

THE YELLOW DOG

NEWSLETTER FOR THE UVATA



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President's Message

Red Marbles

Babs Miller was bagging some early potatoes for me. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily apprising a basket of freshly picked green peas.

I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes. Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller and the ragged boy next to me.

"Hello Barry, how are you today?"

"H'lo, Mr. Miller, Fine than ya. Jus' admirin' them peas sure look good."

They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?"

"Fine. Gittin' stronger alla' time."

"Good. Anything I can help you with?"

"No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them pea."

"Would you like to take some home?"

"No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with."

"Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?"

"All I got's my prize marble here."

"Is that right? Let me see it."

"Here 'tis. She's a dandy."

"I can see that. Hmmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?"

"Not zackley, but almost."

"Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble."

"Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller." are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for

I left the stand smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys, and their bartering.”

Several years went by, each more rapid than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having his viewing that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary, we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform, and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits, and white shirts...all very professional looking.

They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket. Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket.

Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and mentioned the story she had told me about the marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket.

“Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim “traded” them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color, or size...they came to pay their debt.”

“We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world,” she confided, “but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho.”

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

As ag. teachers, we continually offer many things to our students and sacrifice numerous hours that might otherwise be spent accumulating the “wealth of the world.” In life we may not be appreciated, we may not even be thanked for our work. However, as students mature, and come back to say “Hi” at school, it seems most often they make a stop by the ag. room because in the long run they recognize the real meaning in our stated motto “Learning to do, doing to learn, earning to live, living to serve.”

We have many challenges facing our profession: increased graduation requirements, low pay raises, high class sizes with shrinking budgets, more challenging students who have less agricultural background etc. It falls to us, those who really care about kids, & want them to succeed, to help them find a love for life, a love for agriculture, a love for learning, and to help transform their lives into the best they can become. This is an unending task and will never be easy, but the rewards are insurmountable.

Good luck.

Grant Peterson

2005– 06 UVATA President

Making Announcements

Do you write announcements of FFA meetings, examinations, committee meetings, etc., on the board, only to find that many students never see them?

Students get so used to seeing the blackboard full of written material that they become immune to announcements written there. The problem is to make the announcement stand out in some part of the room where it will be noticed and not smothered by other written material.

Try this. On the band saw, cut out , or have cut out, a cartoon likeness of a barnyard animal of your choice or of the class's choice. Select a name for it. Mount a small blackboard behind and above it. Paint in a suitable caption, such as "Ferdinand the bull says" and leave space for your announcement. Then write your notices as they do in cartoons, as though the animal were speaking the words. Your finished product would read something like this. "Ferdinand the bull says, 'Hooray, final exam on Wednesday' " or, "Daisy June says, 'FFA meeting Thursday night, 7p.m., free eats' ". Now place your animal above the blackboard, to one side, or preferably where the students can't miss it as they come in. Students will learn to look for new announcements when they come in. It helps to paint the animal in bright colors and to use colored chalk for your announcements.

Other Possibilities

Use a popular comic character to make announcements, such as Donald Duck, Popeye, etc.

Use your talking animal to correct the class, such as "Ferdinand the bull says, 'Too much talking yesterday' or Four books left on the table yesterday.'

From Charles Bigo

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Some Useful Websites

By David Wilson

Ag teachers, here are a couple of websites that may be of help. I just found them and plan to utilize them next school year. The first one The Cattle Learning Center, I read about in a Farm Journal article. This site provides a model for cattle reproduction. This model is a web-based interactive training tool with audio, video and quizzes teaching about cattle reproduction. www.cattlelearningcenter.org/ cost is \$35.00.

The second site called First Step, I received a flyer about at National FFA Convention, but I just recently checked into it. This site has 14 inquiry lessons. The lessons are listed on this webpage and when you click on a particular lesson you will get the lesson standards and details about every aspect of the lesson. futurescientists.tamu.edu/lessons.html

there is no cost.

Here are a few more sites that are useful:

www.marketplaceforthemind.state.pa.us/m4m/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=150587

This site is out of Pennsylvania and has some good labs and activities. Definitely worth a look.

I really like the PBS NOVA site. It's great for biology. There are short video segments and online learning activities for students to complete. www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sciencenow/3209/04.html This one is all about stem cell research.

www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sciencenow/3214/01.html A neat link about what life really is.

www.scienceteacherprogram.org/biology/biolps.html A bunch of biology lessons. Quite Good.

An excellent site with online activities and lessons for students. It ties right into our state biology core.

<http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/> So much at this site you must explore it.

Perhaps several of you all ready know about these sites, but I thought they were good enough to share. I have attached a roughed out DNA Fingerprint activity that I have used in the past. It uses a PBS NOVA online module.

DNA Finger Print Activity for BAST

Instructions: Go to the following website: www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sheppard/analyze.html

Read the instructions on this web site and complete the online DNA fingerprinting activity. Be sure you complete the lab part as instructed. There are three steps to this activity.

When you have completed the online activity you are to type up a one page or less response explaining how DNA fingerprinting works, the equipment used and how to read a DNA fingerprint. Include who you found the murderer to be. Do quality work. Be sure your write up is detailed and includes each step of the DNA fingerprint process. This is to be turned in at the end of the hour.