



HEEL 'N' PAWS

BY JODY G

When is National Pet Week?



This week, May 3rd through 9th.

Our Humane Society, shelters and animal support groups are asking us to check in with them on volunteer opportunities. Volunteers are sorely needed at local shelters, and helping all groups with community outreach for our nation's cats and dogs. There are many choices of hands on services we can provide besides walking the dogs and socializing with the cats.

Foster and/or permanent homes continue to be very much needed and greatly appreciated.

Did I hear someone say, I have allergies? If you want to provide a home to a dog, you may want to consider a poodle thought to be hypoallergenic. The Obama family's dog, the Portuguese Water Dog, also won't add to your sneezing and running nose.

You really like cats but can't take a chance on the fur balls? I suggest you select a cat with sleek and very short fur. And, using an inexpensive flea comb, it only takes a couple of minutes to run the comb gently thru the cat or kitten's fur to release loose fur, dander and remove flea eggs.

LANDING ON THEIR PAWS Why try to help street cats?

The words ringing in my ears are "cats are survivors." Yes, cats are great in helping to keep our city's rodent population down. They can hunt for food and seek out water and shelter. Yet, not all cats and kittens are survivors. Why not?

Cats can find it very difficult to try and mix with a colony of feral cats. Try to keep in mind that cats you can pet were probably living in a home with daily food and water. Generally, dominant males and aggressive females chase off domestic cats and kittens. Un-neutered cats that haven't been fixed may be broken in spirit and angry. A rude reminder- nature is often cruel within our animal kingdom.

Sometimes there isn't any tolerance for new young blood or adult guests in a colony. Look at us. We're also fighting over personal space and feeling overcrowded in our now less than golden state of California.

Sadly, too many unwanted cats and kittens never get a chance to land on their feet! Like us human critters, cats want to be given a chance to

live out their natural life having their basic survival needs met. Love is a bonus. Again, how can we help manage our abandoned (sometimes persecuted) homeless cats?

We can speak UP for our animal friends. We can sign a petition to support our nation's Humane Society TNR (trap, neuter, return) programs for homeless cats. I'll have petitions available at key locations and will let you know when and where the first week of June.

We can attend a city hall meeting on TNR and brainstorm on how to help city residents and our city's homeless cat population.

The USA Humane Society is actively pushing for all communities, veterinarians and City officials to take action and support efforts made to provide rescue and outreach to abandoned, at times abused, and unwanted feline population.

Thank you for your help!

Until the first week of June, happy trails. Happy Mother's Day!

(Many dogs and cats are waiting for a new mom. Don't forget- the gifts are many with pet ownership, including non conditional love.)

Together Through Life:

Play the Accordion while the Cities Burn

By Jesse Lanum

A cold blooded killer stalking the town/Cop cars blinkin', something bad going down

Buildings are crumbling in the neighborhood/But there's nothing to worry about, 'cause it's all good

It's all good, I say it's all good. Who!

So rings the penultimate stanza of Bob Dylan's new album "Together Through Life." The apocalypse is in sight, and he's made peace with it. Whatever happens is part of a plan that ultimately ends well, as in the Book of Revelation, where God sets up His Kingdom on earth after chaos and mayhem, after the beast, after sickness and women running for the hills. They all get their place in the new album. Dylan has been "lookin' the world over/looking far off into the east," and he sees his baby coming with the village beast.

Women often stand as surrogate for Jesus or Satan in Dylan's songs, well, at least since his late seventies conversion to Christianity (think of the recent Modern Times song "Someday Baby"). In the late seventies, his lyrics were transparent. Since the eighties, they have become more veiled. He doesn't profess/confess his faith as often or as unequivocally. As he sang on the Love and Theft album, "Already confessed no need to confess again."

Don't look for Dylan playing characters in these songs. According to Bob in his recent interview with Bill Flanagan, "Wait a minute, Bill. I'm not a playwright. The people in my songs are all me." Keep this in mind as you're listening to the sometimes woeful revelations that will surely burn the ears of aspiring young Dylanites, like the one in "I Feel a Change Comin' On."

"Dreams never did work for me anyway even when they did come true."

"I Feel a Change Comin' On" is the real masterpiece of the album, though "This Dream of You" comes in a close second. David Hidalgo of Los Lobos lends his accordion to the songs. He gives the whole album a dusty, boarder town feel. Many of the songs would be at home in a Sam Peckinpah score. Maybe Dylan is hoping for a Pat Garret and Billy the Kid remake.

The 67-year-old pays homage to the greats on this album as he has been doing for a while now. The song "My Wife's Home Town" uses the music from Willie Dixon's "I Just Want to Make Love to You." On "I Feel a Change Comin' On," Dylan's voice brightens as he sails on top of the accordion, "I'm listening to Billy Joe Shaver and I'm reading James Joyce/Some people tell me I've got the blood of the land in my voice."

For whatever reason, the best phrase on the album. It's a perfect juxtaposition. Shaver is known to be the least pretentious writer while Joyce may be the most- two giants on opposite ends of the spectrum. Yet, both embody their endemic regions better than their counterparts. Joyce wanted readers to be able to piece Dublin together solely from his writings, if they ever had to, and few question Shaver as the American South incarnate. Some folks say Dylan has the blood of the land in his voice. In his autobiography, Dylan tells us that he learned what he needed to know about writing reading newspaper clippings from Civil War Era America.

In "Life is Hard," the second song on the album, Dylan strains his voice to closely follow the guitar melody, which is

complemented by some excellent mandolin playing. Imagine Charles Aznavour at the end of his life crooning bitter sweetly to the barflies in "The Iceman Cometh." It's a sad tune. "I passed the old schoolyard/Admitting life is hard/Without you near me." It also brings to mind Yeats's "Among School Children," with the exception that this weary traveler knows exactly what it all meant.

"Forgetful Heart" is another gem on the album, which sounds similar to "Ain't Talkin'" from the Modern Times album. Some are saying that "Forgetful Heart" comes from The Works of John Bunyan Volume I: "Wouldst thou grow in the grace of fear? then take heed of a FORGETFUL HEART." The connection here is a little vague, but Dylan often borrows from antique poetry. Some of Modern Times was taken from an obscure Civil War poet.

There's a lot of Texas in the new album. It plays out in a last chance saloon somewhere. Outside the bar are post apocalyptic "boulevards of broken cars," which would not be unusual in pre apocalyptic small town Texas. According to the Douglas Brinkley interview, Dylan told French Pres. Sarkozy, "I'm from the Lone Star state." He later gave him an antique Texas belt buckle.

The anthem of the album is the pre-released "Beyond Here Lies Nothing," which plays unlike anything else that's been recorded in the past thirty or forty years. Jack Kerouac said that the only time he'd heard music played loud enough was in Mexico. You may want to head down there to plug it in.

A Common Sense Approach to Avoid Illness

By: M. Etchieson Rio Vista Fire Department

In recent weeks a new virus similar to influenza has been detected in countries around the world. This new virus, H1N1, otherwise known as "swine flu" has shown signs of spreading through large geographic regions. As of May 4, there has only been one fatality linked to this virus and it was a 22month old in Texas. The vast amount of media coverage of this virus has caused many people in our community a great deal of concern. The Rio Vista Fire Department would like to present some simple steps for prevention and detection of the H1N1 virus to help ease the growing concern in our community. One of the more common questions is "Is the flu contagious?" The simple answer is YES. The H1N1 virus is contagious in much the same manor as the common flu we experience every year.

There are some simple measures you can take to protect yourself.

• Wash your hands with soap and water, especially after

you cough or sneeze

- Cover your cough
- Do not re-use tissues; throw used tissues away immediately
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- If you get sick stay home from work or school and limit contact with others

Some of the signs and symptoms of H1N1

- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Coughing
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

If you have a mild fever, cough or sore throat you should stay home. The current recommendation is to care for yourself and treat this virus as you would the regular flu. Rest, drink plenty of fluids and take over the counter flu medications to relieve symptoms. You should contact 911 or your primary care provider immediately if you

have any severe symptoms such as trouble breathing. If you would like further information on this virus please contact The Rio Vista Fire Department at 374-2233 or visit www.cdc.gov/swineflu www.cdph.ca.gov

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