

July 6, 1952

My goodness but this living at the sea shore keeps a soul busy! If it isn't the smelt running, it's the Tom Cod and the clam tides. The wild blackberries are getting ripe, too. One hardly knows where to go first, the beach or the hills?

I am trying to get in all the activities--clamming early in the morn and berrying in the afternoon; so by evening I am pretty much exhausted and sunburned or wind burned or scratched from brambles.

It's a lot of fun bringing home the clams and the berries; but it's a job for the hardy. The clam is a tricky fellow and can dig faster than you; if you aren't a little wiser than he; so he provides you with some fast digging. He's one fellow who isn't sticking his neck out without being covered by half the ocean.

The blackberry has plenty of protection in growing over old logs and steep hill sides and covered with a million barb-like stickers. The fruit is small and does not fill a bucket in a few minutes. But the flavor is not imitated by any other fruit; so in spite of all the hazards, over the hills I scramble and suffer the miseries of dirt and briars.

Catching smelt is fun, too; but requires hard work and mostly a good dunking in the cold ocean and a sore back from so much dipping.

This is the land O'Plenty; but to get that plenty requires work and will power and sacrifice. The fish, the clams, and the berries are usually well earned.

July 7, 1952

Today is the big day in political news. The Republican convention began and for this week, all we will see and hear is "that". The front page of the newspapers will headline "Convention"; the radio announcers will have a scoop.

As I said before, I don't see why the people can't nominate the candidates for president; but that would certainly be too simple. There wouldn't be any "ballyhoo" and the boys wouldn't have any fun squabbling over their candidates. Chicago wouldn't have as many tourists; and the whole thing would just be over too soon.

The big conventions give the "parties" a chance to get-together and really celebrate and a place for the big fellows to get up and blow off some steam. It would be too bad if there wasn't some sort of value for the parties to get relief from all the pent up pressure of elections.

It is just human nature for men to want to crowd into a small place and do a lot of boasting and make a bunch of promises and more or less "beat on their chests" like a bunch of monkeys.

Politics is very dirty with mud slinging from all sides. The two parties throw it back and forth; and within the party, it is traded from candidate to candidate. In the end all are

working for the same thing and the fellows all shake hands and promise to support the winner.

So goes life in the great United States!

July 8, 1952

“Pardon me, sonny, but your manners are slipping,” this could be said to about every young fellow I know. It is quite a novelty to see a well-mannered fellow these days.

Good manners should grow up with us and be as important as health and good grooming. Few little fellows these days even say “Thank you.”

It is no fault of the child; but of the careless parents not taking time to teach. From the time we walk and talk we can be taught consideration of others. It is very commendable to see a polite youngster and he is not a sissy, either, for the other boys and girls admire this trait.

Good manners are a compliment to the parents and their duty to the child. Too many children swear and use bad language--a reflection upon their home life. After all we grown-ups are examples for the little ones walking in our footsteps.

July 9, 1952

It is vacation time and our little town is filled with strangers enjoying the cool breezes and the bounteous fishing and our wonderful beaches.

This also fills our usually clean streets, parkways, and beaches with a litter of garbage and paper. The state has provided garbage cans; but few take the time to use the containers.

If this is the way these visitors treat us, then it is little wonder the cities spend so much for street cleaning services and advertise for cleanliness.

Probably those who complain of dirty beaches are the worst offenders. Every family has a surplus of paper sacks and these are very handy for garbage and easily disposed of in the proper places. Today's children are not taught to place unwanted papers and fruit peelings in containers for the purpose; but throw them on the street, parkways, or the beaches.

When summer is over the winds and the tides will clean our countryside; but until then we must suffer the untidiness--which is so unnecessary.

July 10, 1952

It isn't any mystery to me where the tax money goes. Today I was up to my elbows in the kitchen sink washing blackberries and certainly didn't look the picture of neatness when the doorbell rang and I glanced out through the living room window to see a late mode Oldsmobile parked in the driveway and a middle aged man dressed in summer suit and straw hat and carrying a portfolio. My first thought was: "Another government man."

Opening the two doors to our inner sanctum, I greeted the stranger, "How-do-you do!"

"Is this the Hays residence?"

"It is."

"Is Mr. Hays home?"

"No."

"Are you Mrs. Hays?"

"I am."

"I am from the Social Security office at Salem. There is a little confusion here about your husband's occupation." He took out some papers from the portfolio and showing the occupation as "logging and excavating". "This is confusing." Said he. "To the boys in the office--just what does your husband do?"

Said I, "He logs or he can dig a basement or build a road. What could be confusing about that? A bulldozer is a very versatile machine. I guess the boys from the office should be brought down here to learn something about occupations." He could see I was losing patience with these government employees.

"Well, now this social security set-up for the self-employed is new and there are things to be adjusted. You say your husband is logging? The next time you better put him down as a 'logger.' What kind of a tractor does he have; a TD8? I think I know what a bulldozer is."

From here on he had an education on tractors and their functions. On the next income tax and social security report I will put "Cat Skinner". Maybe I shouldn't. We might have to get a license for a slaughter house.

July 11, 1952

You can't have a cat and birds, too. On this the cat and I agree; and it makes me unhappy to think the old rascal can't leave the birds to their business. It just isn't necessary for him to have bird meat when he already gets the choicest canned cat food.

Some people would be happy to get rid of the Robins because they eat the strawberries; but for the few berries the birds devour it is small payment for the pesky worms they eat. The birds must have food, too, and much of their original supply has

been eradicated with the influx of man. We could supplement this by planting berrying shrubs as Mulberry.

The Robin is a friendly bird; one reason he is good target for the hunting cat. These birds stay around here all year and I enjoy their company. It is interesting to watch them build their nests and seek food. Their habit of cocking their head to one side in search of the earthworm might be puzzling; but I read they have supersonic hearing and can hear the worm stirring in the ground. Who figured this out without being a bird, I don't know.

It may be natural for cats to hunt birds as well as mice; but it is aggravating to see our lovely friends killed by a well fed feline. And I hate to put a bell on a cat and make him a "sissy" and lose his hunting instinct; or trim his claws so he cannot catch even the unwanted mouse.

The end of the story is that it is another case of the survival of the fittest. If someone can figure a way to humanely break a cat of catching birds; then he is the friend of all.

Speaking of cats; that is the feline species, to rid them of fleas keep their nest well dusted with flea powder and vacuum the creature once a week. He will object at first; but in a few weeks he will like the attention. This will rid him of loose hairs, too.

July 12, 1952

I spent one day this week at the dentist and it wasn't for me because my hardware could have been sent without my being there and thank goodness! they don't develop caries anymore; and if they did, it would be the first set of dentures that did.

These young folks seem to have periods of tooth decay and it is hard on the old folk's pocketbook and time is consumed taking them to the dentist. Many causes are set forth natural and otherwise. Once it is lack of mineral in the water; and the next argument is poor diet and too much of the wrong thing. Now it is too many cokes. So it goes.

When I was a young one thirty years back, my teeth were just as "caried" away. I never heard of a coke then and we had milk as it naturally came from the cows with all its vitamins intact and calcium, too. Vegetables were fresh from the home garden with an ample supply of raw ones. From personal conclusions I would rather place the blame on poor mouth hygiene or lack of proper mineral in the water.

We all hope the addition of fluorine to the water will help the situation. It is a proven fact that citizens of some of the inland states have perfect teeth and live on much of the same diet as we; so the water must have the "fountain of youth" for teeth. I doubt if the mouth hygiene is any better than here.

I think it helps to wash or at least rinse out the mouth after each session of eating or drinking food. This has been proven and can be a good habit to form and one not too hard to follow.

Toothaches are “in the head”; the fellow who said that wasn’t referring to a pain in the head. I have had my share of toothache and know it wasn’t imagination. He should have a good old ache in his biggest molar; and he would change his opinion--and quick.
