

IRON PEAK LOOKOUT

Volume I, No. 2

February 1985

THE BEAR FACTS

At least three families have reported encounters with bears this winter, with one of the incidents ending in a bear being shot to death.

The shooting occurred when a man, hearing unusual noises outside his house, went to investigate and was surprised by a bear which reared up as if to attack. A family living about two miles away had earlier come home to find a bear sitting in their yard eating from a bag of cookies and drinking from a carton of milk which it had obtained by tipping over the back-porch refrigerator. Still another family came home from a trip and discovered that a bear had broken into their house and generally made a mess of things.

There's no way of knowing if the bear that was killed was responsible for the other incidents. Chances are that it was; most bears previously seen around here have not been aggressive and in fact have tended to run away from people and/or dogs.

There has been, however, a startling increase in attacks by bears against humans, not only in California, but all across the West. It has been suggested that a possible explanation lies in the use of the tranquilizer phencyclidine (PCP) by park rangers to subdue unruly bears. It is estimated

that some bears have been drugged with PCP over 100 times. PCP, as any urban police officer can tell you, often stimulates irrational and violent behavior in young people who smoke it in the form known as angel dust.

Is PCP responsible for increased bear violence, or are bears simply getting tired of humans intruding on their turf? Nobody knows for sure, but in the meantime, the best idea if you meet a bear is to stay out of its way. In addition to being illegal to kill a bear (except in self-defense, of course), it is also very difficult if you don't have the right weapon and by no means a sure thing even if you do. A wounded bear is an angry bear, and that can be a dangerous thing, not only for you, but also for your neighbors.

If you have to run from a bear, remember that bears have a hard time running downhill. If you're already at the bottom of a hill, you're on your own. You could always try reasoning with the bear. You never know; maybe he was misunderstood as a child.

POT SWITCH BEDEVILS LOCAL GROWER

A man who is well-known for the high quality of the marijuana he grows complained that several unknown persons came to his house one night and either drugged or hypnotized him so that he was unable to

move. When he recovered the following morning, he found that the intruders had removed his entire crop from a storage room where it was drying and replaced it with an inferior grade of marijuana.

SHUT UP AND DRINK YOUR CHEMICALS

It has been several months since the governor and legislature of the state of California emphatically told the people of Mendocino County that they have no say in whether they will be sprayed with poisonous chemicals. Until now there have been no attempts by logging companies to spray local forest lands with phenoxy herbicides (or Agent Orange, as they were known in Vietnam), but just as this issue of the LOOKOUT was going to press, news came through that Louisiana Pacific intends to be the first corporate criminal to re-institute chemical warfare against the people of Mendocino County.

Louisiana Pacific, which may have already caused more damage to our local environment than any other private or public entity, plans to aerially spray 100 acres on Mount Sanhedrin near Willits. L-P spokesmen made it clear that this is only the first of many planned sprayings.

These announcements were made at a January 28 dog-and-pony show which saw L-P parade a series of "expert" witnesses before skeptical local media representatives in an attempt to convince them that phenoxy herbicides were not only safe, but would actually be "good" for Mendocino County. Although they stopped short of recommending that people sprinkle the stuff on their breakfast cereal, the L-P mouthpieces continued to trumpet the theme that spraying cancer causing poisons on our forest lands is the only way to maintain

a viable local economy and that those who prefer to drink pure water and breathe untainted air are a bunch of wooly-headed extremists obstreperously standing in the way of "progress." *

Louisiana Pacific is not the only institution expecting the rest of us to ingest poison to further its own short-sighted goals. The federal government's Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has announced that it intends to spray both private and public lands with herbicides to combat what it perceives as the marijuana menace.

Ignoring opposition from state and local governments, including such anti-marijuana fanatics as state Attorney General John Van de Kamp, the DEA insists it will begin spraying with paraquat as early as this spring. Even Chevron Corporation, the manufacturer of paraquat, has stated its opposition to the DEA plans, calling them a dangerous misuse of the herbicide. Chevron, never known as a champion of the environment, apparently fears that it will become the target of massive lawsuits, as did Dow Chemical and the other manufacturers of Agent Orange.

The DEA's position seems to be that marijuana constitutes such a drastic danger to our society that its eradication justifies the widespread poisoning of watersheds and agricultural lands, in total disregard of the United States Constitution and the rights of American citizens. All this in spite of the fact that after years of searching, no one has yet found a shred of evidence to suggest that marijuana is anywhere near as dangerous as tobacco, a product not only approved of, but actually sub-

*See related story on the next page

sidized by the same federal government that seems prepared to destroy Mendocino County in order to save it from itself.

*A FOOTNOTE ON LOGGING

Louisiana Pacific may feel that the previous article's reference to "our" forest lands is inaccurate, since the lands in question are theirs, not ours. It is the viewpoint of the LOOKOUT that finite resources such as timber, gas, oil, and yes, even water and air, belong to all of the people, not just to whichever corporate octopus has managed to grasp them within the rapacious tentacles of "private property rights."

The present system encourages short-term profits at the cost of long-term management of our forest resources, and it virtually guarantees the greedy and destructive practices that will, if unchecked, destroy the North Coast logging industry within our lifetimes.

Many local people feel that corporations like L-P should be allowed extra leeway since they provide so many jobs, but they're forgetting that L-P doesn't care about the people of Mendocino County; it cares about extracting the maximum amount of dollars from this county in the shortest possible time. When they've finished, they'll pack up and leave an economic and environmental wasteland as they've already done in so many other places around the country.

Public management of timber resources (and not by such corporate lackeys as the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management) would be a first step toward sustainable logging practices that would provide a permanent and secure economic base for our county instead of one-time profits of obscene proportions for corporate carpetbaggers like Louisiana Pacific.

If you feel similarly, you might consider letting your Fourth District Supervisor, "Handsome John" Cimolino (the LOOKOUT has decided to stop referring to John as "Old Sourpuss" because one reader thought it wasn't very nice) know what you think. He's rumored to have some influence with L-P, although it may be the other way around; one local writer has described Cimolino as "the supervisor from Louisiana Pacific."

PARANOIA-FREE GARDENING

Lest the LOOKOUT be accused of focusing only on negative issues, we'd like to report on one very positive development. More and more local farmers are diversifying into the realm of legal agriculture. This might be due in part to increased government pressure on marijuana growers, but it's probably equally due to a lot of people realizing that neither marijuana nor money in themselves make up a particularly nourishing diet and that Safeway doesn't have a whole lot to offer, either.

Although neither our climate nor our soil are ideal for agriculture, people in many parts of the world make their living farming under much less favorable conditions. One big advantage we have here is that, since most of our land has never been farmed, we can grow organically here with a much greater chance of success than farmers in area where the balance of nature has already been drastically tampered with.

You probably already know that organically grown produce is much better for you. Did you also know that it commands a considerably

higher price in the marketplace? Many local stores and restaurants will be happy to buy your produce, because it's generally fresher and of better quality than the stuff that has to be trucked in from San Francisco.

So what grows best in our area? In addition to most vegetables, certain fruits, berries, and grapes will do well. Apples and pears are the easiest, and with sufficient winter cooling and good drainage (more likely at the higher altitudes) cherries can also be grown. With enough water, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, and blueberries will all do great, and none of them require an inordinate amount of effort. Many varieties of grapes will flourish, and if you have an area with an unshaded southern exposure, you may even be able to produce high-quality wine grapes.

Right now is the time to plant all of the aforementioned items (except vegetables, of course) while they are still in their dormant, or bare-root stage. You can find some of them at Weathertop Nursery in Laytonville, although Sanhedrin Nursery in Willits has a much better selection. Both places are very generous with advice on how to get your orchard or vineyard started.

In future issues the LOOKOUT will take a more detailed look at the various crops and will share experiences of local gardeners. The Garden for Joy column in the Laytonville Ledger also contains much useful information.

One does not use good iron to make nails. One does not use good men to make soldiers.

...old Chinese proverb

WHAT DO YOU MEAN MY HOUSE IS AGAINST THE LAW?

The Mendocino County Board of Stupidvisors is blundering along with its Building and Land Use Resolve (BLUR II) program which seems to be living up to its name by dissolving further and further into confusion. For some months now the right wingers have been locking horns with the liberal do-gooders (some would say busy-bodies) over just how the county government will regulate your right to live in your own home and just how much you will have to pay for this dubious service.

Belligerently championing the cause of the far right is Frank Creasy, a man far more deserving of the sobriquet "Old Sourpuss" than last month's candidate, Supervisor John Cimolino. Mr. Creasy, whose misanthropic maunderings can be read every other week in his Mendocino Grapevine column, represents a mysterious group known as Mendocino County Associates (MCA).

Although most members of MCA have chosen to remain anonymous (for their own protection, they say), it is generally assumed that they consist mostly of big-money developers, many from outside the county. Mr. Creasy and MCA feel that there is a counterculture (you could probably substitute communist here) plot to take over Mendocino County and deny them their God-given right as Americans to plunder and rape every square inch of land they can get their greedy little fingers on. They want the Board of Supervisors to use the building code laws to force people out of their homes and return control of the land to its rightful

stewards, the real estate, timber, and strip-mining interests.

Mr. Creasy's opposition does not come, as you might expect, from outraged citizens who want the government to mind its own business, but rather from some back-to-the-land types who originally opposed all building code-type harassment, but who are now cooperating with the Board of Stupes to draw up a system that would force all of us to register our homes with the county and pay hefty fees for inspections.

Both sides agree that the government has the right to take away the homes of those who refuse to go along; the only real dispute is over just how harsh to be about it. The right-wingers like Creasy want to impose heavy fines (\$10 or more a day) on non-code homes and confiscate the homes when the bill reaches a certain point. The liberals merely want to place liens against your home; they won't take your house until you try to sell it. So you get a choice: fascism with a grimace or a smile.

Most people in these parts say they have no intention of cooperating with whatever crackpot enforcement program the county comes up with next. In the meantime houses are continuing to go up, almost none of them with permits. The Board of Stupes would probably like to forget about the whole thing, but Creasy and MCA won't let them; they have a habit of suing the county whenever they don't get their way. Maybe it's time they got a taste of their own medicine.

SHERIFF TINKLES TIN CUP
FOR ALL OUT POT PUTSCH

Proving once again that ignorance is no barrier to a career in government, Mendocino County Sheriff Tim Shea has announced his latest

anti-marijuana scheme: he is soliciting contributions from the public to pay for an additional team of CAMP terrorists to invade our county next fall.

Taking his cue from P.T. Barnum, whose dictum, "There's a sucker born every minute," has become a cornerstone of the American dream, Sheriff Shea apparently is of the opinion that there are enough born-again crackpots and gullible do-badders out there to make his plea worthwhile. Or maybe he's counting on the CIA funnelling covert aid into Mendocino a la Nicaragua.

Sheriff Shea's fund-raising campaign is particularly ludicrous in light of his past performance in fiscal matters. With the county constantly on the brink of bankruptcy, and having to cut back on schools, libraries, and road maintenance to feed the Sheriff's Department's insatiable appetite for more deputies and more jails, Sheriff Shea had the gall to come before the Board of Supervisors last year to ask them to replace \$300,000 that his department had come up short by. When asked what had happened to the 300 grand, Shea essentially replied, well, he wasn't sure, it just wasn't there anymore.

Now in most places a public official who gave an answer like that would be in danger of being charged with malfeasance in office, but given the pro-police anti-people bias of our Board of Stupes, Shea was given his money and told to be more careful next time.

Sheriff Shea has clearly become an expensive embarrassment to Mendocino County. Unfortunately he's not up for re-election until November of 1986, and even then there's no guarantee that he'll be replaced. The reason for this is not a lack

of intelligence on the part of the voters, but simply a lack of qualified candidates. Like most of our county officials, Shea was elected primarily because he was capable of speaking in public without drooling and because the other candidates were even worse. It's a heck of a way to run a county (or a country), isn't it?

There has been some talk that Ukiah attorney Jared Carter could be persuaded to oppose Shea in the next election. Carter's views on law enforcement (and government in general) could make such a race very interesting.

AND NOW A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

When I first decided to publish the LOOKOUT I expected that it would cause some controversy. I was not disappointed.

I was surprised, though, that some people were objecting not so much to what was being said in the LOOKOUT, but to the fact that it was being said at all. They felt there was a danger that the LOOKOUT would draw undesirable attention to our little neck of the woods.

I have thought long and hard about this issue, and I still feel that 1) the advantages of an informed community outweigh the the dangers posed by an increased outside awareness of our existence and 2) it is naive in the extreme to suppose that those who wish us harm are not already very well informed about what goes on up here in the hills. The fact that there were no CAMP raids in our area last

fall had nothing to do with our keeping a low profile; it was simply that the CAMP folks knew there were bigger and better fields elsewhere.

It's important to realize (and I hope the LOOKOUT will help make people aware of this) that there's a lot more going on up here than just marijuana. There are people raising families, retired people, people getting into more traditional forms of agriculture, musicians, artists, and more...

I believe in freedom, and for that reason I believe in people's right to grow marijuana if they choose to. But marijuana growers do not have the right to expect others who live here to adjust their lifestyles to accomodate the growers' needs. When you think about it, that wouldn't be much different from General Motors or Louisiana Pacific expecting whole communities to put up with their pollution so they can make more money.

Recognizing, however, that many people prefer to maintain their privacy, and not necessarily because they are engaged in any illegal activities, the LOOKOUT will not publish names or addresses of local residents without their permission.

Another criticism, and one with which I agree, was that readers had no way to communicate with the LOOKOUT. Beginning with this issue, that will no longer be true. Mailboxes will be placed in at least two places along local roads, and Grapewine Station will also accept any letters, articles, drawings, or anything else you'd like to see published in the LOOKOUT. If you have something to say, we'd like to hear about it.