

## SAVE THESE DATES

**Community Council Meetings.** No meetings are planned until it is safe to gather. Contact HPCC: PO Box 592, Lyle, WA 98635 or email [highprairiebarb@gmail.com](mailto:highprairiebarb@gmail.com)

**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. P.O. Box 853, Lyle, WA 98635 or email [kcpd14@gmail.com](mailto:kcpd14@gmail.com)

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 [highprairiebarb@gmail.com](mailto:highprairiebarb@gmail.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/](https://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!)

## BE READY FOR THE NEXT EVACUATION ORDER

Debbie McDonald

Once again Klickitat County is under a red flag warning (low humidity, high winds). Everyone in the fire community knows this is a very dangerous situation and reports of fire departments responding are coming from our neighboring districts. Wildfire has become a fact of everyday life.

When a family hasn't planned ahead, an evacuation call or knock on the door by a 1st responder can be a scary situation. Preparing ahead of time, thinking through what a family should do when ordered to evacuate, and gathering important supplies ahead of time can greatly ease the fear that comes with the realization that fire is headed your way. This is an article to get you started with your plan.

First you should **know** what the **three evacuation levels** mean. Think of Ready, Set, Go.

- Level one is **be ready**. For example, a wildfire may be burning in a nearby area. You may or may not need to evacuate but have your plan and a bag ready to leave if ordered to do so.

- Level two is **be alert, get set to leave**. Pack your car. Put your pets in carriers and move your livestock. (Do you have a plan for livestock?) This may be the only warning you receive and you may want to leave for safer ground at level two, especially if your family has special circumstances.

- Level three is **GO, GO, GO** - act early and do not wait, as it is time to leave.

What can you do ahead of time? Plan, prioritize and make lists. If you have two minutes, what are absolutely most important items for you to take with you? Write it down. What will you take with you if you have two hours? Write it down. What will you take with you if you have two days to prepare? Write it down. The answers will depend on your individual situation. Use your lists to take preparation action.

You can pack a bag ahead of time that you can grab in the first two minutes. Maybe the bag is a backpack or maybe it's a duffel on wheels that a Senior or younger child can pull rather than carry. Some folks put supplies in a plastic tub with a lid. Bottled water is essential. Seasonal clothing and protection from the weather is essential. Don't forget about pet supplies. How about a basic 1st aid kit? These things don't have to be expensive or take up a lot of room but they do need to be thought out depending on your situation and kept together.

Maybe each family member has their own bag that contains personal items such as a change of seasonal clothes, a blanket (mylar emergency blankets are handy), a few favorite foods, bottled water, prescriptions and other medical essentials like hearing aid batteries and a spare pair of glasses, a flashlight, sturdy pair of shoes (no flipflops), or emergency cell phone charger. Small children will want to take a few different items than teens or the elderly. Babies and pets have their own special needs. Think about the items for each person who will likely evacuate from your home and make a bag. Will your supplies be enough for a few hours or a few days? If there is anything essential stored in another place, write it down and put a reminder with your bag. In a time of emergency, don't rely on your mental list to remember those important items.

If you had two hours (or two days), what would you want to take with you? Walk through each room of your home and write down what you consider irreplaceable. Prioritize the list. Will these things fit in your car? Are there other ways than packing that you could preserve them? For example, you could scan photos ahead of time to a USB drive rather than try to pack pictures up during the emergency. The USB drive could go in your bag or could be sent to an out of town friend or relative. Keep your written list with your bag so that the decisions have been made ahead of time and, if you have the time, you'll know exactly what is a priority to take with you.

One of the most important things you can do ahead of time is gather your important documents and photocopy them or scan them into an electronic file. Keep the copies together and put them with your bag to grab in that first two minutes. If your home is destroyed or you need to prove your identity, you'll have copies at hand. (Evacuees often need to prove their

## THE HIGH PRAIRIAN

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*The first week of August hangs at  
 the very top of summer, the top of the  
 live-long year, like the highest seat of  
 a Ferris wheel when it pauses in its  
 turning. The weeks that come before are  
 only a climb from balmy spring, and  
 those that follow a drop to the chill of  
 autumn, but the first week of August  
 is motionless, and hot. It is curiously  
 silent, too, with blank white dawns and  
 glaring noons, and sunsets smeared  
 with too much color.*

—Natalie Babbitt, Tuck Everlasting

### Be Ready, from p. 1

address in order to return to their neighborhood.) The list of documents could be extensive but if you start before you need to evacuate, you'll have peace of mind.

Remember the sad aftermath tales of those folks who couldn't provide overwhelmed insurance companies with policy numbers to file a claim, or those who didn't know how to contact their mortgage companies? Include (and update as needed) copies of drivers licenses, birth certificates, passports, titles to vehicles, auto-home-medical insurance cards, and a list of important phone numbers.

Speaking of phone numbers, develop a communication plan for your family in case you leave as a family or in case some of your family members are in other places. Sometimes an out of state contact is easier to connect with than an in-state phone number. Agree ahead of time on who will be your family's point of contact. Texting might also be more reliable than trying to make voice contact. A suggestion is to practice texting IMOK (I am OK) to that point of contact phone number so they know you are safe. Whatever your plan, write it down. Write down the phone numbers in your contact list and put the list with your bag. Talk about what to do if you cannot communicate.

Engage your family members in these preparations so they will know the plan. If your teen is at home with a younger sibling and they receive the evacuation notice, they need to know where the bags are stored and how to react according to the evacuation level. If a Senior lives alone, they need to know the plan. Just as you change out your smoke alarm batteries each Fall and Spring, check your bags to make sure items are still relevant. Does clothing still fit? Have your medications changed? If you packed food, check the expiration dates. Is there plenty of water for each person?

This article is not all inclusive or for all natural emergencies; it is a starting point for those wondering what they can do BEFORE they receive that automated call telling them to be ready, get set or GO. Make these preparations happen one step at a time. If you get overwhelmed, you probably won't do anything but, if you do plan and act on your plan, you won't need to panic or make last minute decisions.

Give yourself and your family the gift of peace of mind. You can take steps now to keep you and your family safe. By definition, once a disaster hits, it is too late to make preparations.

## PROVIDING GOOD FOOD FOR NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Chris Sokol

The Lyle Good Food Pantry serves the food insecure in the High Prairie area as well as Lyle, Murdock and Dallesport. Food distribution began as a small grassroots operation, which Julie Lawson headed up early in the pandemic, operating out of the high school cafeteria. Donations of food came in from all over the community and were sorted and boxed according to family size. Volunteers delivered boxes directly to families and brought boxes to the school bus stops.

The Pantry was able to secure a permanent spot at the Lyle Community Center thanks to the Washington Gorge Action Program (WAGAP). We became a satellite of this well-established Gorge program one year ago, joining food pantries in Stevenson, Bingen Klickitat, and Goldendale.

WAGAP not only helps with food, but offers help with housing, utilities and domestic violence. Low income individuals and families are eligible for monthly food boxes which include fresh produce, canned foods, bread, frozen protein, and much more. The boxes are distributed as a drive-through (or walk-through) and are customized for the size of the family.

Donations are appreciated from overflowing gardens, orchards or pantries. All donations go directly out to the community. Checks can be made out to WAGAP with Lyle in the memo line.

We are always looking for volunteers to help during our distribution days on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The current summer hours are 10am-1pm and 4-6pm. If you have any questions, call 509-281-0884.

## GOAT YOGA

Lori Sweeney

"You want me to do what?!"

This is a familiar refrain for my husband. I admit I continually try to coax him out of his self-imposed ordinary-ness. Winter zip-lining in 7-degree weather. Couples yoga. Getting lucky at Lucky Lake.

But he was not budging on this one. He barely acquiesced to couples' yoga when I called it "stretching class," and he was not about to add goats to the formula. So I got my best woo-woo girlfriend and drove to Monmouth for one of the most unique experiences on my list yet: goat yoga.

Turns out goat yoga is pivotal for a lot of folks, including the phenomenon's founder, Lainey Morse. She was deep in the double D's—depression and divorce—when her yoga instructor suggested she combine her beloved goats with the refreshment of yoga. Outside. Exercise. Communing with animals. If it works with horses and dogs, why not goats?

Despite predictions that goat yoga would go the way of pet rocks, or better yet, beer yoga and naked yoga (!), it keeps trending up. While Morse laments the fad factor, she touts that a "variety of folks are finding out just how special these animals are." From experienced yogis to the sick and downtrodden, exercising with goats turns out to be a calming experience, not a circus act.

I myself was slightly amused the entire time. From the plain explanation of what to do if the goat pooped on your mat to maneuvering around a goat in downward dog to the sheer absurdity of the concept, I couldn't help cracking a smile—until one of them stepped on my foot with those blasted unyielding hooves. Shrieking out didn't seem appropriate, so I sucked it up for the sake of my fellow yogis, the crisp autumn air and, well, the goats. I didn't want to put them off and end up with no goat on my mat.



Willamette Valley. She figured she'd "go big or go home." She got a vendor to make goat yoga pants. She recruited vet students from OSU to corral the goats. It became a full-time gig. Her cherished daily meditations with the goats, which she had termed "goat happy hour," became a vocation, a path to a new life, a book, even a reality show (gulp, or should I say bleat?).

Makes you think differently about that ordinary daily walk with your dog doesn't it?

Editor's Note: Lori Sweeney lives part-time in South High Prairie and really does do yoga regularly, but not with goats (or any other animal for that matter!). To do some goat yoga, check out <https://goatyoga.net/>.

The naysayers about goat yoga, after all, are the ones who don't do it. I enjoyed sweetly communing with the critters, calling them by name over a glass of wine afterward. It made me happy. In these stressful times, that's something.

For Morse, it really was something. She quickly was all in. That meant buying a van emblazoned with the Goat Yoga emblem, filling it daily with 8 goats and hay (no seats needed) and delivering them to local partners all along the

## RUSTIC TOMATO PIE

<https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/rustic-tomato-pie/>



TOTAL TIME: Prep: 15 min. Bake 30 min. + standing

YIELD: 8 servings.

Perk up your plate with this humble tomato pie. We like to use fresh-from-the-garden tomatoes and herbs, but store-bought produce will work in a pinch.

### Ingredients

Dough for single-crust pie  
1-3/4 pounds mixed tomatoes, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch slices  
1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions  
1/2 cup mayonnaise  
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
2 tablespoons minced fresh basil  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
2 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled  
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to a 1/8-in.-thick circle; transfer to a 9-in. pie plate. Trim crust to 1/2 in. beyond rim of plate.

2. Place half of the tomatoes and half of the onions in crust. Combine mayonnaise, cheddar cheese, basil, salt and pepper; spread over tomatoes. Top with remaining onions and tomatoes. Fold crust edge over filling, pleating as you go and leaving an 8-in. opening in the center. Sprinkle with bacon and Parmesan cheese. Bake on a lower oven rack until crust is golden and filling is bubbly, 30-35 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. If desired, sprinkle with additional basil.

*A vacation is having nothing to do and all day to do it in.*

— Robert Orben



## MUSIC SUGGESTIONS TO SAMPLE AND ENJOY

John Parr

Let's revisit the audio world again (see 4-part series in 2014 HP issues on [www.highprairie.us](http://www.highprairie.us)) and connect up with those often forgotten street musicians. They abound in this country and are under-appreciated for the most part. With the advent of the internet they can be found all over the world, knocking themselves out for your approval.

We managed to get James Clem to visit High Prairie and celebrate birthday parties at Bill Stallings and Diane Cazalet's home and also at Ben and Barb Parrish's home. We first met James Clem in a tiny little bar way out in Portland's St. Johns area on Lombard, just knocking himself out for a few people. He is definitely a hard working street musician and available for any High Prairie occasion. His email is [jclem2@msn.com](mailto:jclem2@msn.com).

Not wanting to be overly presumptuous with your taste in music; it is our wish to share some unusual talent that you might enjoy. Some of this music is one of a kind and can be difficult to dig out of the internet, so we've done it for you!

Czech (pun) some of this music out. Kick back in your arm chair and have a listen.

1. Tamer Zeynioglu – Czech musician, very unusual guitars and playing

- A. Bridle on the Wall
- B. Deniz Ve Mehtap
- C. Cemberimde Gul Oya
- D. Oyle Sarmos Olsamki

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLFRLXV2DqvlWnnfjZtU-4RyldoRfxNL2eD>

2. Ariel Villazon – absolutely staggering finger play on a charango (South American instrument)

- A. Czardas De Monti/En Charango 2

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-eQ-cUa\\_2xQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-eQ-cUa_2xQ) (especially from 1:42 on)

- 3. Meredith Axelrod

- A. Georgia Crawl

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQqaNKQ87c4>



Meredith Axelrod



Charango

4. Pharis and Jason Romero – both Canadians living on Horsefly Lake, BC

- A. Waiting on the Evening Mail

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5txEMacMAiw>



Pharis and Jason Romero

5. Dedepick – an East Coast Canadian

- A. Flat Top Chimes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBMtJ3YlOmE>

6. J.J. Cale

- A. City Girls

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nFbPkfL3lY>

B. Crazy Momma

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4GgRzLYVis>

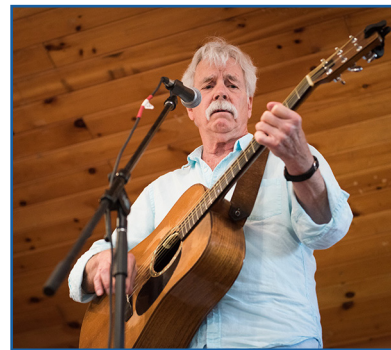
7. Flip Wilson & Roy Clark – funny little skit for you to laugh at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWHKFNoSAZ0>

8. Tom Rush – written by Portland musician Geoff Muldar

- A. Moles Moan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdQ6cgxoT8I>



Tom Rush

9. Mean Mary – fantastic banjo playing

- A. The Sparrow and the Hawk

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcszGP80QYY>

10. Jody Stetcher & Kate Brislan – proteges of Utah Phillips

- A. Miner's Lullaby

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux7k40mzxTE>

- B. Orphan Train

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKV2CpGZ5w>

C. Hood River Roll On – now this one is close to home

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBmnVnuSswc>

11. Here is a nice duet by Utah Phillips & Priscilla Herdman

- A. I Remember Loving You

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgqt38CtqEo>

Don't be bashful, folks – go for it!



## Fire Lines

Tim Darland, Fire Chief

Needless to say, things have been very busy for the fire department over the last month. In addition to preparing for the open houses scheduled for Saturday, July 10th, High Prairie first responders also worked two major fires in Lyle (Fire District #4) over the last 2 weeks. I will briefly discuss both fires and what roles HP fire department had on each fire. Just a reminder that High Prairie and Lyle fire districts have an automatic aid agreement and both departments get paged simultaneously to any emergency.

The July 4th Fire in Lyle began with a firework launched from a vehicle. One individual was charged with the crime. The cost of the fire suppression services was estimated between \$75,000 to \$100,000. No structures were lost, which most of us professional firefighters consider extremely lucky! Timing was absolutely perfect in all aspects of the fire – from calling mutual aid from several neighboring fire districts as the Lyle Fire Chief ran out his door; to first units on-scene with a good size-up of the fire; air resources from the DNR; arrival of mutual aid resources (local, state and federal) attacking the fire; and HP (Command 14 and Engine 1411) arriving just in time to assist Lyle brush truck 410 with the spot fire that ignited the grass field in town above the Lyle Activity Center.

Engine 1411 personnel (4 on-board) quickly pulled two hose lines, one to work the oncoming fire and the other to provide for structure protection at the Lyle Museum. As Command 14, I was staged at the intersection of Spokane and 4th St where I had a good view of the spot fire to report to both on-the-ground resources for direction and to Incident Command. Once the fire was knocked down, HP firefighters laid a hose line on the eastern edge of the fire to continue to knock out the flames and remaining heat. Additional HP resources (Brush 1422, Brush 1412) arrived to begin mopping up the hot spots and ensuring the fire was completely out.

The second fire, officially named the "Lyle Hill Fire," started above the Lyle high school. The fire began Monday evening of July 12. The origin of the fire is under investigation. The cost of fire suppression services is estimated around \$500,000. Official total acres burned tallied at 135 acres. Here is a link to the details of the fire: <https://data.statesmanjournal.com/fires/incident/7662/lyle-hill/>

Local resources did a great job immediately responding to the fire, and Incident Command also did a great job in assigning resources to areas of the fire. Unified Command was set up with local, state and Federal resources. The Sheriff ordered a Level 1 evacuation notice for residences up Centerville Hwy from about milepost 1.5 to 4.2. This order remained in effect for several days. HP personnel were essentially set up for traffic control around the access point to the state land and to provide for and oversee structure protection activities along Centerville Hwy at 146, 201, 207 and 216 and for residents along Henderson Rd. HP units on-scene were Engine 1411, Water Tenders 1415 and 1424, Brush 1422 and Command 14. The fire remained active near the top of the ridge overnight, and the call was made to request state mobilization resources as we exhausted the capacity of local resources to continue to fight the fire. Some were up all night.

A Type 3 Management Team took command of the fire at 10:00

am Tuesday morning. Over the next several days, multiple air assets put water on the fire and one fire retardant drop was conducted at the top of the ridge. DNR resources were patrolling the area for any flare-ups over the next week and will continue to spot check the fire for any activity.

Two major injuries occurred with the fire. One firefighter succumbed to heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation, for which he was LifeFlighted to Portland. We term this an incident within an incident. I am happy to report he is doing well and returned home a few days from the initial start of the fire. The other injury was to a juvenile bald eagle which sustained burns from the fire. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife said they got a call about the eagle from fire crews who found it. They were able to bring a specialist to the area to administer fluids and transport it to the Rowena Wildlife Clinic in Oregon. The eagle is expected to make a full recovery and be released. Some firefighters sustained minor injuries from poison oak.

On Saturday July 10th from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm, in-between the two fires, the High Prairie Community Council held a community picnic as a tribute to both HP and Lyle first responders. In addition, the HP Fire Department provided Open Houses for the community to visit both our fire stations and talk firsthand with the men and women on the fire department. Full disclosure: my plan was to try and attract new recruits for the fire department. We are at a critical low for staffing, with a total of 12 personnel. We need a minimum of 6 first responders assigned to each station to maintain our homeowner's insurance rating. All skill levels are welcome. Great news, we did hand out 3 applications to join and we're looking forward to getting those back. (Hint, hint.) Please consider volunteering and help make a difference!

There are so many folks to thank for the picnic who worked behind the scenes and on the front line cleaning, decorating, cooking, serving, shopping, signage, brownie baking, donation boot touting, cleaning-up including running to the dump with the trash, as well as providing donations. Community members donated an unbelievable amount of \$1,637 dollars to the fire department during the event. The donations will go toward personal protective equipment to keep our men and women safe in the line of duty. The HPCC received \$215.00 dollars in donations for food and supplies. What a great tribute. The firefighters and I are so grateful to our supportive community. Thank you for all you do for us!!

Last but not least, I want to personally thank each of our first responders and their families (they are in this, too) for the dedication they give to us. Truly amazed by you answering the call anytime in the day or night, providing selfless service for the betterment of our neighbors' lives and property.

Volunteers make High Prairie a great community!







FD 14 Open House

## ON CLOSER REFLECTION

Rebecca Sonniksen

March 2020 the pandemic had begun, when a friend suggested we watch the live stream of the Clark County Public Utilities Osprey Watch. We enjoy bird-watching but this was different. This was an up-close look at a bird we knew only from its "M" shaped wings silhouetted against the sky. The Osprey, which according to audubon.org is a very distinct fish-hawk, formerly classified with other hawks but now in a separate family also known as the sea hawk.

It was perfect pandemic entertainment and topic of conversation with our friend as we'd check the wellbeing of "our" birds. How's the nest remodeling going? Or, Did you see that huge stick Dad carried into the nest? We'd share our observations from our special vantage point above the nest. We agreed that Dad was into the large scale pieces, as he pivoted around the nest barely missing Mom. Finally satisfied it didn't matter if it didn't fit, he'd wedge it on top of the woven limbs and fly off, leaving Mom to rearrange it with a touch of moss and lichen.

They had three eggs, and overall it was a surprisingly equal partnership. Mom and Dad took turns sitting on the nest and, after the chicks hatched, alternated watching them. Dad was an impressive fish provider, easily two a day, and Mom served it up. We'd fuss about the last born and smallest chick not getting his fair share, but it seemed to work out. Eventually the fledglings left and all was well.

So, this year when our friend texted in late March, I think they've returned to the nest, we tuned in for season two. Not sure if it was last year's pair. Could it be an offspring? This couple was certainly more laid back and less adept at nest rebuilding. They had three eggs, but only two hatched. The wait between fish seemed longer, but the chicks were thriving and Mom and Dad were busy.

During the week of our 110+ degree temperatures, we got a



*The Last Screen Shot before the chick died of heat exhaustion.*

text from our friend saying, I think they are taking off. The fledglings were leaving the nest. We turned to the webcam to see one chick was gone and we assumed had made the leap. Its sibling, however, was tottering on the edge with his downy wings flapping in the hot wind.

Mom, scanning the sky and calling for her lost one, extended her majestic wing to wrap the remaining chick close to her, protecting him from the brutal heat. Maybe she was comforting him, it's okay. Now isn't a good time to jump out of the nest. Wait with me. That was the last we saw them together. (It's the picture included below.) When we checked

back an hour later the webcam was off and the screen was dark.

The next day an email sent from the Clark Public Utilities, explained, "the resident osprey pair sadly lost their two chicks to the extreme temperatures." They went on to say, "We know that seeing the reality of nature can be upsetting for some so we've turned off the live stream to the public while nature runs its course. ....we are hands-off observers."

So this makes me wonder, how much do I want to see up close? In a rural environment surrounded by "nature," it's hard not to watch and to wonder sometimes how we might be responsible. Sometimes it's easier to see an animal as a "species," part of a flock, a herd, not as an individual creature with attachments.

I think this applies to most of life. The closer we look, the more we care, the harder to dismiss what we might not understand, what might make us sad or uncomfortable.

Did Osprey mom grieve for the loss of her chicks? I don't know. Did she shelter her chick under her feathery embrace until he died? They were right to turn off the video. It's not easy to see the inevitable loss life brings. But, I'm glad I had the chance to witness this winged gesture of beauty and grace.



Tom McMackin

## BE FIREWISE IN THE MIDDLE OF FIRE SEASON

At this late date, the best things you can do to create defensible space for your place is to concentrate on the area from the foundation out to 30'. If you have standing tall grass or weeds to remove, using a string type, electric weed whacker on a small patch of grass at a time after you've run the sprinkler on the spot. Early morning before 10 AM should be fire safe. Repeat the water-and-whack in steps until you've cleared your whole work area. Keep the hose with a spray nozzle charged nearby your work area. A shovel and rake would be good to have close too.

If a fire starts ~ call 911 ~ and get help on the way! <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/firewise>

### !! Added FireWise Bonus !!



Snake on the Plain [not to be confused with Snakes on a Plane, the 2006 movie with Samuel L. Jackson,

TomatoMeter rated 69% on Rotten Tomatoes.com]. The title really relates to our High Prairie wee piece of Heaven...

If you have mice or lizards around your place (and even if you don't) ... You've got snakes! The FireWise zone principles of Foundation to 5' and Out to 30' of short grass and cleared debris around your buildings has the added benefit of making snakes easier to see and our world safer for you. Clear up anything that might obscure your outside faucets, hose storage, garden tools or supplies, etc., so you can see all around them clearly before reaching for them!

Snake Safety: [https://health.ucdavis.edu/welcome/features/2018-2019/07/20180710\\_rattlesnakes.html](https://health.ucdavis.edu/welcome/features/2018-2019/07/20180710_rattlesnakes.html)

Evacuation information:

<https://www.firesafefarin.org/evacuation/guide>

[https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3852749.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3852749.pdf)

If you have any questions or desire Firewise or High Prairie Fire information or have other comments or requests, please feel free to contact me by email at [mcmackint@gmail.com](mailto:mcmackint@gmail.com) or a call to 206-234-4141.

## TIPS FOR DEALING WITH BLOSSOM-END ROT

<https://bonnieplants.com/gardening/conquer-blossom-end-rot/>

When tomatoes, peppers, melons, and eggplant develop a sunken, rotten spot on the end of the fruit, the cause came long before you found the problem. It's called blossom end rot, and here is why it happens.



Vegetables need calcium for healthy development. When tomatoes, peppers, melons, and eggplant can't get enough from the soil, the tissues on the blossom end of the fruit break down. The calcium shortage may be because the soil lacks calcium, or calcium is present but is tied up in the soil chemistry because the pH is too low. Also, drought stress or moisture fluctuations can reduce its uptake into the plant. Another reason is that too much fertilizer causes the plant to grow so fast that the calcium can't move into the plant quickly enough.

Start by testing the soil. Although most vegetables do well with a soil pH of 6.2 to 6.8, for those with blossom-end the pH should be 6.5 to 6.8 to free more calcium in the soil chemistry. Test results will indicate the amount of lime to add. Even better, lime also contains calcium. Work the lime into the top 12 inches of soil. Use a lime labeled "fast-acting," which is better than ground limestone unless you have weeks to wait for the lime to react in the soil. If the pH is already correct, the soil test will recommend a different calcium source, such as gypsum. Also, add crumbled egg shells to your compost or bury them in your garden over time to help maintain the calcium levels.

Fertilize wisely. Use a fertilizer at planting time that contains calcium, such as Miracle-Gro® Shake 'n Feed® Tomato, Fruit & Vegetable Plant Food. Whichever fertilizer you choose, be sure to follow the directions on the label so you'll know how much to apply, as it's important not to over-fertilize. Adding too much nitrogen during early fruiting, especially if the nitrogen is made from ammonia, ties up calcium in the soil chemistry.

Avoid moisture stress. Use mulch to keep the soil evenly moist. Vegetables need about 1 to 1 1/2 inches of water a week while fruiting. The best way to water tomatoes planted in the ground is with a soaker hose. In hot climates it is especially tricky to keep big tomato plants in pots watered well during the summer. Make sure to water them daily or set them up on a drip system with a timer.

As a stop-gap measure, spray tomato plants with a calcium solution made for blossom-end rot. Follow label directions. Apply two to three times a week, beginning when the first blooms appear. This is not a long-term fix, but it may salvage your crop until you can take the steps mentioned above. The spray seems to work better on tomatoes than other vegetables.

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## AT NOON

by Reginald Gibbons

The thick-walled room's cave-darkness,  
cool in summer, soothes  
by saying, This is the truth, not the taut  
cicada-strummed daylight.  
Rest here, out of the flame—the thick air's  
stirred by the fan's four  
slow-moving spoons; under the house the stone  
has its feet in deep water.  
Outside, even the sun god, dressed in this life  
as a lizard, abruptly rises  
on stiff legs and descends blasé toward the shadows.

