

38TH ANNUAL OREGON COUNTRY FAIR JULY 7, 8 & 9, 2006

Fantastic Fair Folk

Fair family relationships extend throughout the community. ■ By Vanessa Salvia



Lucy Kingsley

Lucy Kingsley White Bird Medicine

Lucy Kingsley moved to Oregon from Southern California in 1965 to attend college at OSU. She has participated in all 38 years of the fair and has been with White Bird Medicine since 1970. The first fair in 1969 was a fundraiser for an alternative school, and Kingsley was there. "I went to the first fair on Blanton Heights as a tourist when I was still living in Corvallis," Kingsley said. "In April of 1970 I transferred down from Oregon State to UO. White Bird had opened in February of that year, and I started working in July for White Bird."

Through White Bird, Kingsley coordinated medical care for the fair until the mid-'90s. Kingsley was and still is active in the local mental health community; she worked the very first CAHOOTS shift on July 4, 1989.

For the fair, it might be easier to list all of the things Kingsley *hasn't* done over the decades: "I've coordinated

medical for many years, I've also worked in a food booth and a craft booth, I've coordinated registration, I've worked on the info crew. When the Neighborhood Response team first got in operation [1993], I worked doing that, and I've been the mother of the Country Fair lost and found for more than 30 years!" Kingsley has also served on the fair's board of directors and as the secretary. "I just go every year and work and play!" she said.

Bob Fennessy Publicist at WOW Hall

"I moved to Eugene in August of 1977, so the first year I actually got to go to the fair was 1978," said Bob Fennessy, the man behind the WOW Hall's entertainment publicity. "Of course, as soon as I went out there it became my life's ambition to camp all night, but first I had to become worthy!"

Fennessy finished his degree in community service and public affairs at UO, became a political activist with Oregon Fair Share and told his boss that in order to get a booth at the fair she needed to go to the Community Village meetings. "Because I was working in the evenings when the meetings were held, she had to do it," he explained. "She embraced the idea, and I got to start camping there in 1983."

After a few years, Fennessy was able to go to those meetings himself. For 10 years he was part of the coordinating council of Community Village, which is the hub allowing non-profit agencies to distribute information about their organizations to fairgoers. It's part of the fair but has its own umbrella of leadership and is a completely consensus-driven entity. "It is an experiment in direct self-government, kind of like the old town meetings you read about in history," Fennessy said. "Everybody has an equal say."



Bob Fennessy

After 10 years Fennessy relinquished his role as coordinator and began helping out with other projects, such as organizing the Spring Fling and scheduling the stage, which he has done for more than ten years.

In order to open up fair jobs to the new generation of fair family, volunteers can be "retired" after 20 years of service or after reaching 55 years of age. Fennessy has already served more than 20 years, and will soon enjoy all the benefits of fair life without the work.

Sue Kesey Co-owner of Springfield Creamery, maker of Nancy's Yogurt

The founding of Springfield Creamery in 1960 pre-dates the Oregon Country Fair, and when the fair started, the creamery was



Sue Kesey

among the first to sign up as a vendor. "We [attended] one of the very first fairs," said Sue Kesey, one of the creamery's owners, and wife of Chuck Kesey, author Ken Kesey's brother. "We did frozen yogurt, and no one had ever done anything like that before. This was 1969."

After the fair moved to the current site, the creamery set up a frozen yogurt booth in 1972 or 1973 — "nobody quite remembers!" Sue said. Sue and Chuck's daughter Sheryl handles operations of the booth now, while son Kit (who also produces entertainment through McDonald Theatre and other venues) runs the daily plant operations. Sue and Chuck's grandsons are now 20, 17 and 14, and also work in the booth. "They have become complete fair kids, so now we have three generations and it's very wonderful," she said.

The fair site bounced around the greater Eugene area for several years until it settled in its current location near Veneta. Initially, the fair was renting the property, but the owners said they would consider selling it. Along with Nicki Scully and her Grateful Dead connections, the Keseyes brought the Dead to town, organizing and promoting the 1972 Field Trip with tickets printed on Nancy's Yogurt labels. In 1982 they helped organize another concert, finishing the down payment on the land. "In 1992 there was going to be another one, but that got canceled because Jerry Garcia got ill and they canceled that whole tour. We ended up doing the Furthur Festival in 1996," she said.

Sue has been with the fair's food committee for more than 20 years and marvels at the level of volunteer involvement that keeps the fair going. "We are certainly only a minute part of that," she said.

Nicki Scully Author, healer, shaman and spiritual tour guide

Nicki is a longtime member of the Grateful Dead's family, formerly married to their original manager Rock Scully. She first visited Egypt when the Grateful Dead performed there in 1978, then became involved with spiritual healing and incorporating Egyptian mysteries into her healing work. Now, she leads tours to what she considers the most spiritual places on earth, including Egypt, Greece and Peru. She has written two books on animal totems and alchemical healing, with one on the way about Egyptian mysteries.

Scully moved to Eugene from the Bay Area in 1981. "The first thing I looked for was how to get the Grateful Dead to play here," Scully said. "I was turned on to the fair because that was the obvious place to do it." With the Springfield Creamery at the helm, the concert went off the next year. "It was many fair folks' dream to combine the Grateful Dead with Country Fair magic, and it was a great way for me to get involved with the fair initially."

In the mid-'90s, the fair board asked Scully to take over a space in the fair. She transformed it into Altared Space, which is "a place where people can step out of the hustle and bustle and intensity of the fair and into a place of connection with spirit," she said. Altared Space, which is open to everyone, holds an altar for representation of all spiritual beliefs, a meditation space, a

healing space called Altared Healing, and Altared Advice, a place for advice and counseling from caring, trained individuals. It also has a space for creating sacred crafts, such as prayer flags, for children of all ages.

This year, crews are building a more permanent structure for the altar so it has a much larger and more welcoming presence. "For a person like me

who has a really, really busy schedule, who travels all over the world, the fair week is inviolable to me," Scully said. "That is where I go to rejoice and rejoice."

David Paul Black Mainstage Entertainment

David Paul Black has booked the acts and managed the Mainstage at the fair for decades. Now he's retiring after more than 28 years of service. "I started attending the fair in 1975, when I worked for KLCC, and at the time I was a producer of a live music show from the WOW Hall, which was



Nicki Scully