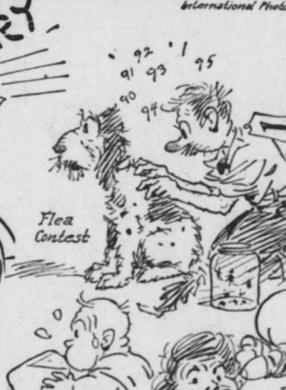


The Race for Freak Championships



Husband-Calling Contest
By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

ILL the decade of 1920-30 be written down by the historians of the future as the "marathon era" in American history? It may very well be, if some one ever takes the trouble to count up all the endurance contests and races for freak championships which have taken place during the last ten years and which, if a visitor from Mars were to judge by the interest shown and the amount of newspaper space devoted to them, he might regard as typically American, if not actually deserving to be listed among our major activities.

Perhaps the "marathon era" should include the years from 1910 to 1920 also, for it was in 1910 that Sallie Rope, a negress of Kansas City, Mo., decided to set a new gastronomic record. So she stowed away some 1,551 items of hardware, including 453 nails, 42 screws, 9 bolts, 5 spoons, 5 thimbles, 63 buttons, 105 safety pins, 115 hairpins, 136 common pins, 52 carpet tacks, 57 needles, 85 pebbles, a four-foot string of beads and a nail file. Of course, it killed her, but she had proved that the "so-called human race" could compete successfully with ostriches and goats for variety in its menu when it chose.

It was not until after 1920, however, that the "marathoners" struck their stride. On November 23, 1923, John Hinsin of New York City won over Val Menges in a "hot dog" contest by consuming 53. On November 24 of that year Dan Henderson of Jonesboro, Ga., completed 60 hours of steady chewing on a quid of tobacco. On December 6, 1925, C. S. Carter of Groton, S. D., ate 51 flapjacks, but lost the "championship" the next day to W. P. G. Meyers, who ate 43 but his flapjacks measured two inches more in diameter.

Commendable as were these enterprises, it remained for Miss Alma Cummings, a dance instructor in New York City, to start an endurance contest which was destined to become the latest craze and to sweep the country. Some time in 1923 she noticed an item in the papers about a Frenchman dancing continuously for 17 hours. She decided that Americans could do better than that and to prove it she danced for 27 hours. And that started it! Within a week she had to dance for 50 hours to hold her title and three days later her record was broken.

1. A sweeping contest, held in Los Angeles, Calif., to determine who should be crowned "Queen of Sweepers."
2. A fourteen-year-old entry in a Maryland flag pole sitting contest.

en. Other dancers in other cities took up the fad and "On with the dance!" became the watchword of the hour. From 50 hours the record went to 60, then to 73, then to 80, 90 and 100. Out in California Viola Pompey and Horace Dunn started at Los Angeles and danced eight miles down the highway to Ocean Park. They kept up their dancing for 140 hours.

And then, of course, there's flag pole sitting. A good way to rest up after a dance marathon is to climb up on a flag pole and just sit. And flag pole sitting was a close second to dancing in endurance popularity. In 1927 "Shipwreck" Kelly, a sailor, went aloft on a 40 foot pole in Newark, N. J., and stayed there for 12 days. Not to be outdone by this exhibition of civic supremacy, other cities staged similar contests and many of the burghers of those municipalities got permanent cricks in their necks from permanent flag pole sitters.

If 1929 is never famous for anything else, it will be famous for some new and unusual "championships." Consider, for instance, Bill Williams of Hondo, Texas, who rolled a peanut with his nose over the 22 mile route to the summit of Pikes Peak. It took him 30 days to do it and he got \$500, plus a large amount of newspaper publicity. Inspired by his example L. R. Rose of Rule, Texas, started from Galveston to knock a croquet ball all the way to New York and H. P. Williams started rolling a little iron hoop for the same destination.

The so-called weaker sex is not far behind the other in their bids for fame. Last summer any number of cities held rolling pin throwing contests and husband calling contests in which housewives showed both their strength of arm and voice. And Campaign, Ill., is the home of Mrs. H. B. Schmidt who claims the world's cham-

plonship for rocking, she having spent 401 hours in a rocking chair swaying back and forth.

Yes, everybody's doing it, including the children. Last summer, the previously mentioned "Shipwreck" Kelly gave a 23-day exhibition in Baltimore. The result was a pole sitting epidemic among the children of that city. Avor W. Foreman started it by staying or top a 17 foot pole for 10 days, 10 hours, 10 minutes and 10 seconds. When he descended he was praised by the mayor of Baltimore for "the old pioneer spirit" and acclaimed "world's champion fifteen-year-old flagpole sitter." His record was broken by twelve-year-old Willie Wentworth, however, who stayed up nearly a month, breaking even "Shipwreck's" record.

By starting young perhaps some one will break the record which has stood for 1,478 years. It was made by Simoon Stylites, the Syrian shepherd boy who became a monk and who, to prove his devotion to Christianity in the days when martyrdom was popular, mounted to the top of a nine foot column, chained himself there and occupied his time in prayer. He stayed there 30 years?

Yes, the children are showing themselves worthy sons and daughters of their fathers in this matter of thinking up new feats in which to vie for the "championship." But they will have to be original indeed to match the merchants of Belle Plaine, Iowa who thought that a contest to decide who had the most flea-bitten dog in four counties would be a good attraction for their annual fall festival. They offered a prize of \$100 and it was won by James Parks of Belle Plaine. The judges counted 113 fleas on his dog (Author's Note: The list of "championships" in this article does not pretend to be a complete one and some of the "records" in some events may have been broken since the article was written. But does it matter?)

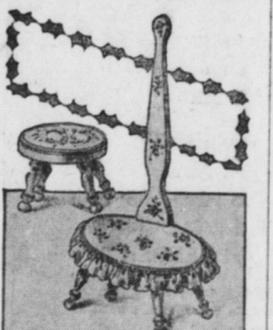
PRESENTS THAT CAN BE GIVEN AT CHRISTMAS TIME

Art in Basketry



A basket for every need is evidently the slogan adopted in modern Christmas gift sections. Art in basketry is indeed touching the high spots this season, as the gorgeous raffia basket in the picture bears witness. The flowers are done in the bas relief and gayly painted. 'T would indeed be a difficult matter to conceive of a more happily chosen gift coming from one woman to another at Christmas time.

"Step-Up" If You Please



You know how it is yourself to try to get something off the top shelf just out of reach. Well, it won't happen again, that annoyance, providing you are the fortunate recipient this Christmas of one of the cunning, gayly decorated "step-ups" such as most of the gift shops are showing. Tiny stool step-ups for children, too. These convenient contrivances come in all colors to match the other boudoir furnishings.

New Cushion Themes



In regard to the Christmas gift problem there's this in favor of sofa cushions, no matter how many one may possess "there's always room for one more." To women skilled in fine needlecraft the pillow of chenille-embroidered velvet is proving a new inspiration. Something "different" too, is the black felt cushion top done in cut-out design, and posed over white or colorful satin.

Carries Sweet Odor



Santa Claus likes to carry these ornamental bags wherever he goes, for the sweet odor of their contents (garden lavender) scents up his entire pack. They are made of coarse, colorful netting with frills at the top and hand-painted embroidery hoop handles. Gift shops report them as among their most popular numbers. They measure from nine to twelve inches across.

Girl Fights Big Handicap

MANY a girl would give up in despair when she found herself snubbed in school and unpopular in college, but not so Mrs. Norma Kussel Jones of 1567 Cramer Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

"When I was seventeen I went away to college," says Mrs. Jones. "Freda, my room-mate, was a very popular girl. Soon she asked to have her room changed. It seems I kept her awake at night, I slept so restlessly. No one knows how I suffered.

"One day one of my teachers found me sobbing. 'Why,' she said, 'sometimes sluggish circulation causes restless sleep. Why don't you try Nujol?'"

"In two weeks Nujol had begun clearing out the poisons in my body, my skin had a clear healthy appearance, and everything looked brighter. 'What have you been doing to yourself?' asked my room-mate. 'You are a different girl.' The days and years that followed were filled with every activity and not long ago Freda was maid of honor at my wedding. That's what Nujol did for me!"



Brave American Girls like this one never say die!

Looking to the Future
Wife—If you ever got tired of me, I'd take poison!
Husband—That's handy to know.

Happiness
Baggs—Happy are they who look before they marry.
Boggs—Yes, and overlook after.



For any BABY

We can never be sure just what makes an infant restless, but the remedy can always be the same. Good old Castoria! There's comfort in every drop of this pure vegetable preparation, and not the slightest harm in its frequent use. As often as Baby has a fretful spell, is feverish, or cries and can't sleep, let Castoria soothe and quiet him. Sometimes it's a touch of diarrhea—a condition that should always be checked without delay. Just keep Castoria handy, and give it promptly. Relief will follow

very promptly; if it doesn't, you should call a physician.

All through babyhood, Castoria should be a mother's standby; and a wise mother does not change to stronger medicines as the child grows older. Castoria is readily obtained at any drugstore, and the genuine easily identified by the Chas. H. Fletcher signature that appears on every wrapper.

Tide and Untied
The young man and young woman occupying the rear seat of the bus were obviously returning from a trip to Indianapolis. Oblivious to the stonching figure in the corner they chatted on. When the driver switched off the inside lights of the bus they were attracted to the appearance of the moon.

"Oh, look, what a perfectly beautiful moon," she hisped.

"Yes, isn't it?" her companion agreed. "And, by the way, they say the moon affects the tide."

The figure in the corner stirred uneasily. "And also the untied," it growled.—Indianapolis News.

Largest "Rabbit Farm"
The Hillcrest rabbitry, at Alta Loma, Calif., is the largest in the United States. This farm contains 90 acres, with 28 rabbit sheds, each housing 2,500 rabbits. These sheds are 226 feet long by 26 feet wide.

Firm as to That
"As a hobo, I suppose you could tell some queer stories."
"Yeh, but I ain't gonna collaborate on no book with ye," declared the wayfarer, edging off.

Wright's Indian Vegetable Pills contain only vegetable ingredients which act as a gentle purgative. 25c a box. 372 Pearl St., N. Y. Adv.

Getting Behind
Some people get ahead, and some cannot resist the temptation to buy a thing that is only one dollar down.—Itland Herald.

Doesn't Sound True
Life is full of pleasant surprises. Just when you think your luck has vanished forever, you put a cent in a slot machine and get two pieces of gum.—Farm and Fireside.

Your friends are not perfect, of course. If they were they might not like you.

It takes infinite patience to rear a child; and there seems to be an abundance of it.



The Mark of Genuine Aspirin..

BAYER ASPIRIN is like an old friend, tried and true. There can never be a satisfactory substitute for either one. Bayer Aspirin is genuine. It is the accepted antidote for pain. Its relief may always be relied on, whether used for the occasional headache, to head-off a cold, or for the more serious aches and pains from neuralgia, neuritis, rheumatism or other ailments. It's easy to identify Bayer Aspirin by the Bayer Cross on every tablet, by the name Bayer on the box and the word "genuine" always printed in red.



Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monaschewitz, Germany.

The Poor Indian

Down in the neighborhood of Pocatello, Idaho, the Fort Hall Indians are showing how primitive and pagan our aborigines can be even after the United States government has done its best to civilize and educate them. They are holding a three-day sun dance. With only short rest periods, and with nothing much to eat and drink, these benighted savages are posturing and gyrating for the glory of their tribe.

All this takes place in the sagebrush, and the Indians, we blush to say, wear hardly any clothes.

Now, let us moralize a bit. If these poor Indians were civilized whites in a large American city, what would they do? Probably they would be very up to date and enter a marathon dancing contest in a hall. They would dance continuously with only brief rest periods and with nothing much to eat or drink. Only, of course, being civilized, they would not stop at the end of three days. They would try to make

it three weeks and thereby set a record and get a week's engagement in a cheap vaudeville house. While doing this, for a cut of the gate receipts, they would, we blush to say, wear hardly any clothes.

No wonder, they keep Indians on reservations. They are really pagans at heart.—Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman-Review.

The year 1928 was the second largest in the history of foreign financing in the United States.