

# Remembering Brad Smith

By Jim Anderson  
Correspondent

Brad Smith of Paulina Springs Books went out among the stars on May 20 of this year — but if reincarnation works, he'll be back, not as Brad Smith, owner of Paulina Springs Books, but as a thorny devil stick insect. If that goes as he planned, however, we'll have to visit the Solomon Islands to catch up with him!

Brad was born December 13, 1954, in Spokane, Washington and lived there until he was five. His big sister Cynthia says, "The family then moved to Clarkston, Washington, and lived there for 1-1/2 years. He was seven when we moved to Portland, Oregon. I guess Portland was probably the closest to a hometown. After high school and several years of traveling around, he settled in Bellingham, Washington, and lived there until he moved to Bend."

Brad and his wife, Randi, lived happily together for 35 years before Brad proposed marriage. The occasion was their oldest son Leben's wedding, and Randi accepted! During those 35 years another son, Austin, entered their lives, and out of all these events came a beautiful granddaughter, Hazel.

It wasn't his idea to leave us at such a young age. Those of us who were around Brad knew very well he was just getting started in the business

of enjoying life. What got him was cancer.

Cynthia remembers his intense curiosity as a kid, and how he almost burned their house down learning about fire. And on another occasion a few years later, while learning about gravity, rolling boulders into Loon Lake with the help of his brother, almost wiping out hikers on the trail below them. Cynthia still smiles remembering the happy times their family had going to their grandmother school teacher's cabin on Loon Lake, Washington, when all the kids were young.

Brad went through his life applying his uncontrollable curiosity in just about everything he took on, which eventually brought him a great following with children — his own, his grandchildren, and strays. Throughout his adult life, when kids heard about any big outing coming up, they'd ask, "Will Uncle Brad be there?"

"Children just glommed onto him!" Cynthia noted.

Jim Ashby, the general manager of a natural foods co-op in Bellingham, Washington, wrote a delightful account of Brad's learning about the business world.

"Brad was a driving force in the co-op's growth and development for over 25 years. He began working for the co-op when they were using a cigar box instead of a cash register. It can be said of very few people that if it weren't for them

an organization might not exist. Brad was that rare person for the co-op. For many years, he was the co-op's most recognizable staff person. Longtime members will remember him as encyclopedic on both natural foods and co-ops. Brad has been gone from the co-op for quite a few years, and now he's gone from the Natural World. He left the evidence of his vision and hard work behind for us."

You can feel, see, experience and appreciate Brad's influence on his store in Sisters the same way today. But the story of Brad's Paulina Springs Books began with founders Dick Sandvik and Diane Campbell in 1992. They created the bookstore with high appeal to readers of many persuasions, and over time its good reputation had spread far and wide.

Dick and Diane began hosting author events, bringing a welcome new element to the already culturally rich community of Sisters. Six months after opening, they hired Sue Tank, who continues to be a vital member of the staff today. In addition to Sue, Bunny Thompson was working in the store at the time of purchase, and she too was instrumental in the shaping of the store's character.

In 2003, after 25 years of



PHOTO COURTESY CYNTHIA CLARIDGE

Brad Smith doing what he liked to do best: reading to his granddaughter, Hazel.

managing the Community Food Co-Op in Bellingham, Brad moved to Central Oregon and began searching for a new community-connected endeavor. After visiting the store, he was impressed by the strong sense of community Dick and Diane had achieved. When he learned they were interested in selling, he decided to take the plunge.

Owning and operating Paulina Springs Books was different from the community-owned grocery store he managed for years, but Brad was a glutton for work. He opened Paulina Springs Books in Redmond in 2007 and was active in the Independent Booksellers Association, which has

started a scholarship in Brad's name.

Brad's wish to be reincarnated as a thorny devil stick insect may have come from one of the zoology books he read. With his vast knowledge of languages, he may have grabbed the scientific name for the walking sticks, Phasmatidae, which is from the Greek, meaning an apparition or phantom, referring to the resemblance of many species to sticks or leaves — or perhaps he liked the idea of being included with the world's longest insects.

On Saturday, July 21, from 5 to 7 p.m., there will be a celebration of Brad's life, held at Paulina Springs Books, 252 W. Hood Ave. in Sisters.

## INDIGO COLLECTION



Nature + Geometry

Stitchin' Post

541.549.6061 | 311 W. CASCADE AVE.

*Sisters Rotary*

# HOEDOWN

← Dance to →

## Dry Canyon Stampede

Saturday, July 28th ☆ 5-9 p.m.

67480 Cloverdale Road

*Join Us in Raising Funds to Support*

Seed to Table | Circle of Friends | Sisters Band of Brothers  
SHS Flight Science Program | The Rotary Club of Sisters

### GRAND PRIZE DRAWING - A TASTE OF SISTERS

The Depot Cafe | The Gallery | Los Agaves  
Three Creeks Brewing Co. | Chops Bistro

*Live & Silent Auction by Ramona Hulick - Turmon Auction Services*  
Kid's Corner ☆ Wine Wall

Available for Purchase:  
Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Veggie Burgers, Salads, Desserts, Wine and Beer

## Tickets \$20/person (kids 12 & under FREE)

☆ SistersRotary.org ☆