

BE CAREFUL

So far, so good this fire season. Let's keep up the good work and not have any major fires this year.

If you didn't go to the picnic you missed a good one. Thanks to all of you who made it such a fun time.

As you will see from Leo's article, he is starting his 13th year as Fire Chief. And the *Byte* is also having its 13th anniversary!

CHANGING TIMES

Leo Chaloux

I am finding it hard to believe that this August will be my 13th year as Chief. In looking back over those years I am surprised of the many changes that have taken place. Changes not only in myself but also in the community and the fire department. With the fire department the majority of changes have been in the amount of paper work as a result of rules, regulations, and mandates. I find myself working more hours and getting less done. I do admit that more paper gets moved around and stored. In fact 13 years ago the department only had a need for 1 small filing cabinet. Now, I have 4 large cabinets pretty well crammed full of paper. I am constantly telling my self that I do not run this fire department, the state legislature, the lawyers, and the insurance companies do. All I do is jump through the many hoops they stand up. Only problem I am running into now is the hoops are getting more numerous, smaller in size, and closer together.

One thing I really have to be grateful for are the volunteers, both the Fire Fighters and the Support Group members. They are this fire department. Their efforts, energy, caring and spirit make it possible for this community to have the quality medical care and fire suppression capabilities it has. I greatly believe that the people of this community receive great service from the fire department because of the volunteers. They spend large amounts of their time training and responding to incidents that in the end directly benefit anyone that has a need.

The community as a whole has also changed. I believe it is safe to say that in the last 13 years the population on this hill has probably tripled. I know the number of cars that drive on Mosquito Road and the speed that they drive at has definitely tripled. Even though the population has greatly increased the number of people willing and able to volunteer as fire fighters or as support group members has not increased. It appears

now that it is harder for someone to spend the time, be dedicated, and make the commitment required to be a volunteer. Maybe it is for them as it is for me, people are working more hours but getting less done.

One thing that has not changed is the potential for a large fire. We have been very fortunate, even though we have had many fires they have been kept to a small size. Our district because of its location, type of fuels, and topography is classified as one of the highest fire hazard areas in El Dorado County. Any fire that starts in either the American River Canyon, Rock Creek Canyon or Slab Creek Canyon is expected to go straight to the top where all fire suppression activity will take place. One of the good things about having such a high fire hazard rating is that on the initial report of a wild land fire a larger than normal amount of fire equipment and aircraft will be dispatched. The unfortunate thing is the amount of time it takes for ground units and fire equipment to get to our District.

Another thing that has not changed is a property owners responsibility. There is not a single fire department in California that can save every residential structure from a large wild land fire. In our district alone there are approximately 500 homes that would require one engine in the driveway to do structure protection. There are not that many available fire engines in all of El Dorado and Sacramento Counties. As fire fighters, we do everything possible to protect and save lives. Homes are our next priority, especially when we look at a home where the owner has also done everything possible to help fire fighters provide that protection. I strongly urge every home owner to remove all ground fuels to at least the state requirement of 30 feet around the house. If possible the removal of ground fuels 100 feet around your home would provide additional assurance.

As residents of a heavily wooded rural area we must realize that a large fire will happen, I just cannot tell anyone on what day.

MVFD BOARD NEWS

Leslie Keene

THE PICNIC -- It was a wonderful time! The weather was perfect, the food was outstanding with many, many thanks owed to our chef of the year, Lee Hair, in his jazzy looking red apron and red socks outfit! (Hey, we even had grilled onions to go with our hamburgers and hot links...delicious!) And the games were a great hit, thanks to



Byron and LaVonne Moser. Hard to describe, you would have had to be there, one of the most popular was one called "dirt skiing"! I'll tell you this for sure, the younger crowd in Mosquito are a whole lot more coordinated than some of our firefighters!

And, of course, we had the popular dunk tank with the main attraction being Chief Leo, as always, with Captain Pat coming in a close second. We even sold commemorative picnic t-shirts sporting a likeness of Leo in the dunk tank...if you're interested, they are still available at the fire station.

If you weren't able to make it this year, you missed a really fun event, and can certainly be looking forward to more of the same next year! And my personal thanks goes out to all of you who did soooo much work to make this picnic as great as it was!

But don't forget our next fundraiser, which is the Fall Spaghetti Feed being held on Saturday, September 25th. There will be a great prize drawing for a nice vacation get-away, lots of chances to visit with your neighbors, and, as always, GREAT food!

It's time to be thinking ahead about the Mosquito Volunteer Fire Department Board's Annual Meeting and Elections which will take place on Thursday, November 4th at 7:00 p.m. There are three regular slots open for election and, although I'm hoping the Board members in those positions (LaVonne Moser, Debbie Minor, and Rosemary Alexander (Callahan)) will decide to re-run, we are always looking for new folks who might be interested in running as well. By our by-laws, we can have no more than three firefighters or three Support Group members or three Community-at-Large members at a time. Currently, we have three firefighters on the Board whose terms are not up for re-election until November, 2000. Therefore, we will be looking to the Support Group and the community to fill any vacant slots come this November. In addition to the three regular openings mentioned above, I will, after seven years on the Board, be abandoning ship in November. Due to a promotion at work (a good thing!) and increasing involvement in the care of my parents (not such a good thing!), I can't devote the proper time and effort to the fire department Board. I will continue as a Support Group member and a Safety Officer in the department, but it's time to pass the gavel. I sure hope some of you out there will seriously consider getting involved. If you have any interest or any questions, please feel free to call me at any time at 621-0508.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 5th, at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station. It will be a very short open agenda, as we will be in Executive Session from 7:30 p.m. on to interview some candidates for the Finnon Lake Resort concessionaire. However, you are always welcome to join us for the open session!

NEWS ON THE HILL

Jo Thomas

Seems like everyone has been taking advantage of summer by getting out there and doing many things. *Norm and Doris*

Ostrander just returned from Alaska where their daughter's family lives. They only had a few nice days and then nothing but rain. (That's why it's still nice and green there) Norm is certain the cooler weather hitched a ride back with them. WE THANK YOU

Steve Loree managed to win himself a trophy with his gokart last month. I don't know if son Stephen's broken arm gave him any encouragement, but some of Steve's "friends" are wondering if he deprived some little kid of that trophy.

Deb Arsenych is putting her birthday present to good use. It's a sporty Honda Passport 4x4. Wouldn't you know the weather turned cooler (thanks to Norm) now that Deb has AIR!

By the time you read this, *Ralph and Sharon Hern* will be back from a reunion with long lost family in Kentucky. Was this your 35th anniversary present?

I presume *Eddie and Betty Kinney* brought back lots of fish from their trip to Truckee. And even if they didn't, I'm sure the pleasant temperatures still made the trip well worth while.

Carolyn Jones is an award winning baker, but with all her travels she didn't have time to enter any baked goods in the El Dorado County Fair this year. But her crocheted afghan took first place in its class and she also won awards for a couple baby items as well. If you've seen Carolyn's fingers at work, you know she must have the fastest needles in the west!

Here's something you won't read in our Fire Chief's column. *Leo and Chris Chaloux* recently had their silver anniversary (25th). Belated congratulations to our Chief and his Mrs.

More wedding bells ringing. On June 19th *Eddie Darr, Jr.* married his sweetheart from Arizona, *Hannah Sheradowski*. Following a honeymoon to Cancun they are making their home where his Uncle Bill once lived. We wish you much happiness as you begin your life together in this little corner of the world.

Last month Devery Minor, our station Captain, announced the promotion of firefighter *Jean Pearson* to Captain. I hope everyone saw the terrific article and picture in the newspaper regarding this special lady, in uniform, in color. Not only is Jean the first female captain in OUR fire department, but the FIRST female captain in El Dorado County. You do us proud, Jean.

FINNON LAKE

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Diane Brady

The committee met in July as usual, although there is not a whole lot of activity going on right now. We are currently working on getting the water line hooked up so that we can have EID water at the restaurant. We are also finalizing our plans for the restaurant remodel, and hope to have our building permit from the county soon.

We have received several proposals from individuals who are interested in operating the restaurant concession. However, at this point we can not say when the restaurant will be ready

for reopening, so it may be premature to choose a concessionaire at this point. We will have a better idea of the timetable on the restaurant reopening within the next month or two.

Regarding the dam, we hope to begin the repair work next spring. It's probably too much to expect that we will have a full lake by next summer, but we can always hope! As usual, we want to hear from anyone who is interested in helping with this project. Our next meeting will be on August 15 at 6:00 p.m. at the firehouse, or you may call me at 622-7019 at any time.

SCPOA REPORT

Deb Arsenych

June Board of Directors Regular Meeting

Paul Hinds (Maintenance Person) gave a presentation to the Board

Boat launching access for Trout and Dyer Lakes was discussed. A decision will be made at a later time.

Barb-B-Que pits and the old pump house at Dyer Lake and the Barb-B-Que pits at Catfish Lake will be removed.

A new lawn tractor was purchased.

The sprinkler system at Dyer Lake will be repaired.

Brush removal at Bass Lake will be done in the fall.

The water lilies at Trout Lake were controlled chemically by Waterworks Industries, a vendor hired by SCPOA. It was suggested that a representative from the company address the Board and answer questions about the use of chemicals in the lakes.

A discussion was held on purchasing two 55-gallon drums to hold fuel needed to run the tractor and the equipment used to maintain the grounds. Safety standards for the storage of fuel will be researched.

TREASURERS REPORT – Sharon Hern.

One Write Plus version 7 was purchased, installed and registered. It is Y2K compliant. The March and April financials have just come from the accountant's office and will be reviewed for the next meeting. May financials have been sent to the accountant. After an exhaustive review of the banking institutions in the area, it was suggested that SCPOA stay with Wells Fargo.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Architectural Review: Bob Castleberry and George Kellison, Co-Chairpersons. A few phone calls from owners asking questions have been answered, but no plans have been submitted at this time.

Bylaws & DC&Rs: Mel Joyner and Sharon Hern, Co-Chairpersons. A revised Complaint Form was submitted. It will be used in the future. A review of the complaints was held.

Common Areas/Fences: Mel Joyner, Jo Thomas, and Barbara Atkins, Co-Chairpersons. Report given by Mel Joyner. A priority list was discussed with a progress report given.

A thank you letter will be drafted by Barbara Mikel and sent to the persons responsible for the new garbage cans.

Paul Hinds will compile an inventory list of all equipment

owned by SCPOA.

The SCPOA Board accepted the offer of a dock for a lake by a Mosquito Resident. Issues of insurance, maintenance, installation, and use regulations will be resolved before it is installed.

Replacing and repairing of the fences was discussed. Repair work will be scheduled. The Dyer Lake area fences will be repaired first. Vinyl fencing will be considered for Trout Lake.

Regulations for Common Area use was discussed. More information will be gathered for the next meeting.

Parking regulations at the Lakes were discussed. Nothing was decided at this time.

Roads Committee: George Kellison, Barbara Mikel, Bob Castleberry, Co-Chairpersons.

Brushing is being done first on primary roads where there is a physical hazard to safety. Volunteer work parties will be considered.

Road repair priorities will be discussed at a later meeting.

Runway Committee: Barbara Atkins, Barbara Mikel, Co-Chairpersons.

A bid was received in the amount of \$27,920.00 to double slur the runway and parking lot. A volunteer group will be headed by Barbara Atkins. Issues will be discussed in a future committee meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

EID Summerfield Ditch: EID will open and close the ditch. EID will be monitored in regard to SCPOA water rights.

School Site. Devery Minor addressed the board about this issue. It was decided that George Kellison and Barbara Mikel will attend the planning committee meeting on Thursday, June 22nd.

NEXT MEETING IS SET FOR AUGUST 21, 1999

YUMMY BANANA BREAD

Evelyn Potter

A new twist on banana bread – and so yummy!

APRICOT BANANA BREAD

1/3 c butter or margarine, softened

2/3 c sugar

2 eggs

1 c mashed ripe bananas (2 to 3 medium)

1/4 c buttermilk (can use powdered, follow directions on can for amount needed)

1 1/4 c all purpose flour

1 t baking powder

1/2 t baking soda

1/2 t salt

1 c 100% bran cereal (not flakes)

3/4 c chopped dried apricots (about 6 oz.)

1/2 c chopped walnuts

In a mixing bowl, cream sugar and butter. Add eggs; mix well. Combine bananas and buttermilk. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; Add to creamed mixture alternately with banana mixture. Stir in bran, apricots and

nuts. Pour into greased 9 x 5 x 3 inch loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 55-60 minutes or until bread tests done. Cool 10 minutes before removing from pan to wire rack.

END OF RAIN YEAR
STATISTICS

Jim Hinds

It has been another one of our usual unusual periods of time that we call (for better or worse) our weather year. My records indicate it was a rather mild year both in temperature and in rainfall. My total for 1998-1999 came to 46.03 inches of the wet stuff while my neighbors, the Penrods measured 46.04 inches. We had a difference of 1/100 inch of rain last year, too.

The temperatures have been mild. I have recorded only a few readings below 30°. The winter as a whole was very mild. We have a wide variation both in rainfall and temperature in this area. Location may change the picture completely. So far this summer has not been to bad. We have had higher than 90° just a few times and a couple of warm nights. They may be a reminder of what may be in store for us in August and September. The past few days have been just right.

The 46.03" of rain I recorded compares with the *Mountain Democrat's* recording of 40.74". They report a 122 year average as 38.52". We are again about 10% more than Placerville's official mark. By the way, the official rain instruments the *Democrat* uses are at the PG&E yard on Enterprise Drive.

We do need rain as things, especially the grass and brush, are very dry. We have not done well since February, which had 13.16". March had 3.40", April 3.66", May 1.25" and June .33".

ASTRONOMIC

The sun is in a very active mode and could be affecting our weather. This is the last year of its 11 year cycle and it seems to be more active than usual.

The following has been submitted by our "guest vet" - also known as LaVonne Moser.

HOW TO PILL A CAT

1) Pick cat up and cradle it in the crook of your left arm as if holding a baby. Position right forefinger and thumb on either side of cat's mouth and gently apply pressure to cheeks while holding pill in right hand. As cat opens mouth pop pill into mouth. allow cat to close mouth and swallow.

2) Retrieve pill from floor and cat from behind sofa. Cradle cat in left arm and repeat process.

3) Retrieve cat from bedroom, and throw soggy pill away.

4) Take new pill from foil wrap, cradle cat in left arm holding rear paws tightly with left hand. Force jaws open and push pill to back of mouth with right fore-finger. Hold mouth shut for a count of ten.

5) Retrieve pill from goldfish bowl and cat from top of wardrobe. Call spouse from garden.

6) Kneel on floor with cat wedged firmly between knees,

hold front and rear paws. Ignore low growls emitted by cat. Get spouse to hold head firmly with one hand while forcing wooden ruler into mouth. Drop pill down ruler and rub cat's throat vigorously.

7) Retrieve cat from curtain rail, get another pill from foil wrap. Make note to buy new ruler and repair curtains. Carefully sweep shattered china Doulton figures from hearth and set to one side for gluing later.

8) Wrap cat in large towel and get spouse to lie on cat with head just visible from below armpit. Put pill in end of drinking straw, force mouth open with pencil and blow down drinking straw.

9) Check label to make sure pill not harmful to humans, drink glass of water to take taste away. Apply band-aid to spouse's forearm and remove blood from carpet with cold water and soap.

10) Retrieve cat from neighbor's shed. Get another pill. Place cat in cupboard and close door onto neck to leave head showing. Force mouth open with dessert spoon. Flick pill down throat with elastic band.

11) Fetch screwdriver from garage and put door back on hinges. Apply cold compress to cheek and check records for date of last tetanus jab. Throw Tee-shirt away and fetch new one from bedroom.

12) Ring fire brigade to retrieve cat from tree across the road. Apologize to neighbor who crashed into fence while swerving to avoid cat. Take last pill from foil-wrap.

13) Tie cats front paws to rear paws with garden twine and bind tightly to leg of dining table, find heavy duty pruning gloves from shed, force cat's mouth open with small spanner. Push pill into mouth followed by large piece of fillet steak. Hold head vertically and pour 1/2 pint of water down throat to wash pill down.

14) Get spouse to drive you to the emergency room, sit quietly while doctor stitches fingers and forearm and removes pill remnants from right eye. Stop at furniture shop on way home to order new table.

15) Arrange for SPCA to collect cat and ring local pet shop to see if they have any hamsters.

SOLUTION TO JULY WORD PUZZLE
"IMPATIENS"

The *MOSQUITO BYTE* is available by subscription and is mailed first class to subscribers. Cost of subscription is \$8.50 per year. Mail check to 2300 Mosquito Cut-Off Rd, Placerville, CA, 95667. Deadline for news and advertising is the 19th of each month.

The editors reserve the right to edit, limit or refuse any article submitted for publication in the *Mosquito Byte*.

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ADVERTISING

There is no charge for advertising in the *Mosquito Byte* for our subscribers. Deadline for advertising is the 19th of each month. Call Pat at 622-6436 or Lela at 626-8265. Ads in the "For Sale" department will run for three months unless you call to say the item has been sold, or you want the ad extended.

WANTED

TO RENT: An RV or trailer for about three weeks from August 22 to September 15. To be driven (towed) to Atwater CA and lived in while we are working on the EAA Golden West Fly-in. Non-smokers. Call Dean or Lela 626-8265.

OLD TENNIS BALLS, to be used in a probably-futile attempt to teach my dog to fetch. Also wanted: a **BASKETBALL**, to be used in a hopefully less futile attempt to keep myself in shape after age 40! Call Diane at 622-7019.

MOM/DRIVER to take student to or from school near Schnell school for 1999/2000 school year. 8:00 AM and 3:15 PM. Will help pay for gas. Call Denice Garza 621-1719 or 621-1700.

SERVICES

HORSESHOEING: Hot, cold or therapeutic: Call David Greenlee at 647-9100.

WINTER'S COMING: I'll split your wood for you. \$20 per hour. 626-8856.

VACATION HOUSE WATCHING: Services include bringing in mail and/or newspapers, turning lights on at dusk and/or off at dawn, watering plants, feeding/walking pets. Please call Stan Okumura at 626-5321.

COMFORT CONTROL HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING: Sales - service - installation. Free estimates on replacement. 10% senior discount. 530/642-0987 or 1-800-770-7747.

GOODYMZ ENTERTAINMENT: Offering the newest and best music for dancing and for karaoke singing. Private parties, corporate parties and clubs. Reasonable rates and service with a smile. Call John or Lee-Ann Becton at 642-1444 or e-mail at g00dymz@pacbell.net.

ROBERTI ROOFING License #754951. Call Nick Roberti at 626-7116 or 957-6399.

NOTARY PUBLIC- Anytime, Anywhere: I live in Mosquito and will come to your house to do notary work. Call Elaine at 621-2433.

WORKER AVAILABLE: Honest, dependable, hardworking man seeks work gardening, weedeating, house cleaning, painting, odd jobs. Call 621-1762.

SOCIAL SERVICES MINISTRY: For help in times of crises. If you or anyone you know is in need of food, clothing, transportation, abuse intervention drug dependency, emergency housing or any

other need, please call Sharon McCoy 621-4383 or Mountain Fellowship 621-4282. All requests will be confidential and needy parties are treated with respect. Your help and support are needed. Call us to assist in this ministry or to donate food, clothing, cash or other usable items.

VACATION CARE: Going on vacation? Need any pet care, or taking care of plants? You have found just the one: me, Amanda Pearson. I love animals and am great with plants. Call me at 621-1653. If I'm not there, leave a message.

PLUMBING: Vick's Plumbing, license No. 605357. Victor Garcia, 626-6493.

CLEANING: Swansboro resident for 7 years to clean your home, meal preparation or errands done with TLC. Reasonable, experienced, references. Call Renee at 626-3280 OK to leave message

NUTRITIONAL AIDS and free information. Call Teresa at 626-6970.

CARETAKER/DOOR SHAKER SERVICE: Available to vacation/vacationing homeowners at modest cost, daily, weekly, monthly. Reference available. Call "Crittter" Don Reid, 622-7622.

DON'S CRITTER CARE: Pets, livestock and gardens, too. While you're away. Reasonable rates, references. Call 622-7622.

BUSINESS CARDS: Small quantities, 10 to 100. Designed for you. Cost plus \$5.00. Call Lela, 626-8265.

ANIMAL OUTREACH: Cats for adoption. Low cost spay, neuter and vaccinations. Call Pat Hair at 642-1944 for information.

REALTOR: Continuously serving this area with efficient, friendly service. Associated with Coldwell Banker, Inc. Member of Multiple Listing Service, Mosquito Volunteer Fire Department Support Group and Mosquito Volunteer Fire Department Board. Call LaVonne Moser for any of your real estate needs. **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT:** Coldwell Banker, Inc. now has property management services. If you are a landlord or prospective tenant, please call LaVonne Moser at 622-6337 or 626-3333.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: Are you stressed to the max about your bills? Are you having difficulty making your monthly payments and the creditors are calling and getting nasty? **WE CAN HELP!** Call Barbara Proctor at Hampton Financial for a FREE consultation at 621-3153.

J. R. PLUMBING: Licensed plumber. Repairs, remodels, new construction. Gas Lines and gas appliance conversions. Local gas company references. Call John at 626-6552.

COMPUTER SERVICE: Frazier Electronics. Computer/printer service and repair. Free estimates. Call Stu at 621-4221.

ROBIN'S NEST CLEANING: Commercial and residential. References. Call Robin 621-1030.

TAX HELP?? Professional Tax Preparation and Electronic filing. Call Don Bates, licensed and bonded tax consultant, 622-1886

FOR SALE

BORDER COLLIE PUPS 8 weeks old. \$100 each Call 622-7622

FRESH BROWN EGGS \$1.25 a dozen. Call 622-7622.

COUCH, dark wood accents, no rips or tears, fabric is velour greenish gold color. LOVE SEAT, purchased at Bruners, has an 'iron' burn in one place and sunburned on one arm. Both pieces - make offer. LARGE WOOD STOVE, can be used in fireplace as

insert or free standing, has blower. \$75.00 "AB" EXERCISER, paid \$40., sell for \$20. Older SCHWINN BICYCLE, \$25.00 Please call 622-6337. If no answer, please leave message. Will return calls ASAP.

HERBS: Evergreen Herb Garden, 2001 Swansboro Road. Herbs, herb classes, products, plants and books. Call or write for information. 626-9288.

SPIDERS, SCORPIONS AND CENTIPEDES & YOUR PETS.

Lisa S. Couper, DVM

So something bit your dog or cat. What should you do now? This all depends on the offending critter. Most spider and insect bites are inconsequential, but a few can be life threatening. We'll start with spiders. In our area and the USA in general there are only two spiders that will cause more than a minor annoyance. These are, in order of nastiness, the black widow and the brown spider sometimes called the fiddle-back spider. Both are commonly found in dark undisturbed places such as the garage and in old wood piles. The later is also called the brown recluse spider by many but the brown recluse actually resides only in the midwest according to the Arizona Poison and Drug information Center. They have a very nice web site. Although the tarantula looks very ominous and is indigenous to our area it seldom bites people or pets. Wolf spiders are about 1/3 the size of a tarantula but still fairly impressive. They too are harmless.

Black Widow Spiders

Of black widow spiders only the larger female is harmful. She is black with a red or orange marking on the underside of the abdomen and spins a very tough web. Immature females have a colorful pattern of red brown and beige on the top of her abdomen and is just as dangerous as their older stereotypical friends. The web is irregular and may contain a white egg sack. When the eggs are present the female can be very aggressive. The rest of the time they usually will retreat into the darkness. The male is small brown and basically harmless. The black widow is very resistant to insecticides.

After a bite the site may be painful, but with little reaction at the site of the bite. (Because of the fur and dark coloration of the skin and this lack of reaction at the site of the bite it can be very difficult to diagnose a case unless you follow your pet around 24 hours a day and see them get bitten.) Later you or your animal may experience pain, cramping and rigidity in the shoulders, back chest or abdomen. Sometimes there is nausea, vomiting, headache, elevated blood pressure and anxiety. Seizures are also possible. Young children and small pets may need medical attention as well as adults and larger pets with severe symptoms. Death is usually from respiratory arrest or cardiovascular collapse. Cats are very sensitive to the venom of black widows. In one study of 22 cats bitten 20 of them died. The site of the bite should be cleaned with soap and water, a cool compress applied to the bite and slight elevation of the affected body part but not higher than the level of the heart and do not use any kind of tourniquet. Although aspirin can be used to alleviate pain you should call your veterinarian for the proper dosage. Improper dosing of aspirin can kill your cat and cause ulcers in your dog. Affected animals should be closely monitored for 4-6 hours but less severe symptoms may show up days later. Other supportive treatments, including intravenous calcium, and more intensive monitoring can be done at a veterinary hospital. There is an antivenin from Merck (Lyovac) but it is clear that there needs to be some certainty about the animal being bitten for this to be useful.

The final outcome of a black widow spider bite is uncertain for several days after the bite. Recovery may take months with persistent symptoms of weakness, fatigue and insomnia.

The venom of the black widow is toxic to nerve cells. The venom is most potent in the fall and least potent in the spring. 86% of bites in a 4 month period from late summer to early fall. In about 15% of bites no venom is injected.

Brown Spiders

The brown spider primarily causes a severe local reaction at the site of the bite. At the time of the bite there may be little pain but after a couple of hours there may be pain at the site of the bite. In 12 hours to several days later a bleb/blister may form at the site. Often a bulls-eye develops with a dark center where the skin has died surrounded by white and then red inflamed skin around the outside. Healing can be very slow (usually 2 months at a minimum) and can leave a significant scar. In the first 24 hrs after a bite you or your pet may experience flu-like symptoms such as joint pain, fever, nausea, vomiting even seizures.

First aid consists of keeping the site clean until it heals. Daily cleaning with hydrogen peroxide and removal of any dead tissue is the mainstay of treatment. Three times a day soaks in Burrow's solution may also be helpful. Antibiotics may be needed to deal with the bacterial infection which can result from this bite. This spider is called the fiddleback spider because it is tan to brown with a violin shaped marking on the head and back, with the handle pointing toward the abdomen. It is nickel to quarter size including body and legs. There is no specific antidote for its venom.

Scorpions

Although annoying the scorpions we have here in El Dorado County are not dangerous unless you develop an allergy to them as people commonly get allergies to bee stings. The bite is painful and causes a burning sensation. This is typically very short lived and is not perceptible an hour or less later. Bites typically occur when you go to put on clothing that has been undisturbed for a number of months or if you leave folded laundry on the floor for any period of time. The only life threatening scorpion lives in the Southwest.

Centipedes (not millipedes)

These guys give me the creeps but they are not very poisonous. They vary in color and can be up to 10 inches long. They have a flat multisegmented body with a pair of legs on each. The toxin causes local pain, redness and swelling and sometimes swelling of the lymphatic ducts. The symptoms usually subside in a few hours with rare cases where discomfort lasts a couple of weeks. First Aid consists of washing the bite area and application of a cool compress and trying to get the bite to bleed freely to wash out the venom. If there is a lot of swelling then the patient/pet should be monitored for an allergic reaction like for bee stings.



Mosquito Bite
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