

# The Moaning Meadows Gazette™

## October Edition 2008

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### The Missing Black Cat

Miss Prudence Erweil reported her black cat missing last Tuesday. The cat simply disappeared. A neighbor, upon hearing of the missing cat, accused Miss Prudence of being a witch.

Upon investigation, the evidence against Miss Erweil is quite condemning.

Kurtis Winfer, the Moaning Meadows policeman, listed as evidence the fact that witches have black cats. Then there is the other condemning evidence; it seems that Miss Prudence also owns a broom. One was found by the policeman in her broom closet. "Since witches ride on brooms, Miss Prudence is definitely a witch" reported Kurtis.

There are, as yet, no flying witch reports, but to be thorough the neighbors of Miss Prudence are going door to door questioning everyone to see if anyone can remember such nighttime activities.

In the meantime, at night all eyes are turned toward the sky in hope of catching any other witches who might be flying around on broomsticks. The good citizens of the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows are well aware of the publicity and the prestige given to anyone who accuses a person of being a witch and having that person convicted.

It was reported on Thursday that Orville Figg thought he saw a witch on a broomstick flying through the air. Mrs. Ivy Figg called Mr. Figg an old fool. A fight broke out. And now Orville is in jail for assaulting his wife. At last report Ivy Figg is still searching the skies for any broomsticks that should fly by.

The witch trial for Miss Prudence Erweil has been set for next Wednesday. This reporter can see no way she can possibly be found innocent. Facts are facts. She has a black cat... AND she has a broom. What more evidence can possibly be needed?

A bonfire has been scheduled for next Saturday for the burning at the stake of Witch Prudence. We all know how much the citizens of Moaning Meadows like fires, so everyone is invited. Please bring your own picnic basket for the gathering afterward.

### **The Upside Down, Upside Down Bat**

Ben Franklin said, "Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." But Cecil Biggins violated that rule by staying up most of the night and rising just before dawn yesterday morning. He then reported that he had discovered a strange phenomenon.

"I found a bat in my barn," he said. "It was a mighty unusual bat." When interviewed Cecil Biggins, claimed that instead of sleeping upside down like bats are supposed to do, this bat was not following the rules. He was sleeping right side up. Cecil said he had never seen such a thing.

Since this is such an important ecological subject, this newspaper has decided to take a survey. Everyone in Moaning Meadows must answer the following question:

Have you ever seen a bat that was sleeping right side up?

- Yes
- No

Vote by filling in the circle. Please deposit your answers in the town square letter box. Results will be announced in the next edition of The Moaning Meadows Gazette. I know everyone will be anxious to hear the results, but please do remember that patience is a virtue.

## Advertisement

For all the good citizens of Moaning Meadows who are terrified of being buried alive by mistake, The Moaning Meadows Whistle Company has come up with a solution. We have invented the one and only "Help Crying Whistle". If you should happen to wake up underground in a tight place you don't seem to be able to get out of, it is possible you are in a coffin. Don't panic, just blow one of our whistles and help will come running.

The whistle is priced reasonably so everyone can afford one. Just ask yourself, "How much is my life really worth?"

Warning: Do not blow this whistle unless you are actually under ground. The Moaning Meadows policeman, Kurtis Winfer, does not like false alarms and he may haul you off to jail

There is a 30-day free trial on the whistle. If the whistle should fail to work properly, while you are buried underground, there is a money back guarantee as long as you return the whistle in person.

## Advertisement

As a follow up to the Help Crying Whistle, Miss Holly Osis, wishes to announce that she has started giving lessons on how to hold your breath and conserve oxygen until someone hears the whistle.

She concluded there might be a short delay between the whistle sound and the rescue. Miss Holly wants you to be prepared.

Contact her at home if you are interested in classes. Everyone knows where she lives. Miss Holly lives in that little white house next to the big blue one down on the corner of Whelms Street. To get to the little white house you will need to cut through the yard of the big blue house. Miss Holly warns that the big blue house has a rather bad-tempered dog. He has the nasty habit of biting so be careful.

If you mention the dog to the mail delivery man, he can give you some advice on how to handle the mangy creature.

This reporter interviewed the mail delivery man. He was quite shaken by the question. He had 2 pieces of advice:

1. Don't ever go near the big blue house!
2. If you must go there, then run like hell.

## Advertisement

Hugh Deeny says that the "Help Crying Whistle" is a dadgum fool idea. The closest house to the graveyard is old Mrs. Totmeir's and she is totally deaf. How is she going to hear a whistle? "Those darn whistle people are just trying to cheat the public. Trying to make money off of good honest people," warns Mr. Deeny.

Hugh Deeny has announced that, for a small fee, he has a public service duty to help out. His class, with a tentative title of "How to Escape From a Coffin While Buried 50 Feet Under Ground" will begin next week. Be sure and register early. He predicts that this class will be very popular. Mr. Deeny advises that in the meantime be sure and let your fingernails grow very long. "All the better to dig with," he claims.

## **The Stolen Scarecrow**

Homer Leadbetter reported to the police, that someone has stolen his scarecrow. The neighborhood is in a state of panic. Everyone is standing by with a shotgun guarding their own scarecrows.

Upon investigation the Moaning Meadows policeman determined the scarecrow had not been kidnapped, he had run away. Kurtis Winfer, the policeman, came to this conclusion after examining the footprints. Instead of footprints the policeman noticed straw marks on the ground and found a few pieces of straw left by the scarecrow scattered across the field.

There has already been a search for the runaway scarecrow without any results. If anyone would like to help, a search party will be formed tomorrow morning. Kurtis claims with pride that he has never lost his man. He admits he doesn't have any expertise in scarecrow searches, but the policeman feels certain he can outsmart the escapee. All the good citizens of Moaning Meadows he has interviewed, claim that scarecrows are not very smart.

"Where's the scarecrow going to go?" asked Willard Towne, the official town worrier.

"It is a good job being a scarecrow," said Granny Smith, "He should not have run away. Ungrateful little stuffed shirt."

## Dog Show News

Granny Smith went off to Muddy Hollow a few days ago and returned with the cutest group of 3 dogs. No one else wanted them and you know how Granny likes to collect stray animals.

Granny Smith feels that her 3 dogs are unique enough to be entered in the next dog show. She is not sure which breed of dog she has, but she feels like her dogs could herald in a new breed category. The ladies of Moaning Meadows Dog Club, all 5 of them, are very excited about this news. A new dog breed has never been considered before.

"It's about time," said Cecil Biggins snarling. "I'm tired of seeing all those tiny, uppity little dogs prancing around. What we need is some manly dogs. I think Granny Smith's new dogs will fill that category."

Granny has asked the people of Moaning Meadows to help her name her three dogs.

They are brown, with big black eyes and the cutest little faces.

The good citizens of the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows stood around in amazement looking at Granny's 3 dogs.

"Do you think Granny knows what she brought home?" asked Earl Mudd.

"Granny can't see worth a hoot," said Cecil Biggins.

"Does she know she owns a 3-headed dog," worried Myron Melvin Murch.

"Darn fool thinks she owns three dogs. Talks to each head on that dog as if it were a separate dog. Woman's crazy," complained Cecil Biggins.

"Who's gonna tell her she only has only one dog."

"Not me," said Myron Melvin Murch. I don't want to get kicked in my shins.

So everyone simply asked, "How are the triplets, Granny?" and pretended there were three dogs.

Upon seeing the 3-headed dog, the librarian, Miss Bobbie True, gasped and ran back to her home to do some research.

She returned running down the street with papers fluttering in her hand. She seemed to be in an awful hurry to present her research findings to the good people of the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows.

"Look! look!" she shouted out of breath from all the running. She pointed at Granny's dog, "That's not a dog. That's a monster. A three-headed dog. It's the hound from Hades. Look at this picture. He's a fierce, flesh-eating dog."

The dog looked at the picture and lunged toward Miss True who promptly fell backwards knocking down Birdie Mae Rooute.

Miss True picked herself up and, hiding behind the tallest man in the hamlet of Moaning Meadows, continued with her research report. "See, it's all here. This is the dog from the River Styx. He keeps those still living out of the land of the dead. And he keeps those already dead from leaving."

"He's a monster," I tell you, "a monster," Miss Bobbie True gasped for breath.

The dog jumped up and licked the face of his owner Granny Smith.

The whole hamlet signed, "Isn't he cute."

Miss True tried again to warn the people of the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows. "Even the gods were afraid of the three-headed dog."

But no one was listening. The dog was winning. Miss True could have sworn that the monstrous dog had laughed at her.

"Well, we'll just see about that," thought Miss True. No dog was going to get the best of the librarian. She straightened her hair, pursed her lips and continued with her research findings, "It says here that no one can sneak past the dog to get in or out of Hades. But Orpheus was able to sneak past by playing his lyre to put the dog to sleep."

No one in the hamlet of Moaning Meadows had ever heard of a lyre, so the librarian finally gave up and went back to her studies. She even considered going to the jail to ask the witch, Miss Penelope, to conjure up a potion to get rid of the horrific dog. She would have done it, too, if she had not been more afraid of witches than she was of flesh-eating dogs.

The townspeople went on adoring the new addition to the hamlet of Moaning Meadows.

## The Curse Of Wanda Waterman

Last week it was reported there was an altercation between Myron Melvin Murch and Wanda Waterman.

It seems that Myron was out on his daily walk down to his favorite bird watching place when he noticed Wanda Waterman sitting on HIS SPOT. Myron has been sitting on that spot for the last 10 years, and he felt that Wanda Waterman should leave him alone with his birds.

Wanda did not agree. She said it was a free country and she could sit wherever she wanted.

A bickering argument broke out. Some time during the argument Wanda shouted, "Go to the dickens Myron Melvin."

He shouted back

Then Wanda Waterman's face darkened, it became big and bloated. Myron recoiled at the fearful site.

Then she pointed her finger at him and put a curse on Myron Melvin, "Bad luck on him," she shouted.

As soon as she said that a big black bird swooped down and bit him on the head. But that was just the beginning. Myron Melvin Murch is surely cursed.

First there was that bee in Myron's outhouse. Then his cat started acting funny. Marvin thinks that Wanda Waterman bewitched the cat. Then his keys disappeared and he couldn't get into his house. One night Myron went to shake some salt on his dinner and pepper came pouring out ruining everything. Even his shoes disappeared. He went to bed and when he woke up his shoes were gone.

Wanda Waterman denies she ever cursed Myron Melvin Murch.

But Myron still fears the curse that Wanda Waterman put on him. He sits at home every day just waiting for something bad to happen.

## **Historical News London 1818**

### **Frankenstein Lives**

There has been an outbreak lately of body snatching for medical research. Only yesterday a person was murdered at that vacant hotel in the seamy part of London. Witnesses say someone wanted to sell her body to medical students. If you are poor and homeless be especially wary of body snatchers.

There have been reports that Dr. Frankenstein is at it again. He finally succeeded in getting his monster to come to life. He put all those body parts together to make a monster. As if that wasn't bad enough. He then had the audacity to name the monster after himself. He egotistically calls the monster "Frankenstein".

There is a report that well-known author Mary Shelley is going to write a book about this incident. We only can hope it will be a best seller.

## News Flash!

...From the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows!

An event so bizarre and mysterious, it will have to be told in the order in which it occurred.

Friday.

Young Earl Mudd came running into town shouting, "I found it. I found it. The Leprechauns pot of gold."

"How much gold?" asked Cecil Biggins.

"The pot's empty, but I know the gold was in there before," insisted Earl.

"Where is it? Where is the gold?" everyone who was in hearing distance shouted.

Earl scratched his head as if in deep thought and then replied, "In the woods."

Granny Smith who had been standing beside Earl, pointed an accusing finger at him and demanded, "And what were you doing in the woods. Have you been chasing that girl again?" Granny then proceeded to kick Earl in the shins.

Earl was hopping around yelling and everyone around him was shouting, "Where's the gold? Where's the gold?"

The whole hamlet of Moaning Meadows flew out of their doors and went running down the street to see what all the commotion was about.

After some discussion, all the good citizens of the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows decided to follow Earl out into the woods. Unfortunately Earl was not the smartest member of the hamlet.

Granny on more than one occasion had said to Earl, "You are dumber than a door nail." Earl took that as a compliment. After all if the door nail was the only thing he was dumber than, then he must be smarter than everything else.

But on this day, Earl could not recall where he had seen the pot of gold.

Trying to figure out what to do, the entire population of the tiny Hamlet of Moaning Meadows analyzed the situation. They all wanted the gold. They thought and thought. They looked at each other suspiciously with squinting eyes. Then they all went running wildly into the woods determined to be the first one to discover the gold before some other citizen of the hamlet took the gold away from them.

Everyone ran through the woods looking. One person ran into a tree and had a huge bump on his head. Another person slipped on a rock, fell down and went rolling down an incline. That unfortunate citizen had to just lay there. No one wanted to take the time to take him back to town. While he was gone someone else might find the gold.

Granny Smith got her new dress caught on a branch. When she tried to pull her dress free there was a ripping sound that echoed through the trees. Everyone within fifty miles probably heard Granny screaming, "Dadgum gold. When I find that Earl I am going to kick him in the shins again. My new cotton dress is ruined. Ruined! Earl is gonna pay for this," she shook her fist in the air and shouted.

Then there came another shout, "I found it."

Found it?

That could mean only one thing, GOLD!

Then the whole population of Moaning Meadows gathered around the leprechaun's pot of gold and just stared at it. They did not know what to say.

Finally, Walter Darr, Mr. Negative, the Town Doubter, pulled his pants up higher, stood taller and proclaimed, "That ain't a pot of gold. Where's the gold? I'm telling you, there ain't no gold. "Never has been, never will be."

"Well, what do you think it is?" asked Wanda Waterman in her booming voice.

That's a pot for cooking chowder said, Mrs. O'Flynn.

Now Mrs. O'Flynn believed in democracy and honoring differences of opinion. But she was sure that this was a pot for making chowder. Every time someone tried to argue with her, she would hit them with her Shillelagh (a wooden club) while exclaiming, "I'm an Irish woman and I know a chowder pot when I see one. "

Mrs. O'Flynn was going to prove it to the whole hamlet of Moaning Meadows. She rushed home to get the ingredients to make the chowder.

The town agreed the chowder was mighty good, but they were not convinced the big black pot was designed for cooking.

Ol' Aunt Eunice Halivar was among those who did not agree that the pot was for cooking and she most certainly did not like the chowder. She offered a new solution, one that the others had not thought of. "It is a pot for washing clothes," she said. The people of Moaning Meadows agreed to test Ol' Aunt Eunice's theory. Clem Abbott, the handy man, went to cut some firewood while the rest of the hamlet ran home to get their clothes to throw into the "washing pot".

Alvin Mudd, Earl's father, brought his favorite shirt, the checkered one with the hole right through the back. That wasn't just any ol' hole, that was a big gun hole. Alvin had hung his favorite shirt on the rope clothesline to dry on that fateful day.

Unfortunately, Harley Rooute, was out practicing with his brand new 357 Magnum, when he accidentally blew a hole right through the shirt. It was very lucky that Alvin Mudd was not in the shirt at the time.

Birdie Mae Rooute promptly took the 357 Magnum away from Harley and decided it might be nice to shoot a chicken instead of chasing it around the yard to ring its neck. She could hardly lift the gun, but Birdie Mae was determine to shoot that chicken. She took aim, squeezed the trigger and...

I don't want to talk about chickens complained Grandpa Jones. If you want to see a good hole, look at this. Grandpa stuck his thumb through the heel of his blue sock and wiggled it at Birdie Mae.

Birdie Mae almost decided to use Harley's new 357 Magnum to shoot Grandpa. Only the excitement of gold stopped her from running home to get the gun. It was a lucky day for Grandpa.

Everybody threw their clothes into the hot boiling water. The single question on their minds was, "Was this big black pot used to wash clothes?"

When all the good citizens of Moaning Meadows were about to agree that the pot was for washing clothes, there came a gasp from Miss Bobbie True, the librarian. Her face was pale, her voice was weak.

"It's a... it's a..." the librarian just couldn't seem to get the words out. All the people of the hamlet of Moaning Meadows held their breath while waiting to see what had so disturbed Bobbie True that she couldn't even talk.

"It's a witch's cauldron," Bobbie True finally gasped. Then she fainted and fell back into the arms of Myron Melvin Murch. Myron did not know what to do with the woman in his arms. He had never been so close to a woman before. He almost decided to drop her on the ground and run away, when all the yelling seemed to revive Bobbie True.

"A witch's cauldron." boomed Cecil Biggins.

"A witch's cauldron?" moaned Myron Melvin Murch.

"Darn witch's cauldron," said Granny Smith trying to kick the big black pot.

Every single person in the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows looked at each other. Then they looked at the pot. Then altogether they shouted in unison, "Miss Prudence."

The policeman now had a third piece of evidence against Miss Prudence, the accused witch, who was sitting right in the middle of the hamlet jail. Miss Prudence had a black cat AND a broomstick....AND now she had a witch's cauldron. She was guilty, guilty, guilty. She WAS a witch. No doubt about it.

Someone said, "But what if the big black pot doesn't belong to her." The good citizens of Moaning Meadows thought for a moment and then came to the conclusion. "It has to be hers, we don't know any other witches."

The mystery had been solved, there was no gold. The people of the tiny hamlet of Moaning Meadows returned to their homes. They had had enough excitement for one day.

As the sun set over the tiny hamlet, the bats hung upside down, the scarecrow ran across the fields toward freedom, the three-headed dog fell asleep, the librarian marched back to her books and Myron Melvin Murch had survived another day of the curse put on him by Wanda Waterman.