

August 17, 1952

The pattern cut out long ago was for six days of work and one day of rest. Some weeks there aren't any days of complete rest and I go wearying on getting more tired; wondering when the seventh day will ever arrive.

When God set aside the seventh day for rest and worship, he had looked into the future and already shook his head to see how it has been utterly ruined with millions deserting the churches and sapping their energy racing around the country. No longer is it fashionable to spend a restful Sunday.

Soothing music and quiet hymns and restful moments of meditation and prayer set the stage for a peaceful and relaxing Sunday. The atmosphere within a chapel invites serenity and soothes overworked nerves.

The week's worries should be caged for the day and they will become tamed and seem not so burdensome on Monday. Relaxing completely on Sunday will give a fresh start for the next week and actually one can accomplish twice as much.

Sometimes more energy is burned on Sunday than any other day with long excursions and tiring sports. The modern man seemingly must have his nerves pulled taut to feel he is enjoying himself; and he has forgotten how to slacken the tension.

On Sunday I like to be unhurried and not have any special tasks and feel I can catch up on the week's reading and only do the absolutely necessary deeds; but few are these Sundays.

I try to cook the Sunday roast on Saturday and then it can be quickly sliced. Boil plenty of spuds for Saturday's dinner so there will be enough left for browning on Sunday or to make a potato salad. Desert is made on the preceding day, too; so there isn't much cooking or dishwashing for the day of rest.

August 18, 1952

Many business offices have a slogan and I guess every home should have one, too.

"He who stumbles twice on the same stone deserves to break his own neck," is the masterpiece used by Mrs. Knox of the gelatin fame. If I hadn't noticed this slogan, I wouldn't have known that gelatine manufacturing was originally begun by the fair sex, which gives us females a star for accomplishment.

I agree with Mrs. Knox--anyone who makes the same mistake twice is "dumb" and asleep at the wheel; and must be running in the same rut every day. But there are hundreds of these lazy drivers; stumbling over the same rocks all through life.

For the impatient there are a dozen slogans: "Rome wasn't built in a day" or "The elevator to success isn't running, take the stairs" are a few good examples. Every

graduating class has its pet, but I doubt if many graduates ever remember beyond the month of May.

The quickening pace of twentieth century living could include, "Slow down, the road of life is full of curves."

An old but yet timely saying, "The early bird gets the worm," works as well now as it ever did and the fellow following this rule, is one who will be successful. (We should really be on the road to success; getting up before the birds every day this summer).

Note: Wouldn't you know.... Google found over 17 million sites for the word Cliche; and some in other languages as well. It's hard to speak without uttering one; they are that common. Looks like Marj's favorite may have been "The early bird gets the worm." As I remember her, that makes a lot of sense. While staying at her house once, as a child, I thought I was getting up early the morning of my birthday, but there was a cake already made and frosted sitting on the table. She may have gotten more done in her 62 years than most could do in a hundred. I've heard clichés since I remember hearing people talk, but the one about the elevator to success, is new to me. In glancing over some I found online, there are lots I've never heard even though they came spilling out of everyone's mouth constantly in Grandma's household. I like "A stitch in time saves nine" probably because sewing has always been a big part of my life, but my all time favorite is "Haste makes waste" as that has proved to be true for me over and over. "Slow as molasses in January," I am! - Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece

August 19, 1952

For awhile it was a race between spuds and beefsteak to see which could cost the most; so everyone planted the backyard to potatoes. But, alas, the Yachats crop blighted this year and I don't know whether I will get, in return, the price (high) of the seed.

It seems a waste the way people let good ground stay idle when it will produce food. Everyone should have at least a spud patch. I have seen dwellers of country acreage come to the store and pay nine or ten cents a pound for their spuds.

These tubers are about the easiest of all the vegetables to grow and require little care other than a few hoeings. A small space will yield tenfold. It's the only root crop you can do a little snitching on and keep supplied in new spuds while the smaller tubers are still maturing.

Way back when I was a kid and had straight hair I can remember when we grew spuds for the animals to eat and in the winter when the icicles hung from the eaves, the folks cooked great kettles of small potatoes and fed them hot to the chickens. Now a fellow pays for no better spuds--it's like the liver market; it's a premium now and I recall when the butcher gave it to you for the asking.

If it hadn't been for spuds, venison, and fish; there would have been a lot of people starve to death in the early days of this coastal region. Our grandparents never went to the

grocery every day--it was 20 miles away and a day's journey. Believe me, they depended upon their root crops and always saw that some seed was saved for next year.

Everyone had a cellar to keep this produce from freezing; that was the first essential in building up a farm. Our childhood farmstead had a huge, black-as-night, cavern behind the woodshed and in it went the winter's supply of perishable roots and apples and squash. When Spring came the spuds began to sprout and if they weren't brought out and cared for, the old root cellar was entwined with a maze of cold slippery sprouts.

Then came the job of cutting the potatoes for planting and seeing that each piece had sufficient eyes to make a good growth; and to the field to drop the portion into a freshly dug hole or behind the furrow as it was plowed. The harvest came and we kids picked the dug tubers off the ground and packed them to be sorted and sacked. Sometimes Pa would sell the best for a dollar a sack and we would eat the seconds--this was tax money.

Yep! Times have sure changed for potatoes, too.

Note: Marj and I are sure on the same page today! Our yard will again, soon, yield enough potatoes for the coming year. Like she says, they are one of the easiest vegetables to grow, requiring very little care between planting and harvesting; and if stored properly, will keep for months. While our neighbors are constantly mowing their big back yard lawns, our well mulched potatoes are growing underground. We've been eating them for a couple of months too.

– Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece

August 20, 1952

The teenage tempest boils around here quite often; and I am accused of not understanding this younger generation; which is partly right in some respects; although I have gone through the same period in my life.

The "impossible age" suffered during the late twenties was endured during a time of little money and the beginning of the depression. We young ones never tasted the luxury of an allowance and were not draped with store-bought garments and an overflowing closet of the latest fashions. Any small luxuries we earned and often the meager paycheck went into the family budget for the dire necessities of life.

So, perhaps, going through those trying times in my youth, makes it a little hard for me to understand the frivolous nature of the teenagers born into the present age of plenty. Money has only the value to buy the pretties; all the necessary things of life are amply supplied. It is hard to teach thrift as it is so much fun living in the present, one has little need to think of the future. Dreaming of a better day is old fashioned stuff--how could things be any better?

Adults, having been ground up through the mill of life, know the road ahead; so we keep nagging and pounding at our young ones to practice conservation, thrift, and initiative; but we are termed "old fashioned" and plain "mean". It is the work of a lawyer

to convince little Miss Teenager to be conservative when all her age are basking in independence and luxury.

If we mothers look haggard and our hair is disheveled and gray, it is because our young ones are just as stubborn as we are.

All week I have been trying to catch up on the letter writing and a few odd jobs hanging over my head, but something more pressing comes along. Peaches had to be canned and some washing done again. Such is life! I should never plan doing a thing for myself as it usually gets pigeonholed.

August 21, 1952

The swallows are beginning to hold conventions on the light and phone wires and this is a sure sign that Fall is here and it is time for all of us to check the larder and the winter's fuel supply.

We can't take wing and fly to a warm winter climate as do the birds; although some people can afford to do so. The migration of birds is quite a miracle of Mother Nature. Perhaps, in the beginning of time, we were supposed to do the same--minus the wings; but with foot power.

Originally man lived in a temperature comfortable the year around; but Eve gets blamed for being evicted from a perfect home; winning herself fame as the first evicted female.

The easy way to prepare for Winter would be the grasshopper's (and there are a lot of human grasshoppers); but I prefer to take advantage of the full harvests and fill the freezer and the cupboard with an ample supply of healthful foods. "Waste not and want not," is a good slogan for this season.

The human grasshoppers (as long as the purse is filled) can, this day, trot to the grocery and get an ample supply of canned goods; but they are missing some of the pleasures of living and not saving themselves any pennies.

So you will find me, dear diary, amid a confusion of canning jars and a steamed kitchen preparing for winter, which I am sure is to come whether I am prepared or not.

I am most thankful for modern conveniences to make food preservation easier. In the past, I have had to keep the wood box filled and the stove stuffed; so I appreciate the controlled heat of an electric range and the sureness of a pressure canner. The use of dome lids and self sealers take the wrist work out of canning and the guess work, too. No more is canning done in the atmosphere of "the boiler works"; the electric range keeps the kitchen cooler.

August 22, 1952

A frolic in the sand dunes and a drive along a Scotch Broom lined roadway, reminds me of the late '30's when the CCC boys were work guests along our Pacific Coast.

Hundreds of these young men were employed to plant the Holland Grass to keep the sand dunes in check. This grass will grow only along the salt aired shorelines and does not survive too well beyond 400 feet of the ocean. It is the only means ever found to control the wind driven beach sands; the roots grow deep and long and intermat to form a natural fence.

In 1936 and '37, Chet worked with the boys on this grass planting project south of Reedsport. His Forest Service Grader was converted to a transport to distribute the roots over the miles of dunes. The grader worked perfect as the huge tires rolled over the sand without miring.

It is awesome to view the desolation caused from drifting sands and this has become quite a problem along portions of the coast line. A visit to the dunes will remind one of the Sahara Desert and when a good healthy North Wind blows, it is as uncomfortable.

The Scotch Broom is also employed to keep the sand in check further from the ocean. I have heard it came to Oregon as seeds in the pocket of a Scotchman. It spreads rapidly and would become a nuisance if not kept controlled. The vivid yellow blossom paints the coastal roadways, in Springtime, with a splash of fresh butter tints; and one year it was so vivid even the pavement appeared yellow.

The Gorse, beauty in disguise, is said to have been brought from Ireland; but everyone wishes it had been left there. It is a stubborn pest and very combustible. It is blamed for the spreading of the terrible Bandon fire in 1937. And like a fire it has spread up and down the coast; causing concern to many property owners.

August 23, 1952

The telephone is a very handy invention; but it can become a nuisance; especially after you have gone to bed and your number is rang and you suddenly hop onto the cold floor and make a wild sleepy dash and unhook the receiver to hear, "Hello, is this so and so?"

"No, it isn't, you have the wrong number!" Back to the arms of Morpheus and nicely relaxed and "ding, ding", again.

"Hello!"

"Hello, Hello! No, this isn't that number."

This jangling of the telephone continued until I had been in and out of bed four times; and dreamed all night of that "ding, ding"; and paddling up the street for two blocks in

my nylon nighty to answer the summons--wondering today why I would dream I had to go so far to answer the phone; but such are our foolish dreams.

The telephone is a big step saver, if all your neighbors have one; but if you are the only phone in the block; then you can spend half your time delivering messages or summoning someone to track up your house.

I have never used time to “tap conversations”, and am glad our village telephone set-up makes this almost impossible. Eavesdroppers are one of my pet hates.

It is a blessing the fire station is centered in town; as central is usually so long in answering, the house would be ashes before a call could be placed. Now telephone troubles aren't centered here, every small exchange has its troubles.

Note: The telephone in 1952 was very different than now, especially in rural areas. One had to “ring central,” the operator, to call any number that was not on your line, thus Marj's comment about the fire station. At least I think that is the way it must of been in Yachats then... Her comment about not being able to eavesdrop, may mean their phone system was even somewhat different from what I've described. -Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece

About “the arms of Morpheus”:
Mor·pheus /'mor-fE-&s, -"f(y)üs/ , Greek mythological character. Morpheus was one of the sons of Hypnos, the god of sleep. As a dream-god Morpheus made human shapes appear to dreamers. His two brothers were responsible for sending forms of animals and inanimate things.
