

The Box City Bulletin

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Your poetry, or any interesting submission will be considered for publication. . . .Send it!!

Always remember, this is your Bulletin. If you disagree with any editorial content, we welcome opposing points of view as well as comments on public issues.

We have opinions, . . .but no agenda and will print all opposing points of view concerning any issue we editorialize.

So let's hear from you!

~

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The Box City web site also has a video of our stores and our complete catalogue, where you can order merchandise on-line.

Visit our web site . . . Your comments will be appreciated.

NAME OUR MASCOT



We have received numerous entries for the "Name Our Mascot" contest.

The Box Fish pictured above is the official Box City mascot. If the name you suggested is selected you will receive a \$50.00 Box City Gift Certificate.

Send your entry before July 30 to:

Box City Name our Mascot contest
P.O. Box 7069
Van Nuys, CA 91409-7069

The winner will be judged on cleverness and originality.

Many Thanks

Every year at this time we ask our readers if they want to continue receiving the Bulletin. We know that many of you are inundated with "junk mail" and much of it winds up in the "round file".

Therefore if you would rather not receive it we will delete you from our mailing list.

Last month we enclosed a little reply postcard for your response.

The response was overwhelming.

The positive comments we received from you our, loyal friends, were so heartwarming that we were deeply touched.

THANK YOU

The Box City Science Page

Bovine Growth Hormones (rBST) & (rBGH)

By Howard Suer

Dairy Growth Hormones (rBST)

Much controversy has arisen over the use of (rBST) recombinant bovine growth hormone and (rBGH) artificial growth hormone in beef cattle and dairy cows, as well as in poultry and pigs.

Before we go further, let's understand that growth hormones are naturally present, not only in cow's milk, but in human mother's milk as well. It is what makes infants grow faster.

Natural **BST** was used as early as 1937 to increase the milk yield in lactating cows. Until the 1980s there was limited use of the compound because the sole source of **BST** was from bovine cadavers. This posed a health risk, which offset the benefits.



Modern Machine Milking

A large chemical company developed a synthetic growth hormone called *recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST)* and in 1994 introduced it under the brand name *Posilac*.

A gene that codes for the sequence of amino acids that make up **BST** is inserted into the DNA of *E. coli* bacterium. The bacteria are then broken up and separated from the rBST,

which is then purified to produce the injectable hormone. *Posilac*, when injected into dairy cows, results in a higher milk yield during an extended lactating period.

In 1993, the product was approved for use in the U.S. by the FDA, and its use began in 1994 in all 50 states.

The use of the recombinant supplement has been controversial. While it is used extensively in the United States, (though not completely without controversy), it is 100% banned in Canada, the European Union, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

The FDA does not require special labels for products produced from cows given rBST, but has charged several dairies with "misbranding" their milk as having no hormones, because all milk contains hormones and cannot be produced without them. Monsanto Chemical sued an independent dairy over its use of a label that pledged to not use *artificial growth hormones*. Since the U.S. FDA approved the use of rBST, Monsanto claimed that Oakhurst Dairy's milk labels were in and of themselves using misleading scare tactics that deserved legal and legislative response.



Woman Shopping For Organic Milk

Beef Growth Hormones (rBGH)

In 2005, 32.5 million cattle were slaughtered to provide beef for U.S. consumers. Scientists believe about two-thirds of American cattle raised for slaughter are injected with rBGH to make them grow faster. Although the USDA and the FDA claim these hormones are safe, there are growing concerns that hormone residues in meat and milk might be harmful to health and the environment.

According to the European Union's Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures Relating to Public Health, the use of six natural and artificial growth hormones in beef production poses a potential risk to human health. These six hormones include three which are naturally occurring—Oestradiol, Progesterone and Testosterone—and three which are synthetic—Zeranol, Trenbolone, and Melengestrol.

The committee also questioned whether hormone residues in the meat of 'growth-enhanced' animals can disrupt *human* hormone balance, causing developmental problems, interfering with the reproductive system, and even leading to the development of breast, prostate, or colon cancer.

Milk from treated cows contains higher levels of IGF-1 (insulin growth factor-1), which has been linked to colon and breast cancer.



The Box City Poetry Corner

Editor's Note: This is one of two poems we publish every year. It's about "Rags," a dog who served with a British Army regiment.

After they were discharged, everyone went their separate ways.
No one kept track of Rags.

This is about one soldier who saw him one last time.

It has a message that I feel must be told.

Howard

They Called Him Rags

by Edmund Vance Cooke

They called him Rags, he was just a cur
But twice on the Western Line,
That little old bunch of faithful fur
Had offered his life for mine.

And all he got was bones and bread
And the leaving of soldiers' grub,
But he'd give his heart for a pat on the head,
A friendly tickle or rub.

And Rags got home with the regiment,
And then, in the breaking away--,
Well, whether they stole him, or whether he went,
I am not prepared to say.

But we mustered out, some to beer and gruel,
And some to sherry and shad,
And I went back to the Sawbones School,
Where I was an undergrad.

One day they took us budding M.D.'s
To one of those institutes
Where they demonstrate every new disease
By means of bisected brutes.

They had one animal tacked and tied
And slit like a full-dressed fish,
With his vitals pumping away inside
As pleasant as one might wish.

I stopped to look like the rest, of course,
And the beast's eyes leveled mine;
His short tail thumped with a feeble force,
And he uttered a tender whine.

It was Rags, yes, Rags! who was martyred there,
Who was quartered and crucified,
And he whined that whine which is doggish prayer
And he licked my hand--and died.

And I was no better in part nor whole
Than the gang I was found among,
And his innocent blood was on the soul
Which he blessed with his dying tongue.

Well! I've seen men go to courageous death
In the air, on sea, on land!
But only a dog would spend his breath
In a kiss for his murderer's hand.
And if there's no heaven for love like that,
For such four-legged fealty — well!
If I have any choice, I tell you flat,
I'll take my chance in hell!



Box City Furry Tales

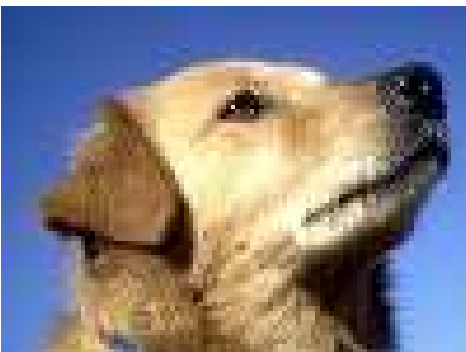
PRINCESS WAS A NUISANCE

By Carol Ann Baum

She was only a mixed-breed scrap of a dog. Her colors were black and tan, but her eyes were what made me take her. They were warm and had gold flecks in them. Other than that, she was nothing unusual, or as my father put it, “a damn nuisance.” I called her Princess.

Dad preferred his hunting dog, a massive hound named Rudy, who followed him everywhere. Rudy had status; Princess was barely tolerated. At mealtimes, she would wait until Rudy ate, then settle for scraps. She slept beside my bed, content that at least one person loved her.

One day Princess started barking like mad near the railroad tracks that ran beside our house. We realized something was wrong when Dad said Rudy had gotten loose. We followed Princess, who led us to Rudy’s lifeless body beside the tracks. His neck was broken.



Dad stumbled back to the house in shock. The task of burying the huge dog fell to me. As I dug, Princess sat next to the body with a perplexed look in her eyes. When I lowered Rudy into the grave, she showed alarm. When I began to cover him with dirt, she became visibly agitated, so much so that I hurriedly unburied Rudy and made certain he was dead.

When I finished, Princess tried to unbury him. I chased her away. She tried again. I held her to me and told her through my tears that her friend was gone. An odd expression came over her features and she walked over to the grave and lay across Rudy’s final resting place.

That night I tried to get her inside, but she wouldn’t budge. I tried to get her to eat, but she ignored the bowl. Next day the same thing. That night a howling rainstorm roared in. She was still there the following morning and kept her vigil throughout the rainy day. I told Dad I was worried, but he said, “She’ll be in when she gets hungry and wet enough.” He clearly wasn’t concerned over what he considered an inferior animal. More important, he was doing his own grieving. Until then he had not been able to even look at his pet’s grave.

The next morning, Princess was still in place. I ran downstairs, determined this time to drag her off,

I stopped when I saw Dad emerge from the parlor carrying his buffalo-robe blanket. No one was ever allowed to touch that blanket. He told me to stay put. I watched from the window as he shook out the blanket above Princess’s soaked form, wrapped her up, and lifted her into his arms like a child. He told us to get towels and warm soapy water. My sister and I wanted to care for her, but he wouldn’t allow it, never looking up as he worked on the bedraggled animal. He said the job was his alone.

He cleaned off the mud and dried her shivering body. Then he took her in his lap.

For a long time he sat there, tears running down his cheeks, the only sound in the room the rain beating on the windows. Finally, he said quietly that he had never known such loyalty from man or beast.

And so for as long as she lived, Princess sat at his feet, slept on his bed, and ate from his plate—an honored member of our family.



Interesting Word Origins

GROGGY

Grog was the nickname sailors gave to British Admiral Edward Vernon because he wore an impressive cloak made of *grogam* (a coarse fabric made of silk mixed with wool or mohair).

In 1740 the admiral issued an unpopular order that sailor's rum should be diluted with water. From then on, the diluted rum was called *grog*. Therefore, when you are *groggy* you are etymologically drunk. (Except for prize fighters who are actually punch-drunk).



FAHRENHEIT

Both Galileo and Sir Isaac Newton had toyed with thermometers and made some progress with the use of water and alcohol.

However, it was a humble manufacturer of meteorological instruments that built the first mercurial thermometer that made it simple to view and record temperature changes.

Early in the 18th century, Gabriel David *Fahrenheit* invented the scale that bears his name and is widely used today.

Fahrenheit was German, but strangely enough, the Germans use Centigrade as a means of measuring temperature, calling it Celsius after its Swedish inventor.



JADE

When the Spanish brought the gem stone from America they named it *piedra de ijada* or "stone of the side," because it was thought that *jade* was the cure for colic, or pain in the side.

Old French adopted the name *l'ejade*, and later *le jade*. The English took only the *jade* part.



Happiness is Isolation

If you like isolation, you would probably love Tristan da Cunha, with the world's most geographically isolated people. Their nearest neighbors are 1,320 miles away on St. Helena. After a volcanic eruption in 1961, the Tristan Islanders were evacuated to Britain. However, most returned two years later, after the danger had passed. They found life in Britain too hectic for them.

The Islands were first sighted in 1506 by a Portuguese sailor, Tristao da Cunha. He named the main island after himself.

The first permanent settler was Jonathan

Lambert from Salem, Massachusetts, who arrived in 1810 and declared the Island his property. He died in a boating accident in 1812.

In 1816 the United Kingdom formally annexed the islands, ruling them from their colony in South Africa.

The islands were occupied by a British military garrison. A civilian population gradually built up. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, together with the gradual move from sailing ships to coal-fired steam ships, the islands were no longer needed as a stopping port from Europe to the far east, increasing their further isolation.

Today the population of Tristan is approximately 269. It occupies 89 square miles. It is a British dependency. The currency is the pound sterling, (The St. Helenian pound.



Editorial

Monsanto and Peanuts

By Howard Suer

Last month's editorial addressed Monsanto Chemical's patents on food products.

Since then, the frightening possibility struck me that Monsanto Chemical Company may have genetically altered peanuts and may now have a patent on peanuts.

For more than 20 years I have been purchasing 25 lb. bags of raw peanuts from a feed store to feed the squirrels and blue jays in my back yard. They wait for me in the morning. The squirrels munch on the peanuts and bury the ones they don't eat.



Every summer I have been delighted to see little peanut plants sprouting up in the most unlikely places. There are two rabbits living in the yard who truly enjoy nibbling on those peanut plants. It's a great balance of nature.



Peanut Plant

Suddenly . . . Starting two years ago, and ever since, there have been no peanut plants sprouting. The squirrels are still burying them . . .but they do not germinate.

I know for a fact that Monsanto Chemical Company has patented genetically altered corn, canola, soy beans, rice, wheat, and other food grains. They have also bought up most of the seed companies in the mid-west. It is now illegal for farmers to har-

vest and save any of the Monsanto seeds from this year's crop for planting next year. Monsanto has successfully sued thousands of farmers for doing just that. The farmers must now buy the seeds from Monsanto each year. Crops are normally pollinated by insects, birds, and the wind. Perhaps some of those farmers were unjustly prosecuted because their crops acquired Monsanto's DNA through natural pollination, and no fault of theirs.

Recently, they have developed a "suicide gene" which, when infused in seeds, makes them sterile. They will not germinate when planted.

I became suspicious that it may be the reason why my peanuts are no longer sprouting.

My research has proven that my suspicions were correct. Monsanto Chemical Company has indeed recently hybridized peanuts, received a patent, and inserted their "suicide gene" in peanuts.

Yes, they have genetically altered the peanut so that farmers cannot plant the peanuts from Monsanto's patented seeds because they will not germinate.

I cannot comprehend why the United States Government Patent Office would grant a giant chemical company a patent on food. The result has been a dramatic increase in grain food costs, particularly rice which is a staple in many third world countries.

Apparently Monsanto's Lobbyists have been busy in Washington. . . . I smell a rat!

This company also provides cattle food for beef and dairy bovines. This feed of course contains chemicals called steroids or growth hormones. The purpose is to get the cattle to fatten up quickly, and the dairy cows to produce more milk. Of course, the milk and the beef from those animals contain the steroids they were fed.

I am not qualified to say whether this is good or bad; however, many countries, including most of Europe, will not buy American Beef or dairy products for that reason. Hmmm.

HONEY BEE DISAPPEARANCE

Since 2006, there has been a serious decline in the honey bee population worldwide. This is alarming, because, as we know, bees pollinate food crops. A famous scientist once said, "if the bees were to disappear, civilization would end."

Scientists around the world have been desperately trying to find the cause of what they call "CCD" (colony collapse disorder).



A Working Honeybee

There have been many theories as to why the bees are going out in the fields and not returning to their hives. Some blame it on the disturbance from cell phone signals, some on viruses that attack the bees' immune system, fungi, pesticides, pathogens, mites, etc.

I may be unfairly biased against Monsanto because of my peanut issue, so I am leaning toward pesticides produced by both Monsanto and Bayer. Monsanto's is nicotine based. Bayer's is a neurotoxin. Germany and France have decided that there is probable cause to ban those substances. .

Why We Say It — (Phrase Origins)

PEANUT GALLERY

Goober, a common synonym for peanuts, is a corruption of *nguba*, a name plantation slaves gave to the peanuts, and one of the few African words still retained in English.

The *peanut gallery*, usually the cheapest seats in the house, was the gallery, or “second balcony,” high up in Gay Nineties theaters.

Peanuts were the movie snack of the day and the occupants of those cheap seats often rained peanut shells on performers who displeased them.



PEEPING TOM

As the story goes, Lady Godiva issued a proclamation ordering all persons to stay indoors and shutter their windows, so that she could ride naked through Coventry allowing her to remain modest.

Peeping Tom must have lived on the left hand side of Hertfords street—assuming that Lady Godiva rode side saddle. *Peeping Tom* ruined Lady Godiva’s plan, and his punishment was to be struck blind, a cruel and u n u s u a l punishment for just being human and living in a strategic location.



The Pen is Mightier Than The Sword

In his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), Robert Burton wrote, “The pen is worse than the sword.” In 1605, Cervantes, in *Don Quixote*, expressed a different point of view: “Let none presume to tell me that the pen is preferable to the sword.” But it was Edward Bulwer-Lytton who coined *the pen is mightier than the sword*, in his play *Richelieu* (1839):

*Beneath the rule of men entirely great,
The pen is mightier than the sword.*

Curiously, two great writers, Sophocles and Demosthenes, were the sons of sword makers, the equivalent of munitions makers today.



A WISE MAN TELLS YOU



Nobody forgets where he buried the hatchet.

—“Kin” Hubbard, 1868-1930

Success has made failures of many men.

—Cindy Adams

Never contend with a man who has nothing to lose.

—Baltasar Gracian, 1601-1658

Politicians and baby diapers should be changed regularly . . . And for the same reasons.

—Author Unknown

Never engage in a battle of wits with an unarmed person.

—Author Unknown

Candor and generosity, unless tempered by due moderation, lead to ruin.

—Cornelius Tacitus, c 56-120

Fame is proof that the people are gullible.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882

Striving to better — oft we mar what is well.

—William Shakespeare, 1564-1616

A smile is the chosen vehicle for all ambiguities.

—Herman Melville, 1819-1891

It is one thing to show a man that he is in error, and another to put him in possession of the truth.

—John Locke, 1632,1704

Criticism is prejudice made plausible.

—Henry Louis Mencken, 1880-1956

When you have nothing to say — say nothing.

—Charles Caleb, 1780-1832



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Cartoons of The Month

Getting Older

