

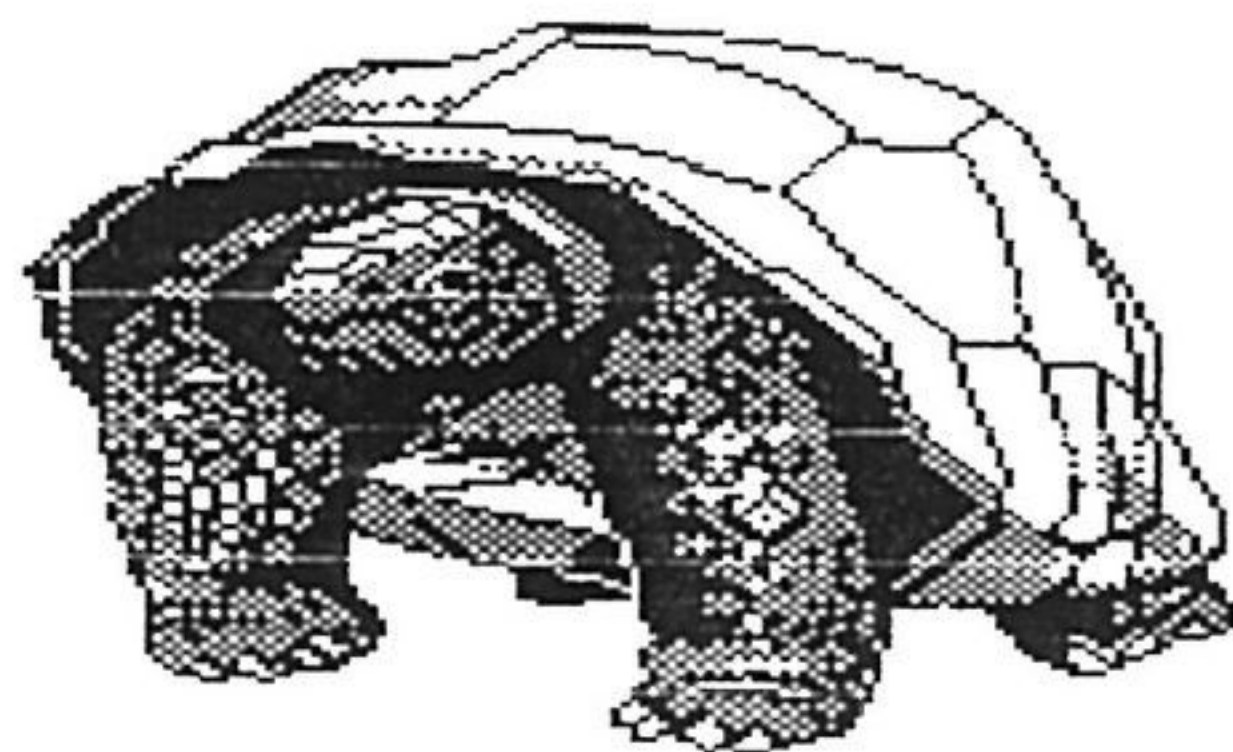
irritated groan as he stumbles over a root.

Raccoons arise occasionally during warm spells, and bumble about, probably just checking to see if spring has finally arrived. Disappointed, they crawl back into their den, whispering to their companions that it's still too cold and wet to bother getting up. When they finally arise in spring, they're like sleepwalkers, slow and mopey. We had three small coons foraging under our bird feeder last spring, and they looked like a gang that had enjoyed the Mother of all New Years Eves. They were dining on tainted sunflower seeds that had been hidden under the snow, and stared at us balefully when we approached, only reluctantly climbing a tree, and then only as far up as necessary.

The deep sleepers have my sympathy. Turtles and frogs, hidden deeply in the mud, have decided to simply wait it out, with most metabolic functions turned down to a point sufficient only to retain the spark of life. I don't think they like doing this, because the frogs in the spring are so darned joyful, a gang of drunken karaoke singers, with their exuberant nightly

song. It must be frustrating for turtles, though, because there's no evident way for them to express the pleasure of spring. In the slough on the Wil-O-Lea road, they creep out, seemingly exhausted, to soak up the feeble warmth of the spring sun.

I have turtle genes, I think.

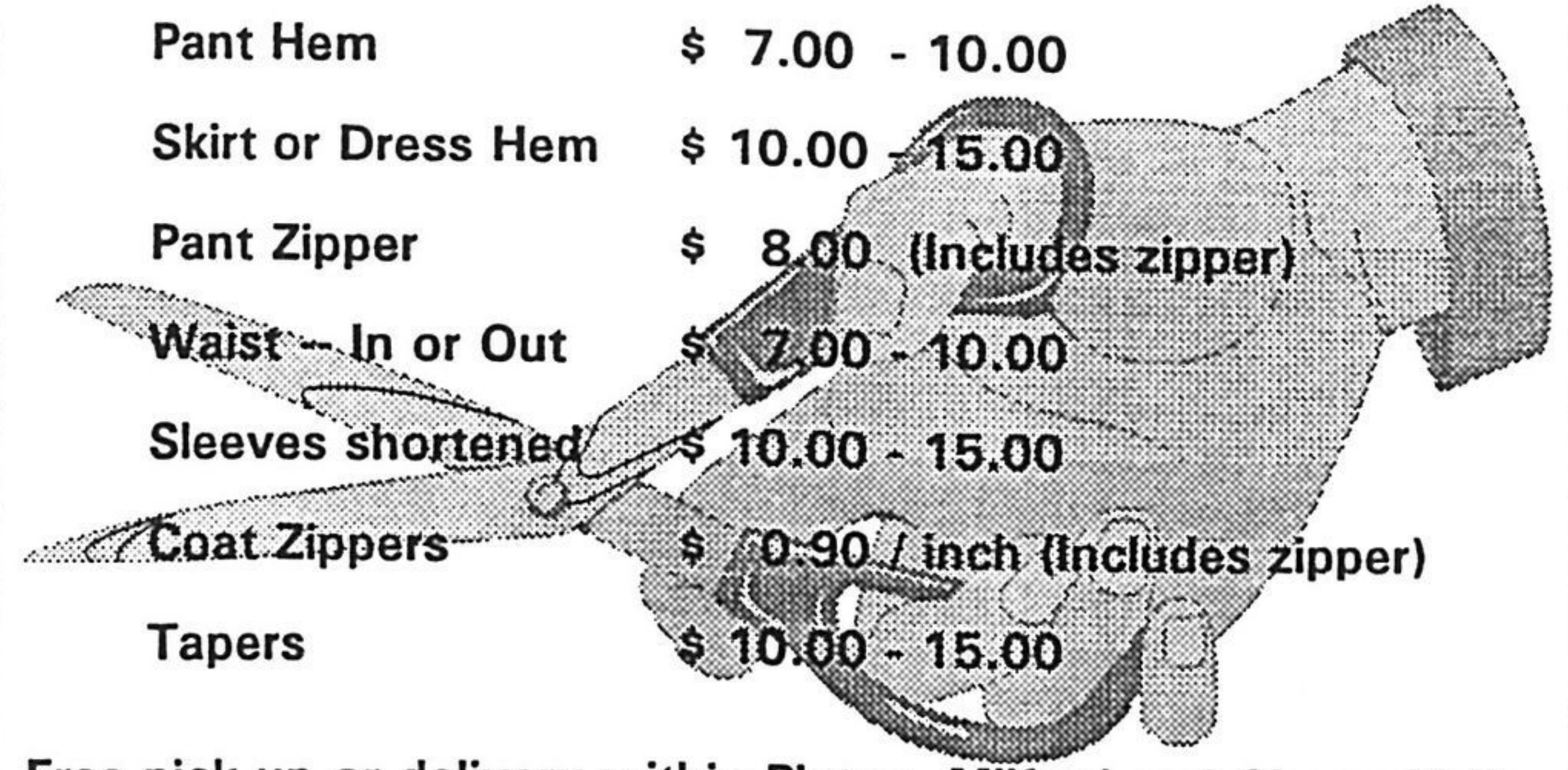


The Ann Farwell Library of Milford would appreciate hearing from anyone who could donate the following books:

- Athol by Philip Dodds
 - Stories of Prince Edward County by Allan Capon
- These are out of print and can no longer be purchased. The library's present copies are badly damaged. Call 476-4130.

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