

Swap Talk



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By Steve Van Hook

479-0375

REPENTED: Cindy Canty will trade red velvet drapes, a red velvet double-bed spread, a red velvet swag lamp, and red velvet cupid plaques for pastel curtains and spread to take their place. Call the Skills Exchange, 479-0375.

LOST SOULS: Mark Zozaya adds show repair to his list of barterables.

NEEDS DOUGH: Sue Hallenbeck will trade various valuables for a flour mill.

PUT ANCHORS AWAY: Keith Hubbard, who shares my mutual love of boats and seas, left the ocean life behind when he retired from his government job down south, saying "There's more important things in life than a good pension." After spending many years as a photography expert for the government, and the last 10-15 years visiting spots here in Oregon, Keith and his wife have newly (six weeks now) become residents of our area. Mr. Hubbard is in the process of remodeling his home, complete with ideas from *Mother Earth News*, and called us trying to find an electrician to wire some wall outlets. We matched him with Vern Curtis, who was in turn rewarded with a dish washer for his services. Keith says, "We love it here, but the building restrictions are tough." He also adds he'd like to find someone knowledgeable in rammed earth housing. In regard to the wiring swap, Keith reports "I've got no complaints."

HUNGRY OTT: Michael Ott will trade mechanical, gardening, housepainting (interior and exterior) and industrial skills for food of any type.

DOOB'S TUBES: Steve Doob will trade auto body repair for a good used AM/FM stereo. Whether it has tubes or not is not important, but Steve prefers "good deals". Reach him through us, 479-0375.

SEEKS SAW: Tony Martin will trade highly recommended carpentry skills for a chainsaw.

STERLING DEAL: Susan Sterling will provide office work (efficient typing and filing) in return for training as a dental assistant.

AT HOME: Paul Knoble came to us a week or so ago hurriedly trying to find a new place to live in exchange for carpentry and landscaping skills. As happens surprisingly often, the solution came that very day when Sandy Day called in offering a small mobile home to someone who could build an A-frame cover and do other maintenance jobs. Sandy and her husband had completed several successful exchanges before, we were confident all would work out well. And it did. When I called to follow-up the swap, Paul was all moved in, and was outside constructing his end of the deal. Sandy elatedly

reported: "It's really working out well for both of us, thanks to you." Paul echoed the same sentiments. Sandy also adds, "When reading the *Review*, yours is the first column I turn to... if nothing else, it gives me a lot of good ideas."

SAME STORY: No doubt about it, hard times have come to visit once again. Rising prices and dwindling revenue make every household head frown with concern. Perhaps the gloomiest threat to family peace is the loss of dignity and the pride of self-reliance, as more of us are forced to turn to other sources for financial assistance.

When times get tight and it seems like no solution is in sight for a pressing problem, we provide an opportunity for those low on cash to still get some needs met by using their most valuable resources: skills, knowledge, crafts, etc.

Like every family, we at the Skills Exchange must meet certain debts for our security, too. When speaking of self-support, we face a funny paradox: as the money available for us (and others) to run on becomes tighter, the more a service like ours will be needed in the community.

The Skills Exchange cannot allow itself to become too dependent on any outside source of funding, and expect to maintain a firm base of support. As the demands on our program increase, out of a drive for self-reliance, so must our demands on the users of our service.

At a recent meeting of local business people and citizens concerned with the continuance of the Skills Exchange, it was strenuously suggested that I swap some of the joys of martyrdom for a healthier attitude towards self-support, realizing that the barter system is a valuable service and deserves compensation in return. Simply put, for us to continue, we must generate revenue.

So far, the most workable means suggested was a percentage charge (say 3%) to be collected from both sides after a successful exchange. The traders would assign a value to the swap, then mail us their compensation, with a possible minimum of \$3. If we were to complete 100 successful exchanges per month, this would generate us a minimum of \$600 per month in funding to support our program.

Of course, self-support will not come to us overnight, but this is something we should work very hard at this upcoming year. The above method is only one possible means, but it is the most promising way to self-reliance I have heard suggested yet.

The final decision lies with our board of directors and ultimately with our users themselves.

If you have any thoughts or questions, please call me at 479-0375, day or night, or write P.O. Box 1673, Grants Pass, OR. 97526.

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HARRY HAS HAPPY HOME: Harry, a retired Marine living on a small pension, came to the Skills Exchange a few weeks back in desperate need of a new place to park his trailer and three dogs. His old spot has just been sold and he had to move quickly. He was unable to afford to pay rent for a trailer space, so we listed his skills in this column, hoping someone would have need for his services and offer him a home.

No luck. Came the day Harry had to move, and he had nowhere to go and little money to get there on. We were able to locate him a temporary place to park, but due to the problem of the dogs, Harry's physical inability to provide much work in exchange, and a seeming personality conflict with the property owner, Harry was asked to leave immediately.

Once again Harry was left homeless.

He called the state police, the sheriff, even the Justice Department; but, as Harry's problem was a civil matter, there was little that could be done for him.

Harry called us once again, said he was going to hook up his trailer, start driving as far as the little money he had would take him, and see what could be done when he couldn't go any farther.

He was, however, due to the recent rains, unable to get enough traction with his aging truck to pull his trailer up the slick, muddy driveway. He asked if we could send someone out with a 4x4 to at least haul him up to the road where he could get a firm grip on things himself.

As I was searching for someone to give Harry a hand, a man visited the Skills Exchange office and explained that he and his wife had been searching for months to find a retired gentleman to property-sit their large ranch in Selma, and that they offered a nice trailer spot on the river in return.

I explained Harry's situation to the visitor; he replied that Harry was exactly what he had been looking for and promptly hauled Harry, trailer, truck and dogs out to his Selma ranch.

As a concerned sheriff's deputy following Harry's problem commented, "There is surely a divine force watching over such situations." Adds Harry, "Thank God there's places like the Skills Exchange to turn to."

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Mike's Miracle: Mike Delaney is a Viet Nam vet who came back home from overseas disillusioned with the American way and moved to Canada. After many years with our northern neighbor, Mike has returned to the states only to find a difficult time in getting resituated. After frustrating experiences with the employment office and the CETA office, Mike was referred to the Skills Exchange by the helpful people at Josephine County Information and Referral. He came into our office downhearted and dejected, saying, "I only want a chance to work and get settled."

Willa Eaton had been trying, after previous bad experiences, to find a *reliable* handyman to build a pool deck and do other projects in exchange for room and board with herself and grandchildren. Mike had received carpentry training in the service, so we matched up the two of them.

Mike says, "I'm not a religious guy, but something good sure gave me some guidance and help."

Mrs. Eaton states emphatically: "He's ours now . . . Mike fits in with the family like he's been here all his life."

Through the assistance of the employment office and CETA, Mike is going to work for an auto parts yard.

With a crack of gratitude in his voice, Mike says, "I can't begin to tell you how good it's worked out."

Spare Room: If you can provide permanent or temporary room and board in exchange for housekeeping, a handyman, or any other specific skills, call the Skills Exchange and help someone else while helping yourself, too!

Hungarian Helper: Olga Martin would like to write her aunt in Hungary, and needs some help with the Hungarian language. Please call the Skills Exchange if you can help.

Tax Time: If you need some help with those 1040 short forms, or those long, long forms, several people have offered their capable tax skills to help those not so adept. Call the Skills Exchange for assistance.

Shower Stall: May Cox has a long list of goodies she will trade for a used shower stall.

Wants Jugs: Jessie Ernie has gallon glass jugs and smaller jugs with three-inch size necks that she would like to trade for plastic gallon jugs with small necks and tops. Reach her through the Skills Exchange, 479-0875.

Hay Trade: Don Pettit will supply the use of his tractor and brawn in helping cut and bale hay for a share of the finished product. Call the Skills Exchange.

Saddle Swap: Virginia Anderson will swap a refrigerator and a gas incubator for a large western saddle.

Well Witcher: Boyd McClung offers his many

successful years of experience with the dowsing rod in exchange for firewood.

Game Table: Linda Dickson has a handmade wood game table that seats eight that she would like to trade away for an electric typewriter.

Wants Wheels: Allen Anderson will trade painting, farm work, handyman skills, and animal care for a small car or truck in good working order.

Doll Home: Peggy Taylor has much to offer someone who could build her little daughter's dolls a home.

Barterin' Bob: Needs some auto body work done on his Henry J in exchange for carpentry, cement work and roofing.

This is next in line of the series listing the skills, services, and goods offered on a barter basis through the Skills Exchange.

If you are in need of something not on this roster, try us anyway. We will try to help you find it. Be sure to clip this and the following columns until the series is completed. Barter is fun. Try a trade today! 479-0375.

Economics tutors, electric water heaters, electronics, electronics tutors, enamellists, engineering, engine rebuilding, English teachers, entertainments, escorts, excavation, exercise instruction, fabrics, farm work, fencing, filing, firemen, firewood, fish, fishing poles, fix-it, fixtures, floor installers, food, food drying, flowers (paper), foraging (wild foods), forge work, foundations, fruit tree pruners, furniture makers, furniture movers, furniture repair, furniture to trade, garden work, goats, goat milk, gourmet cooking, graphics, graphic art, guitar lessons, guns, gun repair, hair cuts, handymen, hauling, hay rakers, healing and health, heating, herb growing, history tutors, home permanents, hot water systems, housekeeping, house sitting, industrial sewing, interior painting, irrigation, ironing, insulation, jacks-of-all-trades, janitorial services, jewelry and jewelry repair.