

# UPPER LEFT EDGE

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# One flew east One flew west One flew over the cuckoo's nest

## SAYING GOODBYE TO KEN KESEY

I can't say I really "knew" Ken Kesey. I'd met and chatted with him and Faye some years back at a book signing. I'd read his "Sailor Song" and he'd read my "Sea Stories." Kesey liked didgeridoos. I played mine for them. But I didn't make contact again until a few months ago, just to say hi via email "...before one of us croaks," as I put it. He remembered me, said my books were on the shelf near his desk, invited me to the farm "some Sunday afternoon." A fool would pass it up. I told Kesey I didn't plan to write anything. It was just a friendly visit, unmarred by "business."

My friend Jim accompanied me on the grueling, 4+ hour drive from Astoria to Pleasant Hill. The Mapquest map was wrong, but we saw the bus from the road. Kesey met us. It was Sunday, September 9, 2001, just a few hours before the 9/11 paradigm shift and a couple of months before Kesey's own reality shift. A friend called the meeting propitious. I looked it up. Yeah, that's it, propitious.

We sat at a large table next to the most recent incarnation of the legendary magic bus "Further." Kesey hopped up on the table, scraping, sanding, touching up parts of the mobile mural. We just talked. It was a beautiful afternoon. We played Kesey's "Thunder Machine" contraption, I played the didge, we all had a few laughs, and yes, shared shamanic sacrament. The whole experience was almost exactly as I had imagined it... and I got to look deeply into the man's eyes and engage in a very focused exchange of thoughts, ideas, perspectives. His departure from this form lends greater depth and import to all those words.

This was not "Finding Forrester." He knew me, knew about the long struggle with the crow book, had raised crows, too. There are many crows painted on Further The Bus, perhaps Kesey's true magnum opus.

I consider myself extremely fortunate. There were no exchanges of writing secrets. I asked and answered most of my own questions. Kesey nodding, commenting in a low, pleasant voice, deep blue eyes, a nice man, a decent soul thrust into a strange role, just trying to make things better, maintaining impeccable dignity and integrity throughout the whole trip, leaving the planet in better shape than it had been, setting a good example. Inspiring.

John Paul Barrett  
Writer, etc., Astoria

Kesey's long-time friend, Ken Babbs:

"A great good friend and great husband and father and grand dad, he will be sorely missed but if there is one thing he would want us to do it would be to carry on his life's work. Namely to treat others with kindness and if anyone does you dirt forgive that person right away. This goes beyond the art, the writing, the performances, even the bus. Right down to the bone.

Good thing the second generation pranksters are on the job: Zane Kesey and Simon Babbs. They know the routine. They'll keep it going. Meanwhile, keep the fires stoked, the wheels greased and the windscreens clean. Stay tuned for further reports."

FURTHER ON!

Yes, we ARE One Family!

If you want to donate something send it to the Spotlight Theater.  
P.O. Box 802  
Pleasant Hill OR 97455

It's a non-profit local community theater group where Ken Kesey's grand daughter Kate performs. Thanks.

Ken Babbs

The conscious utterance of thought,  
by speech or action, to any end, is Art...  
Art is the spirit's voluntary use and  
combination of things to serve its end.  
—Ralph Waldo Emerson



Ken Kesey

September 17, 1935 – November 10, 2001

## Writings and Other Works

- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Viking, 1962.
- One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Viking Critical Edition, edited by John C. Pratt), Viking, 1973.
- Sometimes a Great Notion*, Viking, 1964.
- Kesey's Garage Sale*, Viking, 1973.
- Kesey*, Northwest Review of Books, 1977 (Edited by Michael Strelow).
- The Day After Superman Died*, Lord John Press, 1980.
- Demon Box*, Viking, 1986.
- The Further Inquiry*, Viking, 1990.
- Caverns* (by O.U. Levon, a joint pseudonym for Robert Bluckner, Ben Bochner, James Finley, Jeff Forester, Bennett Huffman, Lynn Jeffress, Ken Kesey, Neil Lindstrom, H. Highwater Powers, Jane Sather, Charles Varani, Meredith Wadley, Lidia Yukman, and Ken Zimmerman), Penguin, 1990. (Author of introduction.)
- Little Tricker the Squirrel Meets Big Double the Bear*, Viking 1990.
- The Sea Lion*, Viking, 1991.
- Sailor Song*, Viking, 1992.
- Last Round Up*, (with Ken Babbs), Viking, 1994

You remember where you were when you learn that people you care about have reached the speed of light. I was in Menresa, Spain when I got an e-mail telling me about Ken Kesey. I had heard of possible health problems, but Kesey was strong, a wrestler, he could go nose to nose with the Hell's Angels and break even. His writing was great at times, as was his life; he went all out, at times. I say this because I respect him as that most rare creature – a human being. Human beings are not heroes, they are not role models, they are human beings. More real than perfect is how a friend described it.

I met Kesey three times in the flesh, over the thirty years I was aware of his existence. He was a different man each time, because we were in a different time each time. The first encounter I had was second hand. He was at the Springfield Creamery Booth at the Oregon Country Fair one morning when I was getting coffee for me and ice cream for my son James, then about six or seven. James was doing a thing with his sweatshirt where he put one arm in a sleeve and held the other sleeve while slipping his free hand under the front of his sweatshirt and pushing it up between the arms. Yes, it is as silly as it sounds. Well, Kesey was watching and wanted to see how it was done and they played together for a while. I smiled.

The second encounter was also at the Country Fair, backstage at the midnight show, and even though, for obvious reasons I don't recall the whole thing clearly, I was sure he was acting like an arrogant asshole. I shook my head. The last time I saw him was at the Nehalem Bay Winery for a party. I had brought some of my copies of his books and asked him to sign them. He was a gracious and witty as you could hope for an author to be under the circumstances.

His writing, like his life, had its good and bad days. I think it fitting that one of the last things he wrote, "The Last Go Around," was a re-telling of a story he had learned from his father about the history of the Pendleton Round-up. I loved it

Billy Hults  
Editor/War Correspondent  
Upper Left Edge



MOONS & TIDES

WASHINGTON AND OREGON COASTS  
2001 Corrected for PACIFIC BEACHES  
HIGH DECEMBER LOW DECEMBER

DATE	MOON	TIME	FT	TIME	FT	TIME	FT	TIME	FT
1 Sat	●	0:53	7.6	11:56	9.6	6:10	3.0	7:08	-0.9
2 SUN	●	1:38	7.6	12:34	9.6	6:52	3.2	7:48	-0.9
3 Mon	●	2:25	7.6	1:15	9.5	7:36	3.4	8:31	-0.9
4 Tues	●	3:13	7.6	2:02	9.2	8:25	3.5	9:18	-0.6
5 Wed	●	4:05	7.6	2:55	8.8	9:21	3.5	10:09	-0.2
6 Thur	●	4:59	7.6	4:00	8.1	10:27	3.5	11:06	0.3
7 Fri	●	5:56	7.9	5:18	7.5	11:42	3.3	...	...
8 Sat	●	6:52	8.2	6:44	7.2	12:07	0.8	1:00	2.7
9 SUN	●	7:45	8.7	8:05	7.1	1:08	1.2	2:13	1.8
10 Mon	●	8:34	9.2	9:16	7.3	2:07	1.6	3:16	0.9
11 Tues	●	9:19	9.6	10:18	7.5	3:02	1.9	4:12	0.0
12 Wed	●	10:02	9.9	11:13	7.7	3:54	2.2	5:02	-0.6
13 Thur	●	10:43	10.0	...	...	4:42	2.5	5:48	-1.0
14 Fri	●	0:05	7.8	11:22	9.9	5:29	2.8	6:32	-1.1
15 Sat	●	0:53	7.9	12:01	9.7	6:15	3.0	7:14	-1.0
16 SUN	●	1:39	7.9	12:39	9.4	6:59	3.3	7:54	-0.8
17 Mon	●	2:29	7.8	1:17	9.0	7:43	3.4	8:32	-0.4
18 Tues	●	3:05	7.7	1:56	8.7	8:26	3.6	9:05	0.0
19 Wed	●	3:47	7.6	2:37	8.2	9:12	3.7	9:46	0.5
20 Thur	●	4:30	7.6	3:24	7.7	10:02	3.7	10:26	1.0
21 Fri	●	5:13	7.6	4:21	7.1	10:59	3.7	11:06	1.5
22 Sat	●	5:58	7.7	5:31	6.6	12:03	3.4	11:56	2.0
23 SUN	●	6:43	7.9	6:50	6.3	...	...	1:10	3.0
24 Mon	●	7:27	8.1	8:05	6.3	0:49	2.4	2:13	2.4
25 Tues	●	8:10	8.5	9:12	6.5	1:43	2.8	3:10	1.6
26 Wed	●	8:51	8.8	10:11	6.8	2:36	3.0	4:00	0.9
27 Thur	●	9:31	9.2	11:04	7.1	3:27	3.2	4:45	0.2
28 Fri	●	10:11	9.5	11:53	7.4	4:16	3.4	5:29	-0.4
29 Sat	●	10:53	9.7	...	...	5:04	3.4	6:12	-0.8
30 SUN	●	0:40	7.7	11:37	9.9	5:52	3.4	6:55	-1.1
31 Mon	●	1:26	7.9	12:23	9.9	6:40	3.4	7:38	-1.1

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