

**Diet or Die?**

**Dolly Lost a Pound A Day for 433 Days**

By HELEN HATHAWAY  
Press-Herald Staff Writer  
"Dolly Dimples," the former 555-pound sideshow fat lady, who attracted national interest when she slimmed to 122 pounds, began life as Celesta Herrmann, a seven and a half pounder with a delicate appetite.

In her autobiography, "Diet or Die," written with Samuel Owen, Celesta has recorded the events which led to her obesity and her victorious struggle when 50 years old to lose 433 pounds.

The Herrmann household as conducive to overeating, with six definite family meals scheduled daily, but Celesta as the only one of eight children who became a "sideshow fat lady." Too, her parents owned a tavern in her pre-school years which featured old-world German cookery; she spent most of each day here contentedly and constantly nibbling.

SCHOOL brought life's first complications to an already overweight Celesta—the ridicule of her classmates. Now food became a refuge and solace. With "a luscious piece of schnecken," she could forget momentarily the torment of her schoolmates' contempt.

Celesta's weight increased from 150 pounds in the fifth grade to 200 pounds when she left school at 16. During these miserable years, brightened only by an occasional friend, Celesta's family tried to minimize the daily insults and find ways of bringing her happiness. Unfortunately, this well-intentioned concern usually led to her one joy—eating. No one at this time attributed her weight to overeating.

Entrance into the working world brought Celesta "a feeling of accomplishment for the first time," but did not alter her eating pattern. As a factory pieceworker, she learned to operate her machine and eat one sandwich after another "without missing a stitch or a bite." Jobs were changed for various reasons, but the weight gain continued at a steady pace. Within several years she hit the 270 mark. She still dreamed of the day when she would lose weight and "be like the other girls."

CELESTA'S humiliation became unbearable when she discovered the few jobs now available featured her as an object of ridicule to amuse customers. She tried travel, even an unhappy romance, but her agony remained as constant as the large bag of food she always carried with her. After a four-day food binge in a Texas motel, Celesta decided to return to the comfort of her family.

One magic dream did come true for Celesta on her return. She and Frank Geyer met and fell in love. At first she refused to marry him, unwilling to subject him to the taunts and cruelty of the staring public. It was only after much thought, and persuasion on Frank's part, that she happily consented to be his 300-pound bride.

As a young wife Celesta rejoiced in her husband's love, cooking, and eating. But the never-never land of love did not take away her anguish at being overweight or give her any insulation against the stares and smirks of strangers. She increasingly avoided seeing anyone except members of her family.

DURING this period she tried various pills advertised as weight reducers; she still did not know the relationship of weight to food intake. Uremic poisoning was caused by one medication and Celesta, after almost losing her life, decided to resign herself to being fat.

Financial problems, Celesta's appetite was extremely expensive, led her to team up with Jolly Pearl Stanley, a 700-pounder, in a sideshow act. Celesta now weighed 338 pounds. This act led to more

show business' and a change of attitude. She learned from Jolly Pearl to accept being fat and laugh about it.

She and Frank settled in a comfortable routine over the years with sideshow tours in the summer and winters in Florida, where she augmented their income by doing psychic readings.

LOOKING forward to retirement in several years, Celesta, now 555 pounds, started her annual tour in the spring of 1950 only to be stricken with a heart attack. This was when she was forced to decide whether to "diet or die."

Her will, and her husband's reassurance, saw her through her first month at home and the loss of another 31 pounds. But a nightmare, in which she dreamed her body was being pulled apart, left her determined to "eat and die happy!" Her doctor agreed she could have a feast, a peach pie, as long as she ate the pie at one sitting just as she had in her pre-diet days. Celesta did; her resulting illness put her firmly

back on the dieting program. A NEW world opened to Celesta as she shed about a pound each day. By Easter of 1951 she was down to 193 pounds and wearing a size 22½ dress. She could now go to a beauty shop or a movie; before she couldn't fit into the seats. She visited her family in July, a proud 155 pounds. She faced up to those

wonderful old-country German dishes and returned to Florida at 139 pounds. Celesta continued her 800-calorie a day diet until she reduced to her present weight of 122 pounds. The week's sample menu and dietetic recipes Celesta has listed in her book are no longer necessary for her. She eats anything she wants. Her secret to remaining slender is she never, never "overeats."

**City Award Presented To Horticulture Team**

Carson High School recently won top honors in the annual Los Angeles City Schools' horticulture contest.

The school took the first-place team award in the senior division, Robert Ulloa, a Carson High student, won the first-place individual student award in the senior division. He also won first place in the landscaping and judging division in the senior competition.

Other Carson team members are Ron Quinn, Gary Pearce, Mark Sugamito, Ed Bullis, Mike Leathers, Darrell Geiger, Richard Owens, Steve Stritchfield, and Robert Bullis. Instructor is Earl Havel. Narbonne High School took fourth place in the senior division team awards. Team members are Jerry Freed, Robert Brohead, Terry Mueck, and Ron Hildner. C. B. Mann instructs the class.

<b>Similac</b> INFANT FORMULA Plain or with Iron 13 oz. <b>4 FOR \$1</b>	<b>Soff</b> COSMETIC PUFFS Soft-Absorbent 69c Bags <b>2 FOR 88c</b>	<b>Kal Kan</b> M.P.S. Dog Food in 14 oz. Cans <b>5 FOR \$1</b>	<b>SUNSWEEET</b> Prune Juice In 40 oz. Refrigerator Bottle <b>2 FOR \$1</b>	<b>'Compoz'</b> For Temporary Relief of Simple Nervous Tension. 98c 12's <b>77c</b>	<b>Kleenex</b> Facial Tissues Box of 260's <b>3 FOR \$1</b>	<b>Kleenex</b> Bathroom TISSUE "Boutique" in Deep Colors 12 ROLLS <b>10 FOR \$1</b>
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**60 Ft. Garden Hose**

"Signature" — 3/8" Bore — Lightweight green tempered plastic which has more flexibility and strength. Full flow heavy brass couplings. Kink-proof, will not harden or crack.  
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VIGORO — For stronger growth, better bloom.  
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**Bone Meal**  
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"HOMELAWN" — Covers 500 sq. ft. of ground.  
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**TORRANCE**

**Film Festival**

Representing Torrance Unified School District at a Mini-Film Festival to be held in San Francisco by the California Art Education Association next weekend will be Melvyn Steinberg, art teacher at Torrance High School, and Kenneth Tuxford, art teacher at South High School.