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# ACCENT

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SECTION **C**



Linda Hoopes photographed this house wren feeding its young. The birds are extremely protective of their babies and are very brave, Hoopes says. "The male and female were dive-bombing me as I shot the

feeding event from about 10 feet away," she said in an e-mail. "Their warning call sounds just like a rattlesnake rattle. At one point, one of the birds parted my hair right down the middle."

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

## Natural backdrop

By ANNETTE JONES  
DAILY JOURNAL FEATURES EDITOR  
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A buffet of berries, seeds and homemade treats attract birds to Linda Hoopes' yard.

The Greenwood woman has photographed dozens of species.

During the summer, her back yard is busy with bird landings and takeoffs, she said.

Her husband, Bill Hoopes, senior pastor at Greenwood United Methodist Church, once quipped that they need an air-traffic controller in their back yard.

An outdoors enthusiast and photographer, Hoopes is a pro at capturing moments in nature, especially birds.

Fall, winter and spring are good times for birdwatching and photographing in the Midwest, Hoopes said.

Birds are most visible in

the bare trees, she said. During spring and fall they are migrating, which brings an even wider variety of birds to Indiana.

"I was never aware of how many birds there are," Hoopes said.

She attracts birds to her yard by serving food they love.

A mixture of crushed eggshells, marshmallow cream and gravel is a favorite in her tree-filled yard. The shells add calcium to birds' diets, and the gravel aids digestion.

Hoopes coats small logs with peanut butter and hangs them from a tree for squirrels and birds. She also drills 1-inch holes in logs and fills them with peanut butter, sometimes adding jelly.

She makes her own suet cakes with fried fat, seeds and marshmallow cream to hold it together. Sometimes she adds unsalted pretzels as a special treat.

(SEE NATURAL, PAGE C3)

## Shutterbug relishes role as photographer for hungry birds



Linda Hoopes looks out a window of her home where feeders attract birds. Hoopes sets up her camera tripod nearby to take pictures through the glass.

STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT ROBERSON/sroberson@thejournalnet.com



An American gold finch with its bright summer plumage is a colorful subject for Linda Hoopes.



A cardinal rests amid a flurry of snowflakes, giving Linda Hoopes time to snap her picture.



A chickadee peers between his legs at photographer Linda Hoopes in a game of peek-a-boo.

## Don't neglect acknowledgements; you'll thank yourself later

Notes need not be overly elaborate, just heartfelt

By KIM ODE  
MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL START TRIBUNE

Dear Reader,  
Thanks for choosing to read this story. Your interest means a great deal, and will help me maintain my enthusiasm for my job. How did you know that's exactly what I needed? Thanks again for the gift of your time.

Sincerely,  
Kim

Well, that wasn't so hard. Of course, I typed it instead of writing in longhand. And the printing presses took the place of my having to address and stamp an

envelope. Hmm. Maybe you're justified in regarding that "sincerely" as anything but.

So it's good to learn that the best thank-you notes also are the easiest to write.

"All you really need to think about is three or four sentences written from the heart, and how tough is that?" said Angelyn Davis of Minnetonka, Minn., who teaches classes on etiquette.

Yet it seems we either nag or are nagged about the task before finally putting pen to paper. And let's get this out of the way right now: pen to paper. E-mail doesn't count.

Jean Summers, who wrote "The Kids' Guide to Writing Great Thank-You Notes" (The Writers' Collective, \$9.95), regards electronic gratitude "as your last resort for kids or teen-agers if a

parent just can't get them to do it any other way."

You want to be lumped in with the dregs of courtesy? Your call. But writing a thank-you note for a favorite CD really is just a dry run for times you'll need to express gratitude for a job interview, a friend's favor, a wonderful party or a task well done.

"The kids start to see the application," Davis said. "The idea of being socially adept, in their minds, is being cool."

After all, she added, etiquette is about being respectful and thoughtful. "There's the satisfaction of building relationships and really wanting to express immediately and spontaneously the impact the gift had on you, how much pleasure it gives you," Davis said.

(SEE THANK, PAGE C3)

### SAY IT WITH STYLE

Five steps to a great thank-you note

**Step 1:** Salutation. "Dear" is often used, but it's OK to use a casual greeting such as "Hi."

**Step 2:** First thank-you. A short sentence that thanks the giver with an adjective describing your gratitude. "Thanks for the great birthday gift."

**Step 3:** The details. Describe the gift, explaining what makes it special and how you'll use it. A couple of sentences will do.

**Step 4:** Second thank-you. One sentence that restates your gratitude.

**Step 5:** Close and signature. Say it with love, sincerely or best regards. Then sign your name.

SOURCE: Jean Summers, "The Kids' Guide to Writing Great Thank-You Notes"



Janet Hommel Mangas

## Time is lost during organization attempts

I think I scared my family when I screamed, "That's me!"

We were enjoying one of those rare reading afternoons during the Christmas break when I saw myself in January's Indy's Child magazine: "The average American woman spends 55.2 minutes a day looking for things. You could regain 14 days a year by reorganizing your home."

That article was just the incentive I needed to tackle the clutter, because I want those extra 14 days in 2007.

In fact, just three weeks before Christmas in the midst of holiday plays and band concerts, I declared to my husband that the next time I fill out a job application I'm going to write down the fact that I've had 17 years experience in working as a high-level seeker.

In one day last month, I aided my youngest daughter, who, I might add, has exercised and perfected my seeking skills to a professional level, in seeking and finding her almost-late library book before we left for school in the morning. Never mind that I later drove back home to retrieve her agenda, which she obviously must have to keep track of the homework she needs to do, which includes remembering to bring back the school's library book on time, so she will grow up to be a responsible, functional adult.

Speaking of adults, that same morning, I also was asked to seek out my husband's misplaced daytimer, or his life, as he also refers to it.

His daytimer used to be one of those expensive electronic, hi-tech Palm Pilot-type information keepers, until he decided not to replace it for the third time. His last device found its death after diving under the front right tire of our 1996 Suburban as we backed out of a parking lot to begin our 21-hour road trip for our annual Canada fishing holiday.

My husband has simplified his life since we heard that 5,000-pounds-on-an-8-ounce-electronic-device crunching noise three years ago. He now has a printed out

(SEE TIME, PAGE C5)

## Five ways to love January

By DIANE DAVIS  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

January is a time to sigh.

No holiday gift-giving pressure. No greeting cards to get into the mail. No office parties to fret over.

Sure, you could tackle your diet, start spring cleaning early or even master the new MP3 player you found under the tree. But first, breathe.

These cold bright days and long dark nights offer a calm quiet like no other time of year.

Enjoy it. Here's how:

### Go to bed early

Even if the days are getting longer, darkness still descends in the evening's early hours.

Embrace it. Turn off the TV and turn down the heat. Silence the cell phone. Crawl under a big down comforter and feel the sheets change from icy cold to cozy warm.

(SEE JANUARY, PAGE C3)

