

Birds, Squirrels Help Dentist as 'Painkillers'

Story and Photos by George Harrison

Getting a small child into a dentist chair is considered a major job for most parents. Dr. Joseph Hummer of Pine Grove Mills never has any trouble with his young patients; in fact, all the kids in the area look forward to coming to his office.

Many dentists bribe children with gifts such as toy rings, chewing gum, free tooth brushes, books and trinkets, but not Dr. Hummer. He doesn't have to.

What is the big attraction to this particular dentist chair?

Actually, there is nothing different about the chair, but the big picture window in front of the chair is the secret to his success.

There, for all patients to see, is Dr. Hummer's own private zoo of wild birds and animals. These creatures, however, are not in cages.

Animals Active All Year

Dr. Hummer has a feeding station for wild birds and squirrels at which there is always a lot of activity during both summer and winter.

Adults as well as children get a kick out of Dr. Hummer's window feeding station.

Black-capped chickadees, cardinals, tufted titmice, nuthatches, evening grosbeaks, brown creepers and others that are normally very wary, come right to the window and pay no attention to those inside.

Children Fascinated

Six years ago, when Dr. Hummer moved his office from downtown State College to his country home in Pine Grove Mills, the children were frightened by the birds and squirrels because they were so close. However, as time passed, they became fascinated and carried stories about the picture window and the dentist's office throughout the area.

The teachers in the Pine Grove Mills grade school had a method for getting the pupils to express themselves. Whenever one of them had a story to tell, he or she would put a small square on the blackboard and then the teacher would allot a time for stories.

More kids told stories about their visits to Dr. Hummer's office than all the rest of the stories put together.

Children Bring Books

Eventually, children began to bring bird books with them when they had to have their teeth worked on. They would check off the birds they had seen and make a report in class the next day.

The birds in Dr. Hummer's yard became so famous, that the children named them: Woodie and Winnie Woodpecker, Timmy and Tillie Titmouse, Ned and Nellie Nuthatch and Mr. and Mrs. Cardinal.

The titmice have rather large black, beady eyes while the chickadees have very tiny black eyes hidden in their black caps.

When one little boy saw a chickadee at the window after watching a titmouse, he yelled, "Oh look, look, Doc, it has no eyes!"

Dog Interested in Animals

Dr. Hummer has a 8-year-old cocker spaniel named Petie who is also interested in the birds and squirrels.

When Petie saw the first bird to arrive at the newly constructed feeder at the window, she barked and frightened it away. Dr. Hummer scolded her for this and she has never barked at the birds since then; however, she does bark at the grey squirrels.

With a barking dog on the other side of the glass, one would think that the squirrels would be frightened, but they never pay any attention to Petie or the children.

Zoo Attracts Children

Dr. Hummer's window zoo beats all other tricks of the trade to get children to the dentist.

The kids love Dr. Hummer and his birds and the parents could not be happier because he has solved for them a big problem among all parents.

The birds at the window seem to take a lot of the hurt out of a bad tooth for young and old alike.

Lutheran Yule Party

Ye Olde Fashioned Christmas Party will be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Lutheran Student Center.

The party will feature a fire-side discussion, chestnut roasting and a song-fest.



DR. JOSEPH HUMMER fills a tooth as the patient in the chair watches the birds and squirrels at the big window. Thinking about the creatures at the feeding station keeps her mind off the bad tooth.



GREY SQUIRRELS and birds pay no attention to the dentist and his patients although they are only a few feet away on the other side of the picture window. The nuthatch upper right, and the evening grosbeak, lower right, are frequent visitors at the dentist's window.

4 on Faculty Resign; 7 Change Positions

Four members of the faculty have resigned and seven others have been given changes in status.

Dr. Kathleen A. Johnston, professor of family economics and housing, has resigned effective Jan. 1, to accept a position as head of the Department of Equipment and Family Housing at Purdue University.

Dr. Felix du Breuil, associate professor of mining engineering, and Frederick C. Belsac, research associate in the Department of Engineering Research, have resigned to accept employment with private engineering firms. Dr. du Breuil will leave Dec. 30 and Belsac Dec. 31.

Home Economist Resigns
Mary Alice Gregory, associate extension home economist, has resigned effective Dec. 31, to devote full time to family duties.

The seven faculty members who were given changes of status were:

Dr. William Spackman Jr., from associate professor of paleobotany to director of the Coal Research Section starting Jan. 1, and maintaining his present rank; Robert B. Hewes, from associate professor in charge of supervisory extension training to associate professor of mineral industries extension starting Dec. 8.

Mueller Named
Joseph W. Hunt, from associate professor in charge of mining extension to associate professor in charge of mineral engineering extension on Dec. 8; Dr. Erwin W. Mueller, from professor of physics to research professor of physics on Jan. 1; Dr. Eugen Skudrzyk, from professor of engineering research to professor of engineering research and physics on Dec. 8.

Robert F. Marboe, associate professor of engineering research and manager of the engineering services division, Ordnance Research Laboratory, to be in charge of engineering services starting Dec. 1; and Paul S. Beaver, from assistant professor of management to associate professor of management, and remaining supervisor of management training, Feb. 1.

Froth Senior Board to Meet

The Froth senior board will meet at 8 tonight in 218 Hetzel Union.

Hillel to Show Four Movies From Israel

The Hillel Foundation will present an hour-long program of four films from Israel at 8 tonight in the Hillel Auditorium, 224 Locust Lane.

Students, faculty, and townspeople may attend. There is no admission charge.

The four films constitute a varied program and include two which have received distinguished awards for their content and production.

One entitled "The Book and the Idol," a color film, is based on the archeological exhibition "From the Land of the Bible" which was shown last year at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. A second color film, entitled "A Letter from Ronny," has its theme in the adventures of a young immigrant from Iraq who finds his way into the life of Israel by way of the scout movement.

The other two films are "This is Israel," which takes the form of a general essay on Israel's cities, agriculture, industries and people, and "Vistas of Israel," newsclips on the discovery of oil, the Biblical Zoo and Israel's orange industry.

WSGA House to Hear Three Reports Today

The Women's Student Government Association House of Representatives will meet at 12:30 p.m. today in 209 Hetzel Union.

Reports from the housing, May Day and lateness rule committee, will be heard.

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