

Yodolaadi-o-dolaadi-o-doloo

Rocky Mountain Yodeler keeps rolling along

by Carol Thurlkill
Feature writer

Yodeling is a reminder of the past for most people. It's an anachronism from days of long ago.

But for Chuck Edwards, who goes by the name of "The Rocky Mountain Yodeler," the art he practices is very much alive.

Edwards, a resident of Wemme, has been yodeling cowboy ballads since he was 12.

"I taught myself to yodel from the word go," he said. All it takes is the nerve to try it and the ability to crack your voice to produce the right harmonies.

The cowboy way of life and tradition has intrigued Edwards since he was a boy. His parents, originally from Illinois, "had a hankerin'" to move West in the thirties and the journey eventually led the Rocky Mountain Yodeler to Oregon.

Edwards began his rodeo career at eight and teamed up with Thunder, his favorite horse, for a part of his act. He joined the Oregon Journal Juniors four years later.

While working for a pony ranch

in 1941, he met Gene Autrey who took him back to Hollywood. Edwards said he learned a great deal from the cowboy movie hero and was also influenced by the late Elton Brit and Montana Slim, a Canadian cowboy singer.

Edwards continued on the amateur rodeo circuit honing his skills. He eventually worked his way into vaudeville and gets a little misty eyed now when reminiscing about shows at the old Capital and Oriental theatres, both of which have been replaced. He also did a few stints at the Bagdad theatre.

Edwards performed live radio in the forties and fifties. He appeared on KWJJ (now KGW) with the Sage Riders where he sang "Smiling Miles." He also did a tune alongside Jerry Van Humis and his Modern Band. There were many more.

But times have changed and so has entertainment since those good old days.

"Of course, radio is all recorded today," Edwards said. He has a hand in that gambit with original songs on the Rocky Mountain label. His latest

recording is "Yodelin' Hobo."

Edwards left professional stage work in the fifties when vaudeville started to decline. He began a new career in police work which took him to Gladstone, Beaverton and Lake Oswego where he became Chief of Police. He put in a total of 20 years in law enforcement work.

Edwards has four children by his wife, Donna, and nine grandchildren. One son, Tim McCarthy, is the music teacher at Welches grade school and carries on the family's musical tradition as the lead in the band "Wildwood."

Edwards has continued with his yodeling through the years but limits himself to freelance work in the area.

"I still do volunteer work," he said. "Mainly singing for children." He also appears at rodeos and horse shows and makes himself available to anyone needing a good cowboy singer for benefit shows.

His next scheduled performance will be in the evening at the Wemme Women's Club July 4 celebration.



Chuck Edwards: The Rocky Mountain Yodeler

Staff photo

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Exploring the mind's outer reaches

by JOHN DEAN

LaFaye Fouts has lived in the Estacada area since 1938, in Viola since 1949. She once was a leader in the local 4-H Club, and is still a member of the Cascade Riding Club. She helped found Viola's church in 1956. She has raised three sons, and now has six grandchildren.

You get the idea. So where's the story?

The story with LaFaye Fouts is not so much what she did in the first 53 years of her life as what she has done in the last five. Since 1974, she has taught classes in metaphysics and spiritual and psychic techniques at "The Source," a human-

potential center in Portland. She has also done spiritual counseling and has written books and booklets about colors, energy, magnetic fields, philosophy and spiritual understanding.

This weekend she will speak at the 17th annual convention of the New Age Foundation, a group covering such diverse interests as UFO's, dowsing, parapsychology, holistic healing, constitutional freedoms and pyramidology.

Fouts herself probably puts the situation in proper perspective: "The last thing I thought I would be doing is what I'm doing now."

So how did she get to be

doing what she's doing now?

Fouts pinpoints 1973 as the year her own awareness opened up — Aug. 26, 1973, as a matter of fact. At the time, she owned a restaurant in the Cedar Hills shopping center near Beaverton. At first, the psychic part was just for fun — the owner of the shop next to her restaurant read palms as a hobby, so she entertained Fouts' patrons by reading their palms during the lunch break. The customers liked that service so much that Fouts brought in a tarot card reader, and before long, she was coordinating a variety of psychic services out of her restaurant.

Coordinating, mind you, not practicing.

"I said, 'Not me. I don't believe in that stuff.' But eventually I was put in the position where I had to do it — someone would be absent. Once, I had to go on the floor to give a reading" of a person's aura (we'll get to that in a moment). Soon, she was taking down akashic records (patience, please), and, not long after, she was doing her own "channeling" with the "life force." (we'll get to that one, too).

"No one could understand what was happening to LaFaye," she chuckles. But she did. "Over the last 25 years, I found if I had a

question, I always got an answer." Sometimes just the book she needed would appear in a second-hand store. Other times the answer might be an idea that just popped into her head. (Such "idea-popping," she says, is nothing less than telepathy.)

So, at 53, LaFaye Fouts was ready to start passing on the spiritual knowledge she has access to through her contact with the "life force."

First of all, about those auras . . .

"The aura is an energy field that surrounds you. It's a shell about two feet thick. It's like an egg — you're the yolk and the aura is the white that surrounds the yolk." She explains this in a normal, conversational tone — maybe it's the fact these ideas are unfamiliar that makes her seem to talk faster than she is.

"It's an energy field of purity of thought. The aura is white, and white repels. It gives people protection, and it aids the person in finding his own level of consciousness."

Auras can be extended to protect other people or things as well, Fouts says. It's called "putting the white light over" someone, which she translates as "surrounding them with love — don't allow negative thoughts."

"All mothers and fathers should put the white light over their homes and their

children every morning," she advises. She is, after all, a grandmother too.

As for akashic records, Fouts says these are records of what each person did in his past lives. (We all live 10,000 lives on this planet before we move to a higher state of consciousness, she says.) She says she is able to "read" these records with the help of the aura.

Knowledge of past lives has a purpose, she says: "It does you no good to know about your past life if it isn't going to help you in your life now. You have to live in the now. What we do now creates what we do in the future."

Why do we need more than one life?

"You need to think for yourself what your own truths are," Fouts says. "We're here to learn to think for ourselves." But it takes time to learn what our truths are, she says; we need 10,000 different lives to experience the range of truths available to us.

Then what is "channeling"? And what is the life force?

"Life flows throughout the universe from one level of consciousness into another." That flow, she says, constitutes a force. When she is channeling, "I'm asking the higher beings to give guidance. I listen and write down what I hear." She hears the answers in her head — "the same place that

you think," she says with a smile.

This, she says is part of what she does as a spiritual counselor: a client will ask her a question; she, in turn, will "ask" in her mind to the higher beings, who will give her a reliable answer to relay back to the client.

Dreams are another form of psychic communication, Fouts says. "We learn things we need to learn at night. We learn how to handle what will happen tomorrow, or we get a solution to a problem we've had. Dreams usually only concern events that have happened in the last 48 hours."

When she reaches her 10,000th life, LaFaye Fouts may return to earth as a spiritual teacher; she may continue her spiritual education on some other world. "You've always got another mountain to climb. There's always another level of consciousness, another classroom to go to."

Fouts sees the same changes in herself taking place in others. The big boost to the earth's awareness, she says, came with Comet Kohoutek, astronomy's great fizzle of 1973. "When Kohoutek came in, we were told (by higher beings) it would bring in a new emanation of the Christ consciousness on earth. It changed the consciousness on the earth very much. Now people have experiences they weren't aware of before." This awakening, she says, is exploration of "a new frontier of the mind."

One lesson to be learned in life, Fouts says, is that "nothing is out of place. Everything has a reason; it's up to us to find out what the reason is."

LaFaye Fouts spent 53 years trying to find out the reasons behind the world; and it's an understatement to say she's content with what she's found.

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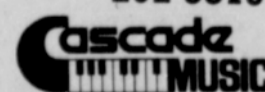
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