saved homes during the 2011 Monastery Fire north of Goldendale: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNKdd81JITk&feature=c4-over-view-vl&list=PL01C5218DDA2ABDA9>

Find invaluable information on making your home defensible at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).

### Volunteer Rob Taylor To Retire



After 10 years on the department, Rob is planning to hang up his firefighting gear for the last time this coming August. Rob came to High Prairie with his wife, Madelon, a decade ago after a long career in landscaping, farming, law enforcement, and teaching criminology.

Always active in the community, Rob served for several years at the annual Firehouse Sale as a Master Gardener, dispensing advice on garden topics. For the last few years he has also helped organize the Garden of Weedin folks, as well as a small group of woodcutters who help each other get in their winter supply of firewood.

Rob emphasizes that "Community service has always been an important part of my life. Serving with Lyle's and High Prairie's volunteer firemen and women has been an especially great experience, and one I will miss." Those of us who have worked alongside Rob all these years will miss his presence and guidance at drills and on the scene of emergencies.





## AMANDA'S HINTS & TIPS

Amanda Richards

### Make Your Own Liquid Laundry Detergent

I've been making my own laundry detergent for about 8 years. I use this in my front loader machine without any problems. It works very well on baby clothes all the way up to our muddy farm clothes. One batch lasts our family of five about 10 months and costs about \$2.41. All ingredients can be found at Walmart or Sawyer's True Value. (Recipe adapted from The Duggar Family.)

1 bar soap, grated. (I use Fels Naptha, but Zote or even Ivory will work well.)

1/2 cup Borax

1 cup Arm & Hammer Washing Soda (NOT baking soda)

1 5-gallon bucket with lid (gamma lid is my preference).

Essential oil (optional)

Grate the bar soap, put it into a saucepan and cover well with water. Simmer and stir occasionally until completely dissolved. To the 5-gallon bucket, add Borax and Washing Soda. Fill about halfway with hot water, stirring to dissolve. Add bar soap solution to the bucket. Stir and fill to about an inch from the top with hot water. Cover and let sit overnight. As it's cooling, I give it a stir now and then.

Optional: Add essential oil once cool. You can add 20-30 drops per 5-gallon bucket. Lavender, Rosemary, and tea tree oil are nice additions.

This will gel up, so keep a large paint stirrer handy and, before using, give it a quick stir or two.

For front loading machines, use 5/8 cup per load. Top loaders, use 1/4 cup per load. Note: you will not see suds with this recipe.

### White Vinegar Instead of Fabric Softener

Get rid of your expensive fabric softener; simply use white distilled vinegar instead! Vinegar will not leave a smell and leaves our clothing super soft, even when hung outside on the line! Use as you would fabric softener, about 1/4 cup per load. We buy in gallon jugs from Cash & Carry, each jug lasts at least 3 months.

## PARTY DROP-INS HAVE A LOT OF GALL

Gwen Berry

Everyone knows that when you eat outside you're likely to end up sharing your meal with any number of wild critters that drop in unexpectedly to crash the party. Some are more than annoying – like mosquitoes, who try to make you the picnic, and yellowjackets, who threaten bodily harm if you don't let them carry off morsels of barbecued chicken. In the creepy-crawly category are ants and spiders, who are masters at unnerving the susceptible. And at the far end of the spectrum are the silent types who drop in, barely noticed, apparently just for the atmosphere.

This last was the case at the recent 50th Anniversary party for Ben and Barb Parrish. It was a wonderful "do" put on by their daughter-in-law, Karla, with help from family and friends. Elegant tables were set up under canopies and among the trees, clad in white cloths, deep purple runners, colorful plates and napkins, and fresh flowers. Live music set the mood, and a happy crowd of well-wishers enjoyed a perfect summer afternoon. Toward evening, a dinner buffet sent everyone to the tables to eat.

It was then that the presence of quiet interlopers was detected.

A diner with a sharp eye let her gaze stray from her rapidly emptying plate. There on the dark ground of the purple runner were what looked like little round seeds, in size halfway between millet and mustard seed. She elbowed the diner next to her and pointed first at the little seeds, then at the oak branches above – they could only have come from up there. Curious, she reached to pick one up, and HOLY TOLEDO it jumped a half-inch to the side! She looked again and saw that the little "seeds" were jerking and jumping all over the purple cloth. What in the world?!?

Notice of the little invaders went around the table, everyone trying to guess what it was they were looking at. "They remind me of Mexican jumping beans," someone accurately pointed out. "Maybe they're hatching," suggested someone else. But the mystery remained.

What did we do before we had the Internet? Later that evening, a Google search (on the highly technical phrase, "little round seeds that jump") brought the answer: the interlopers were Jumping Oak Galls.

Right . . . Sounds like the name of an indie rock band, but it describes them exactly. In early spring, tiny Jumping Oak Gall Wasps deposit their eggs on the surfaces of oak leaves. The oak responds by creating a tiny spherical casing, called a "gall," to isolate each irritating egg. After the eggs hatch, in early summer, movement of the larvae inside breaks the galls free from the leaves and they fall to the ground. They jerk and jump to move their galls into cracks and crevices or beneath leaf litter to overwinter. In years of high infestation, thousands of the tiny galls fall from the tree and begin jumping around en masse, making a sound like the pitter-patter of falling rain. (That would be so not cool on the dinner table at a party!) In spring, the cycle starts all over again when mature Jumping Gall Wasps emerge to lay their eggs on leaf buds.

FYI, a healthy oak tree can usually withstand Jumping Oak Gall infestations, although a heavy infestation can cause partial defoliation. The best method of control is to break the cycle by keeping the area under the oak trees clean of weeds, leaf litter, twigs, and other hiding places where the larvae might overwinter.

Want to see and hear the jumping oak galls doing their thing en masse? Watch this on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXT0QTZ\\_tY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iXT0QTZ_tY)

## NW HOMESTEADING FAIR COMING SOON

Amanda Richards

The 4th annual NW Homesteading Fair will be on September 19th at the Lyle Green-space. As in years past, this year's fair will have free workshops and entertainment, and vendors offering homesteading related items. We always need volunteers to help us get the fair ready and on the day of the fair. If you have a class you'd like to teach, your vending area is free! Please contact Amanda Richards at 509.281.1268 if you'd like to volunteer, teach, or vend.

## THANKS FOR DONATING TO THE HPCC 2015 SILENT AUCTION

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