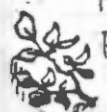


THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOL V NO 2 FEBRUARY 1987

"Redbirds are red; Bluebirds are blue;
But Starlings are everything; how about you?"
--anon



DO IT YR-SELF; PICK A HEADLINE

IT'S BEEN SO LONG BETWEEN ISSUES, JUST PASTE THE ONE ON TOP THAT SUITS.

HOSPITAL SURVIVES

AND SO DOES RAD, BUT HE SURE GAVE US ALL THE FANTODS: CLOTS!
See p. 2

DEMI COPS NAT'L QUILT INVITE

ALMOST 1,000 ENTRIES BUT ONLY 90 WILL HANG IN ^{historic} OHIO ^{dairy} BARN
See p. 5

PETER/PAMELA HOST NUPTIAL GALA

SCHMIDT CLAN ATTENDS WEDDING OUT EAST EN MASSE
(And the Press wasn't invited; what do you think of THAT?) See p. 5

GO WEST, YOUNG WOMAN, GO WEST

MEGAN OFF TO SEEK HER FORTUNE SANTA CRUZ WAY
See p. 4

TOM GIVES THERESE XMAS RING

NO, NOT ON THE PHONE, YOU DUMMIES, ON THE FINGER!
See p. 5

COUSINS CORNER POSSUM

AND A SNARLING BEASTY IT WAS, BUT NOT AS NOISY AS THE WEASLE WAS
See p. 2

DR DOUGAN OFF TO INDUSTRY

See p. 5

SURVIVES SCREW-OP

Beloit RAD's hip replacement went well, but it was a "new improved" (hah) operation. Instead of gluing in the ^{new} hip socket, the Dr. screwed it in; the bone grows into the porous socket, & it never slips, as glued ones often do. However, the recipient, instead of being able to Irish jig a week after surgery, must treat the socket as a broken bone, & keep weight off it totally for 6 weeks. In Grandpa's case, it was longer, & he's still only allowed 50-60 lbs on it, till at least Feb 11. Perhaps this inactivity-he's been on a walker-helped precipitate blood clots: he developed a sausage leg (the non-op one!) and was back in the hosp. for 12 more days, on blood thinner, drip. Was in some danger, the 1st 3 days. By the time he left, he had his corridor whipped into shape. Now he's home on a walker, feels he's not improving v. fast, & is impatient to walk.

REPORTS BIG TOE

Beloit RAD, after not saying anything about his swelling leg for several days, says he's now learned his lesson about disturbing doctors. "From now on," he declares, "I report even an ache in my big toe. If I hiccup, I tell people now."

OPEN SEASON ON RAD

Now that Ron Dougan is getting well, ENNL is giving you the opportunity to tell all those things about him that have irritated you over the years. Karl Schmidt, son-in-law, asks, "Are you going to run a special extra supplement?" JDJ can report that his recent disability, causing him first to use a cane & then a crutch, extended his reach considerably, so that he could nail you in the chest when he wanted your attention, or catch you around the ankle, (Unexpectedly, like a frog's tongue.) Don King, classics prof & former corn boss, recalls how Ron would start off in the car when the passenger was only half-way in, causing the passenger to scramble in panic. Granddaughter Stephanie McPhillips says "When Grandpa was up, every body was up!" to which all other grandchildren will say AMEN. O.K. -- What's yours??

So- do you think there will ever be a report on the Utah raft trip? Just wait till next issue!

THIS CARTOON IS DEDICATED TO ENNL READER JO SCHMIDT, and CHARLIE



".. AND THEN THE TWO TERRIBLE FLEAS PRODUCED 228 TRILLION DESCENDANTS IN LESS THAN NINE MONTHS..."

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THAVES 11-29



"It's Bob, all right ... but look at those vacuous eyes, that stupid grin on his face — he's been domesticated, I tell you."

STUDIES CANINE PATIENCE QUOTIENT

Beloit. Scientist Megan Jackson has timed the intervals Ms. Mary Sue Muffet waits before scratching again — noisily — on the screen door at Chez Nous in order to be let in. Muffie's P.Q. is 15 seconds. MTJ plans to test whether the weather is a factor in the P.Q. and is waiting now for sub-zero temperatures and a nasty blizzard. Megan is happy to accept data from other scientists, provided it is gathered in a careful and unbiased way.

POSSUM SURVIVES, CONSUMES DOG FOOD

Beloit She (or he, I couldn't get close) was in a window well at Chez Nous, and Muffie & Coeur were going crazy when Megan investigated. She put the dogs in the house, put a ladder (of sorts) in the well, and put outside the dogs, spurned supper. The possum licked the platter clean as a whistle. Speaking of whistles — Did ENNL report, several years ago, that JT was visiting Chez Nous & woke up to a rhythmic screech (VERY loud) which she interpreted as some machinery at the corn dryer badly in need of oiling? But after it — & the mad barking — permeated her groggy mind, she got up to investigate and found a weaste in a window well, making ear-piercing, rhythmic screams at the dogs. Again, a plank allowed the creature to get out and away. Incidentally, all Dougan window wells have planks in them, or once did. The possum was in a shallow, plankless well. That one now is equipped.

NEWS BRIEFS

Madison, WI Megan T Jackson twice went up to visit Chad & Tina Dell, and enjoyed both reunions.

Hinesburg, VT. John Monahan, the farmer who looked 100 when we bought the camp near his farm in 1966, has died. Probably in his 80s. His sister Mary, of the winter coat & galoshes all summer, who also looked 100 in 1966, died a year or two ago, I think in her late 70's.

Philadelphia Annie Galarie, 3, went downtown on the bus to see Santa Claus, and vomited both ways. When asked about her visit to good St. Nick, Annie reports, "It is no fun to be sick on the bus."

Beloit Re (p.2) "when Grandpa's up, everybody's up, the corollary is, when Grandma's down, everybody's down." Grandma wants us all to go to bed when she does, so she won't miss anything!

Minneapolis Damaris J. is supporting 3 free market educational systems: She's taking "Surface Design on Fabric" at the U. of Minn; a private class, "Drawing from the Inside Out," and Spanish thru Mlps. Adult Ed. She's also playing violin at the Unitarian Society, & dancing.

Chicago Elle Jackson's had 3 raises at her new job, which brings her up to a living wage. Her new 1 room apartment is at 549 W. Aldine, #303, Chicago IL 60657, 312-477-2394.

Reno HO-HUM DEPT. Gilliam P. Jackson again got all A's, Fall Semester. (Exc. for that one B in

Chem lab but we don't count that.)



A chance to sleep at last



MEGAN TAKES NIGHT SHIFT WITH GRAM

Beloit One of the recent joys to Gram, Grandpa, & JJ on sabbatical, was that Megan generously gave 6 weeks to help out at Chez Naus. She took the night shift with Gram, getting up with her for bathroom, medicines, etc. She slept on a couch by Grandma's bed; the house is kept v. warm, hence no covers on above sleeper. Megan's letters sometime take the form of a series of pix which describe her life & thought; ENNL reproduces some in this issue. JJ can't begin to describe the fun of having Megan there, the Loderunner contests on the computer, M's computer art (see next ENNL), M & JJ trying to sneak past Grandpa's dining room bed with our late night ice cream treats, etc. Thank you, Megan, from the entire family. M. left Jan 15, & is heading West, visiting Kin on the way: All sisters: Ellie in Chicago, train to Minneapolis to Demi, train to Reno to Gillian's & niece Cressida, now 4 1/2, shall visit Unca Craig & Aunt Barbara & cousins Cindy, Bart, Trevor, David & Dana, David, who else? in Portland, then to SF to see Alison Waud Sara Dell, and thence to Santa Cruz to find a place to settle down for a while. The idea is to team up w/ Barb Lewis & Jess Barker in a kind of "Creative Ideas Inc." Jess has a gyno, Barb & Megan will do greeting cards, M. will art freelance, what else? It's an exciting time of transition, & we commend M. to our Western subscribers. She plans to see Annabelle Dirks and Melanie Hamblin in Santa Cruz. (Jeff Barker's fine too, M!)



(not in equal perspective) (but almost)

MYSTERY: HOW DID THE MOUSE TURDS GET IN THE HOSPITAL BED? NURSES BLAME EARLIER SHIFTS.

Beloit You need to know that the office over the milkhouse at the farm has been abandoned (intact) for years, & that the file cases, closets, cupboards, have been slept & bred & defecated in by raccoons, possums, etc, not only vermin. And you need to know that JJ has been going thru all those musty ledgers, files, etc. for her book. And you need to know that JJ needed RA's information, opinions & stories on the contents of hundreds of file folders, & didn't allow Grandpa much rest in the hospital but brought him down bulging grocery sacks to sift thru, when not on the bed pan, etc, WHICH HE DID! And you need to know that she did shake them out, & dust them off, sort of. So now, my dear listeners, you have all the facts you need to solve the mystery & let the nurses off the hook.

QUILTS...

Athens, Ohio That's where you'll see Damaris Jackson's quilt, this June 5-July 5 (approx.), with 90 others chosen from the 1000 entries for "Quilt National '87," an international contemporary quilt show held every other year. It's sponsored by the Ohio Arts Council and 3 other organizations, & was a juried show--lotsa competition, with famous quilters turned down. Demi's quilt is called "Lines from the Park," has a serene center (sand box?) surrounded by crazy quilts and big border, predominantly green squares--odd shapes, actually--with drawn-with-stitches scenes, some abstract, some pretty pitches--one with a bunch of fang-bared dogs¹. It's the sort you pore over & see more & more. There'll be a catalogue book of the show, so Demi will be published! She's priced her quilt at \$1300, which is too low, of course.

MEANWHILE IN BOSTON...

Boston Right now, Jan 30-Feb 22, Demi has a quilt in a show at the Boston U. Art Gallery, "Contemporary Quilts," she's one of 36 artists exhibiting. Go see!

JO AND KARL

Florida This is all the space we're going to give them, fishing & lazing down there in the Keys for 6 (six!) long weeks!



"showering" in the "shower"

Megan's above sketch is a commentary on the Chez Nous shower: of all the little holes in the nozzle, water comes out of about three.

¹Stitched on a day Demi felt v. growly.

PAM, PETER-->TOM

Somewhere in Maryland We hear the wedding was a grand one, and every one had a super time, and that them as had said they wouldn't come, came. What we heard most about, however (sorry, Peter & Pam!) was the most spectacular DANCE, at the party afterwards, performed spontaneously by Tom Schmidt and a guest who was a dancer. Apparently all other activity ceased when people realized they were seeing something incredible, & they all watched spellbound (Why didn't someone grab a video camera?) The pair were perfectly matched, like those English skaters who won the Olympics, tho they'd never met till Tom said, "Shall we?" Tom said afterwards, "I have only once before danced with anyone who responded so instantly to my every thought--anticipated my thought--and that was Grandma, at Katie's wedding." (And we do have a photo, a still, alas, of that dance!) Hey, Pam--welcome to the family!

TOM AND THERESE

Milwaukee And a welcome to you, too, Therese! I'll print your last name in the next ENNL; I'm sure I knew it, but it ain't up there now, and it'd take l.o. distance calls to find out: to Florida or Green Bay, even Milwaukee! Anyway, we're delighted with the engagement, and why doesn't some newspaper person send us a little big sketch? That was a delightful evening w/ you two at Chez Nous, w/ Gram & me when Gram was in the hospital, by the way. Come again!

BARBARA HAS NO BROKEN ANKLE THIS WINTER

Beavercreek, OR. Non-news is good news. Uncle Craig's been tending to those pesky moles. (Yes, those velvet pelted, waffle nosed, mitten pawed little holes-in-lawns makers are being gassed.) Barb & Craig were at Chez Nous this last fall for an extended visit; they (& Jackie) took in the Beloit College cluster reunions (how convenient; '50, '51 and '52!) went out to dinner, saw a lot of Dean & Lois Martell, wrestled cow drinking cups out of the Round Barn, spent scintillating time with those great conversationalists and raconteurs, RAD & VWB, & told a few good ones them selves.

DOESN'T LEARN NEW COMPUTER USE ON SABBAT.

Beloit And then there's some non-news that's not so good. The above means you readers (IF you read) must keep on enduring those hand-lettered messy issues.



Mom's Baby picture

DR. D and INDUSTRY

Portland, OR It rhymes, the headline, did you notice? (Don't want you to miss the subtler points about your fav. news paper.) Well, the story we have is that recently Uncle Craig has taken over a new department at Kaiser-Permanente hospital: Industrial Medicine. He'll still be Frauma part-time, but now will be dealing (correct me, Dr.) with buzz saw cuts, unexplained rashes, poisonings from chemicals, & odd & mysterious maladies of the work place. Craig, when can I send you the samples of insulation from Mole End (Vt. cottage) for asbestos analysis? CONGRATS, CRAIG!

FOR THE BIRDS

Reno Cressida Broten (4) has become the proud owner of two li'l finches, hatchlings of a pair belonging to friends. Their names, natch, are Mary (male) & Prairie (female)

FOR MORE BIRDS

Beloit The Ned Hollister Bird Club is buying prairie, & a bird mobile by Verne Schafer, to go in public libr., to honor our beloved Beloit College ornithologist Carl Welty. They need \$#! Send yours via ENNL, & slip get it to them.

VOYEUR'S PARADISE

Beloit. That's what Pat Dalvit says about Chez Nous--none of the curtains are pulled, when did anyone have to pull a curtain at Chez Nous? And Grandma sits around with nothing on because clothes are too heavy on her frail little body, and Grandpa sits around w/ nothing on because the house is so hot on account of Grandma, and everyone else strips to the buff because they can't stand the heat, either... also, Grandpa can't pull up his trousers yet except with a cane, on account of his operation, so it's easier just not to wear them. Recently Pat, visiting, spent the weekend on the night shift, and the toilet overflowed. It was a mad scene: Pat, grabbing towels, Grandma stumping in at a fast snail's pace on his walker, trying to get at the plunger in the crowded space, Pat stripping off her wet & cumbersome flannel nightie and flinging it away, then mopping on hands & knees w/ rump in air (What a sight!" commented RAD later), water continuing to flow because nobody jiggled the handle, Grandma just out of danger, able to hear the bedlam but not see... The warning accompanying this article was found (kept) by the ENNL ed, years ago, taped to the bathroom mirror at 816 N. Fifth, when she returned home from a late class. It was a prominent notice, is here greatly reduced (by Xerox magic) to fit into ENNL format.

DO NOT FLUSH
THE POT OR YOU MAY
WIND YOURSELF WITH
MOP IN HAND AND
ANKLE WRAPPED IN VET
TOILET PAPER WITH
SHIT BETWEEN TOES
WADING IN SWIRLING
WATER...

Found taped to bathroom mirror
(Megan, 17, did it)

You love?

Then you dream beautiful, new dresses;
You think thoughts you have never thought before;
You live, suddenly, a new life.
Old values are changed -
The old content is gone forever.
Desires are awakened you did not know before.
And you know what pain is.
Humility and sacrifice are ever with you;
Longing and heart-ache clasp your hands.
You have reached another country
From which you would never turn back;
Where exquisite pain and soaring joy
Embrace each other, and enter your heart.
You love!

V.

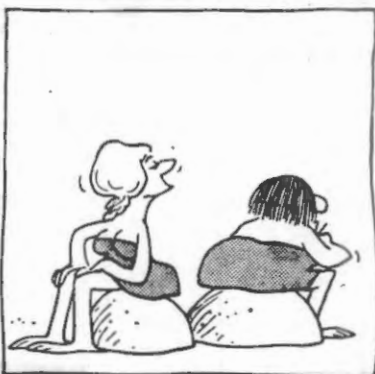
And now for a Complete Change of Pace...

Your Valentine message! JJ's poking & prying around Chez Nous unearthed some of Grandma's poems that aren't in your lovely grey volume of Mirrors by V.W.D. (Have you read that lately?) This was written in her youth, for R.A.D., and I've found more! ☺



I GOT A SCRATCH

SO GO AHEAD!



LANGUAGE IS A STUPID FORM OF COMMUNICATION.



This message was sent from Maine by ENNL readers English professor and birdwatcher, Marieu Stocking.