

## Through New Eyes

by Bill Wickland

### OysterEaterVille fondly recalled

Regretably, I recently learned that we here on the central coast have lost a neat little tradition. "OysterEaterVille" was a party thrown twice a year in Winchester Bay by Cindy & Verne at Umpqua Aquaculture. It wasn't a really big do, but it was huge for fun.

My first experience of it, last December, was the first 'event' for me in my new location, but it turned out to be curtains for the bash. Here's how much fun it was:

I showed up at Umpqua Aquaculture at about noon forty-five. It was already happening since noon. I'd have been there on time, but I was listening to Car Talk and didn't want to use my Magnavox correcting selectric or whatever to shave with, and make noise in my ear, so I used a throw-away blade and sliced off a piece of my ear instead, and bled like a donor. So I got to sit and read Robert Owen Butler's "Mr. Spaceman" until my ear healed. That is a very funny weird book, the first I'd read with a 2000 print date. I recommend it.

Under the tarp at Umpqua Agriculture it was cool. Actually, pleasant. The day was a sort of humid 50, and that was heightened by the steaming oyster kegs and the chowder pot, and about thirty people who hadn't sliced their ears, and so had showed up on time.

Verne told me that last year, things started more slowly. Not this year. And he told me that he and Hoj had been up at five ayem in order to get the second of the big grey-blue tarps secured, the one over the band.

They didn't need a fire after all, so they stuck two tall yard flamingos on the rim, and about a dozen plastic fish in the ground, in the middle of a ring of rocks, and that was the pond. One old fart my age told me with a huge grin that he might be able to catch a fish in that pond.

And Hoj is busy now. He has been tasked (do I actually know enough new-age and government people that I now use 'tasked' as a verb form?) with writing down oyster orders and Tomaselli Bakery bread buys, and screaming out the names of the oyster-orderers when their time has come. "Vinny! Six of 'em here! Get 'em now!; Here ya go!; There ya go, buddy, scarf 'em! Get yer bread!"

In her oyster biz gear, Cindy is going around draping party leis on folkses' shoulders, and the folkses are beaming behind it.

And the band shows up. They get their gear into the back side of the 'tent,' and start hooking up. I watch fascinated. It is by now second nature to them, but I am amazed at how many things get jammed into how many other things before they are ready. It must be a precursor. And they must have forty instruments for a five-piece outfit. I swear that one of the guitars ('axes' if you be cool) was made in one of those roadside tourist redwood bars by a former hippie on an hallucinogen most of us can't remember - which I guess was the point, anyway.

Well, they get plugged in and hooked up, and they start jammin'. Folkses are diggin' it, man. We had been warned of showers. My dawn in Reedsport, three miles east, had been one of almost clear skies. The noon starting time sky had been covered, as much by clouds as by tarps, but it was nice out.

I'm pleased to see quite a few folks about my age, laughing and dancing and dressed funny. I'm adorned in my hard Rock Cafe collared sweatshirt from Rota, "Spain" (they spell it 'Espana' at home) and just in case, my "Desert Shield" t-shirt under. Digging into my shirts I had found, but didn't wear to this particular party, my 60's Zig Zag Man and my "Thank God I'm an Atheist" shirts. Good to run across them again, in my own closet.

With the music are dreams of Jimmy Buffett, Kenny Loggins and Jim Messina. Verne chooses this moment for a tiny, well-deserved, break.

Ever been sailing? Drop your guard for a moment? Whoosh! One of the new super-strong, many-grommet tarps gets ripped off like a cheap lingerie label and starts flapping in what a moment ago had been just a mild breeze, and I go "Wow!" Another guy, who was sort of a band roadie, I think, wearing a hooded sweatshirt from Sause Brothers (not a rock band, but a tugboat outfit which sometimes acts like a rock band and bashes into bridges and piers on the Oregon Coast) leaped to the crux and started fighting the tarp. I was drawn, don't know diddley from sheets and lines, but I was able to get a grip on sheets a little so the real hero could knot some of those lines one-handed in the driving wind and rain, while I observed that yes, God damn it, when you are messing with canvas or tarps in the rain and wind, water will naturally run right down your sleeves and remind you of your elbows, your pit hairs, and your nipples.

Well, hey - it was certainly a rush, like we used to have at hippie festivals. But it isn't over. I notice that it must be raining pretty hard, 'cause the tarp is sagging like a mis-

cannon beach  
arts association

**Comforts & Dangers**, a one-woman show by **Susan Planalp** will open at the Cannon Beach Galley Saturday October 7th with a reception at 6PM. **Dick Weissman** (the artist's husband) and **Gary Keiski** (our Dr. Karkeys) will play music at the reception.

"Will the highways on the Internet become more few?"  
—Concord, N.H., Jan. 29, 2000

pitched pup tent when I was a Cub Scout. But we are grown-ups now. We have no leaders. Now Verne (Around Umpqua Aquaculture, I think his first name shudbe Jules) comes back, and we grab these long two-by-fours with carpet bits attached, and we use them to push up the tarp until the water in the water pockets goes over the edge.

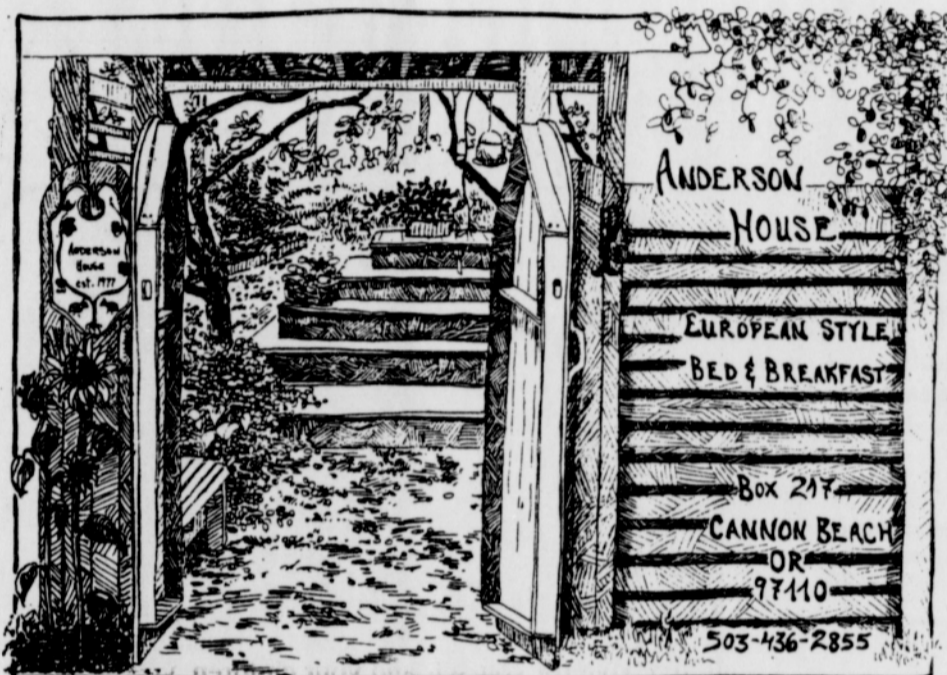
Things quiet a little. At this moment, Hoj is happy to be serving as maitre 'de. To restore my equilibrium (give me librium or give me meth!) I get a Tomaselli garlic and onion baguette and order a bowl of oyster chowder, - and get 'no' for an answer. Gotta wait a minute for the chowder.

With that huge bright smile, Verne allows as how he is going to go get some dry clothes on, and a light goes off in my mind. I've enjoyed one double teekie gold straight up with a touch of lime, but I ain't rich, and I am wet, and soon to be cold. And after that little 'sailing in a storm' scenario, I have probably burned up that double teekie.

So I'm outta there. On the way home, since I have prepared my gullet with the good stuff, I deign to purchase an \$8 bottle of Tequila, or a bottle of \$8 Tequila, and I zip home and microwave some Stagg turkey chili enhanced by a Thorne Apple Valley Polish sausage, and I'm fat on a mild December Saturday.

Earlier, I had noticed pussy willow bursting along Scofield Creek, and had brought home a bud of that, and at the OysterEaterVille, I had been adorned with a lei. Hey. Cheap teekie, pussy willow, and a lei at my new place in Reedsport. It is a start.

Bill Wickland is a life-long wordo enjoying semi-retirement in Reedsport.



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Teddy Roosevelt said this in Kansas on Aug. 31, 1910:

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That is one of our tasks today...The citizens of the United States must effectively control the mighty commercial forces which they havethemselves called into being. There can be no effective control of corporations while their political activity remains. To put an end to it will be neither a short nor an easy task, but it can be done."

"I think we agree, the past is over."  
—On his meeting with John McCain,  
Dallas Morning News, May 10, 2000

"Reading is the basics for all learning."  
—Announcing his "Reading First"  
initiative in Reston, Va., March 28, 2000

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Manzanita: Mother Nature's Juice Bar, Cassandra's, Manzanita News & Espresso, & Nehalem Bay Video

Rockaway: Neptune's Used Books

Tillamook: Rainy Day Books & Tillamook Library

Bay City: Art Space

Yachats: By-the-Sea Books

Pacific City: The River House, Occasidie: Ocean Side Espresso

Lincoln City: Trillium Natural Foods, Driftwood Library, & Lighthouse Brewpub

Newport: Oceana Natural Foods, Ocean Pulse Surf Shop, Sylvia Beach Hotel, & Canyon Way Books

Eugene: Book Mark, Cafe Navarra, Eugene Public Library, Friendly St. Market, Happy Trails, Keystone Cafe, Kiva Foods, Lane C.C., Light For Music, New Frontier Market, Nineteenth Street Brew Pub, Oasis Market, Perry's, Red Barn Grocery, Sundance Natural Foods, U of O, & WOW Hall

Corvallis: The Environmental Center, OSU Salem: Heliotrope, Salem Library, & The Peace Store

Astoria: KMUN, Columbian Cafe, The Community Store, The Wet Dog Cafe, Astoria Coffee Company, Cafe Uniontown, & The River

Seaside: Buck's Book Barn, Universal Video, & Cafe Espresso

Portland: Artichoke Music, Laughing Horse Bookstore, Act III, Barnes & Noble, Belmonts Inn, Bijelot Art Gallery, Bijou Cafe, Borders, Bridgeport Brew Pub, Capt'n Beans (two locations), Center for the Healing Light, Coffee People (three locations), Common Grounds Coffee, East Avenue Tavern, Food Front, Goose Hollow Inn, Hot Lips Pizza, Java Bar Cafe, Key Largo, La Patisserie, Lewis & Clark College, Locals Only, Marco's Pizza, Maryhurst College, Mt. Hood CC, Music Millenium, Nature's (two locations), NW Natural Gas, OHSU Medical School, Old Wives Tales, Ozone Records, Papa Haydn, PCC (four locations), PSU (two locations), Reed College, Third Eye, Multnomah Central Library, and most branches of the YWCA

Ashland: Garo's Java House, The Black Sheep, Blue Mt. Cafe, & Rogue River Brewery

Cave Junction: Coffee Heaven & Kerby Community Market

Grants Pass: The Book Shop (Out of Oregon)

Vancouver, WA: The Den

Longview, WA: The Broadway Gallery

Naselle, WA: Rainy Day Artistry

Nahcotta, WA: Moby Dick Hotel

Duvall, WA: Duvall Books

Bainbridge Island, WA: Eagle Harbor Book Co.

Seattle, WA: Elliot Bay Book Co., Honey Bear Bakery, New Orleans Restaurant, Still Life in Fremont, Allegro Coffeehouse, The Last Exit Coffee House, & Bulldog News

San Francisco, CA: City Lights Bookstore

Denver, CO: Denver Folklore Centre

Washington, D.C.: Hotel Tabard Inn (Out of U.S.A.)

Paris, France: Shakespeare & Cie

Brighton, England: The Public House Bookstore

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