



Thanks for joining us for Junior Blasts. We hope you enjoy this quarterly column. Stay tuned for some great stuff!



by Alan Garbers

Peskunck Larrabee, illustrator

The New Junior Blasts

Kids Who Made History

Laura was an ordinary girl. She didn't do anything greater than thousands of other pioneer children did. Life was much harder then. Families pitched in and worked hard to survive. Trees had to be cleared with an ax. Crops had to be planted and harvested by hand.

But even if they worked hard, tragedies still happened. Laura and her family planted their crops, tended their fruit trees, and weeded their garden to have something to eat during the long, cold winter months. Then one summer day, a green darkness covered the sky. It swept in and became a massive horde of flying locusts, a type of grasshopper that eats everything in its path.

The locusts ate the wheat, they ate all the garden crops, and they ate all the fruit. When the locusts flew away Laura and her family had nothing left to eat and nothing left to sell. Laura and her family had to load up their belongings in a covered wagon and move on.

Laura's family moved to a new farm and started building a new home. Things seemed to be getting better. But as fall got colder, Laura and her father noticed the wild animals acting strangely. They acted as if a long winter was coming. The animals were right.

The snow started falling and the wind started blowing. Their new house wasn't finished and the wind blew through, sucking away the heat. Laura and her family had to move into town to survive. But hardship followed. The snow kept falling and the wind kept blowing. Snowdrifts piled up as high as the town buildings. The railroad tracks were covered and no trains could get through. Food and firewood ran low. Soon the townsfolk



started burning anything they could to stay warm. Laura even wove straw into logs so her family could have heat. Eventually the snow melted

away. Spring came. Laura and her family started over again.

Life wasn't always bad. Laura enjoyed the simple things, like the way

the wind blew waves in the prairie grass, how wild flowers covered the hills, and how free the Indians seemed to be as they visited.

Then tragedy happened. Laura's older sister became sick. She became feverish, and when it was over, she was blind. Laura and her family were heartbroken. They all tried to help as best they could. Laura found she could help by describing things to her sister. She painted a picture with her words so her sister could see the birds fly and the flowers bloom, as if it was with her own eyes. Perhaps it was this

simple gift that enriched people's lives many years later.

You see, as Laura grew older she became a writer and wrote of her life as her family lived in a little house in the big woods. She wrote another story about their life in a little house on the prairie. She wrote book after book about her life as a pioneer. Years later her books were made into a TV series that was watched and loved by millions of people.

By now you may know who Laura is, and you may have even watched the TV series yourself, *Little House on the Prairie* by the famous author Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Game of the Month

Harlequin Wrestle

This game is for two players and is a test of balance and agility. The players each stand on one foot and grasp right hands. Using the off-hand to grab the upraised foot is recommended. Once the game is over the object is to make the opponent's upraised foot or free hand touch the ground without doing the same yourself. The first player who touches the ground with the free hand or upraised foot loses. Touching the opponent with the free hand or foot is not allowed and will also be a cause for losing.

Firearm Safety

The subject of firearm safety comes down to four rules introduced by Colonel Jeff Cooper:

1. Act as if all guns are always loaded.
2. Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.
4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.

What's That?

Here are some terms you may hear around the shooting range, campfire, or hunting. You pick out the correct definition.

Lug - 1. To carry or transport something. 2. A term of endearment used back in the mid-20th century. 3. An attachment point found on military firearms used to fasten a bayonet.

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Charger – 1. A muscle car produced by Dodge. 2. A device that holds multiple bullets and/or powder for rapid re-loading of a firearm. 3. A large horse used in battle.

Battery – 1. A device that produces electricity by using chemical reaction. 2. A group of cannons. 3. The hinged metal plate that the flint strikes against on a flintlock firearm.

Riddles

1. What starts with a 'P', ends with an 'E' and has thousands of letters?
2. What has to be broken before you can use it?
3. Why can't a man living in New York be buried in Chicago?

Answers


1. The post office.
2. An egg.
3. Because he's still living. **MB**

J Y R E T T A B B L I N D
 R P D E R E E N O I P A J
 K A R H T C G C I O T R C
 W H E A T N U R S M L U R
 L P D R I S I T A H A A O
 L C L D T R O W A T C L P
 A H I S T F I R D W O N S
 F A W H F P L E D R L I L
 R R F I R E W O O D D G L
 U G C P Q P S Q W O E O A
 I E L U G E L T S E R W G
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 N N E D R A G W O O D S I

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|----------|-------------|------------|
| ANIMALS | GARDEN | SNOWDRIFTS |
| BATTERY | HARDSHIP | TARGET |
| BLIND | HARLEQUIN | TRIGGER |
| CHARGER | INGALLS | WHEAT |
| COLDER | LAURA | WILDER |
| CROPS | LOCUSTS | WINTER |
| EGG | LUG | WOODS |
| FALL | PIONEER | WRESTLE |
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| FRUIT | SNOW | |

Puzzle answer on page 69

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