

Open Season

Accidents

My right knee is skinned and my left foot has a bandage on the bottom.

I blame both injures on bears and garden implements.

A week or so ago, as we unloaded the car to open our home in Creede, Colorado, for the summer, I saw a large animal go up on the porch.

Steve had gone into the house to turn on the power, but hadn't gotten the lights on yet. There are no street lights in the area and the only illumination was from the lights of the truck, which hadn't gone out yet.

I was carrying a watermelon, which I had put in a wicker basket to keep it from rolling around in the car, plus some trash I had picked up off the floor to take into the house to throw away.

As I walked up the gravel path, a large, furry thing walked up and onto the porch.

At first I thought it was just a big dog, but when it turned towards me, I couldn't see a tail and the face as best I could tell looked pretty bearlike.

The animal started towards me and I, backing up quickly, slipped on the gravel sidewalk and went down, trash going one way, the basket another and the melon rolled under our truck.

The animal turned around and then I saw its long, bushy tail. It had been just a big ol' neighborhood dog after all, and a white one at that. If I hadn't been so tired after the long drive, I'm sure I would have remembered that we have no polar bears in Colorado.

However, we do have brown bears, and we had had a visit from one the year before, so my nervousness was not without some foundation.

I ended up with a few bruises and a skinned knee. (The watermelon was retrieved, and it was delicious despite its adventure.)

Then, last week I was back in Kansas, weeding the garden while Steve was doing errands in McCook.

I had a short-handled three-prong garden digger to scratch out the tiny weeds that I couldn't pull by hand. Now, I'm always careful around rakes and other implements you can step on and hurt yourself. I set the digger carefully prongs down on one of the railroad ties that border the garden. However, when I got up from weeding on my hands and knees, my foot somehow hit the digger and flipped it over. When my foot came down on the digger, I got all three sharp steel prongs in the bottom of my left shoe.

I don't have the best balance and I couldn't keep standing on my right foot, so I made a careful fall into the garden, almost landing on top of my only living yellow squash plant.

My foot hurt, so I knew I was somewhat impaled, but I couldn't tell how bad.

It took quite a bit of pulling and prying to get the digger out of my shoe so I could see what damage it had done.

I limped carefully over to the porch and pulled off my shoe and sock.

Luckily, there was only one puncture wound in my foot. The heavy rubber bottoms of my shoes had protected me from much real damage.

The first thing I did was to hobble into the house and put my foot in the bathtub with hot water and some epon salt. After washing my wounded foot, I dried it and put a bandage over the hole in the ball of my foot.

Next on my list was a call to hospital records to check on the status of my last tetanus shot. The vaccine should be good for seven to 10 years and my last shot was 4 1/2 years ago. I was good on that anyway.

We've medicated and watched the foot for infection, and so far, so good. And luckily, my knee is most healed up, because it's really hard to limp on both legs.

-Cynthia Haynes

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Matt Price-Editor, colby.editor@nwkansas.com

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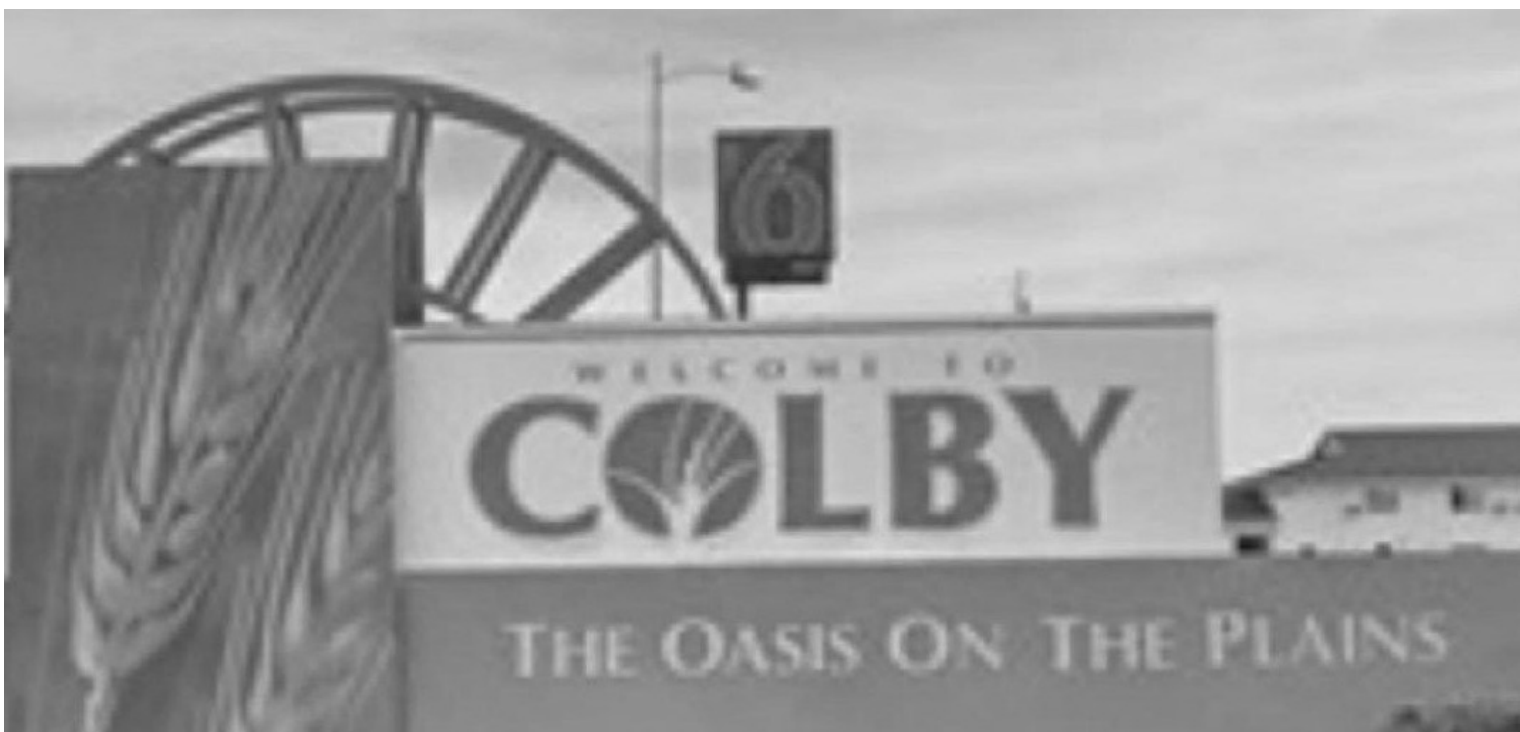
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Did My Body  
Warranty Just Expire?

Just when I recover from the latest ache in my body within a few minutes, I will get a "Boo, I'm back."

I'm not quite sure why these Aches and Pains love my body so much. Why don't they just get over it and move on to another circus. The problem is, after I'm through with one ache, the next ache is just a wee bit more painful. I think the previous ache is just a practice for the next ache.

Getting up from bed the other day, I complained to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that my body was achy all over. I'm not sure why I thought she needed to know about all of these aches and pains, but I had to spill my beans.

After my lecture, she looked at me and said, "Maybe you need some body parts replaced." Then she continued, "I know an antique store I could take you."

I did not find that very funny, and smiled sarcastically at her and went to my office to complain to myself.

I've been to the doctor quite a few times in the last few years to deal with a variety of body aches and pains. He prescribed to me so much medicine that I kind of believe I'm a drug addict at this point. I have a pill for every ache and pain in my body along with substitutes.

While in my office, the telephone rang, and it was, you guessed it, a call reminding me that my car warranty was about to expire. Of course, I have no such warranty on any of my vehicles. However, it did get me to think about something.

Is my body warranty on the verge of expiring?

I'm waiting for someone to call me and offer me a renewed body warranty. That would solve a lot of my problems, I think.

In the meantime, I have to settle for what I got.

I started to chuckle. I discovered The



out to  
pastor

• james snyder

Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is having an affair with Mr. Arthur Ritis. He's in her hand, fingers, and knee. No matter where she goes, Arthur goes along with her. I will never know why she puts up with Arthur.

Some of my worst pain is a pain in the neck. I get this so often as I get older. When I was younger, I had no pain of this nature. But getting older, I've had this pain in the neck. Personally, I want to be a pain in the neck to somebody, like The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I know what would happen if I were a pain in her neck. She would say something very nice at my funeral.

I was having a little trouble with my hip, and was tempted to ask her to take me to her favorite antique store. After all, what did I have to lose in that regard?

When I told her, she smiled at me and said, "I don't think I can. I'm afraid they will want to keep you."

Talk about a pain in the neck?

As I get older, I am trying to learn how to deal with all the aches and pains that come daily. As soon as I get used to one pain, a new one shows up and I have to start all over again. Why isn't there one pain pill to deal with all the pain in my body?

I tried several things to deal with my pain. First of course is the doctor. Every time the doctor sees me he smiles and greets me very heartily. I used to think he was happy to see me, but then I realized when I went to him, he was getting money out of my insurance, Medicare, and whatever else I have. Realizing this, I began to understand that to all those doctors I am an ATM machine.

Home & Family  
Harvest is Coming

Combines will soon be rolling across Kansas for wheat harvest, with other crops not too far in the future.

What memories I have of growing up on a farm! I remember going out in the wheat field in the evening to bring food to my family that was harvesting. And yes, we set down in the camper and enjoyed a meal together. They would take shifts in driving the combine and then come in to eat.

I encourage families to make time to eat together during a break in the harvest. If you don't have a camper set up a portable table and chairs. The break from harvest activity is a great way to recharge and catch up with others before heading back out to the field.

When planning food in the field, follow these guidelines to keep the party safe.

Part of the tradition in farm country is feeding the people working to bring in the harvest. Meals in the field follow many of the same guidelines for safe picnics and backyard barbecue meals.



from  
other pens

• Melinda Daily

Clean. Pack wet wash cloths with soap to clean dirty hands. Another option is a spare soap bottle with a mix of water and soap. Keep in mind that hand sanitizer is not effective on dirty hands. Wash them first, then apply hand sanitizer for best results.

Separate. Keep raw meat and poultry away from ready-to-eat-foods. Use a clean utensil for each dish. Use a clean plate when going for second helpings of food.

Cook. Use a food thermometer to check for doneness. Cook all poultry to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Cook burgers and sliders to

an internal temperature of 160 F.

Chill. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Put out food in batches.

Many foods can be prepared in advance and frozen for use later. Baked goods—Bread, cookies, cupcakes and more—freeze well. After baking, cool these foods completely before packaging.

Many casseroles, meat pies or pasta dishes can be frozen and baked from the freezer. Use aluminum foil containers or other containers made to go from the freezer to the oven with ease.

If there is access to electricity out in the field with some farm equipment, it can be used to plug in slow cookers or roasters to keep hot. But be sure the voltage is compatible for the appliances being used.

Hope for a good safe harvest for everyone!

Melinda Daily is a Sunflower Extension District Family Consumer Science Agent