

The Sad Saga of Sammy

GOING FROM LOST TO FOUND AT THE OREGON COUNTRY FAIR BY WILLIAM KENNEDY

Some people go to the Oregon Country Fair to lose their inhibitions, their worries, their minds or all of the above; more often than not, though, they just end up losing their cell phones.

"Smart phones have memories," a Samsung LG phone recently lost at the Country Fair tells me. "No pun intended," the phone jokes, flicking an ash from his cigarette into the street where we are talking.

"You should call me Sammy," I'm informed. Sammy is serving out 30 days in the lost and found at the Country Fair's HQ at 4th and Lawrence. "I've got 30 days," he says, "after that, if I'm not claimed, I'll get donated somewhere."

I ask Sammy how he came to be lost. "I drove down from Portland with my owner and her best friend," he says. "She's just finished her first year at Reed College. She'd heard a lot about the Fair and decided to come and check it out."

After finally getting through the gates, Sammy and the girls roamed the fairgrounds, with Sammy snapping photos of the craft booths, bellydancers and this one dude dressed like a garden gnome "Man, that guy was a trip," Sammy says, lighting up another Camel Light before he continues his tale.

Soon the trio grabbed some dumplings at Ma Ma's, Mo Mo's, and then headed over Kesey Stage to catch Eugene band the Conjugal Visitors.

And this is when everything started to go wrong — at least for Sammy.

Cell phones, cameras and coats are the most common personal effects turned in by Good Samaritans at the Oregon Country Fair. You can turn in found items at any of the Fair's information booths, after which the lost belongings

will be transferred by 6 pm to Lost and Found Central at Odyssey.

And, yes, sometimes even dru... ms (I'll bet that's not what you thought I was going to say; the OFC, by the way, is officially an alcohol-and-drug-free event). Anyway, back to smokin' Sammy the displaced cell phone.

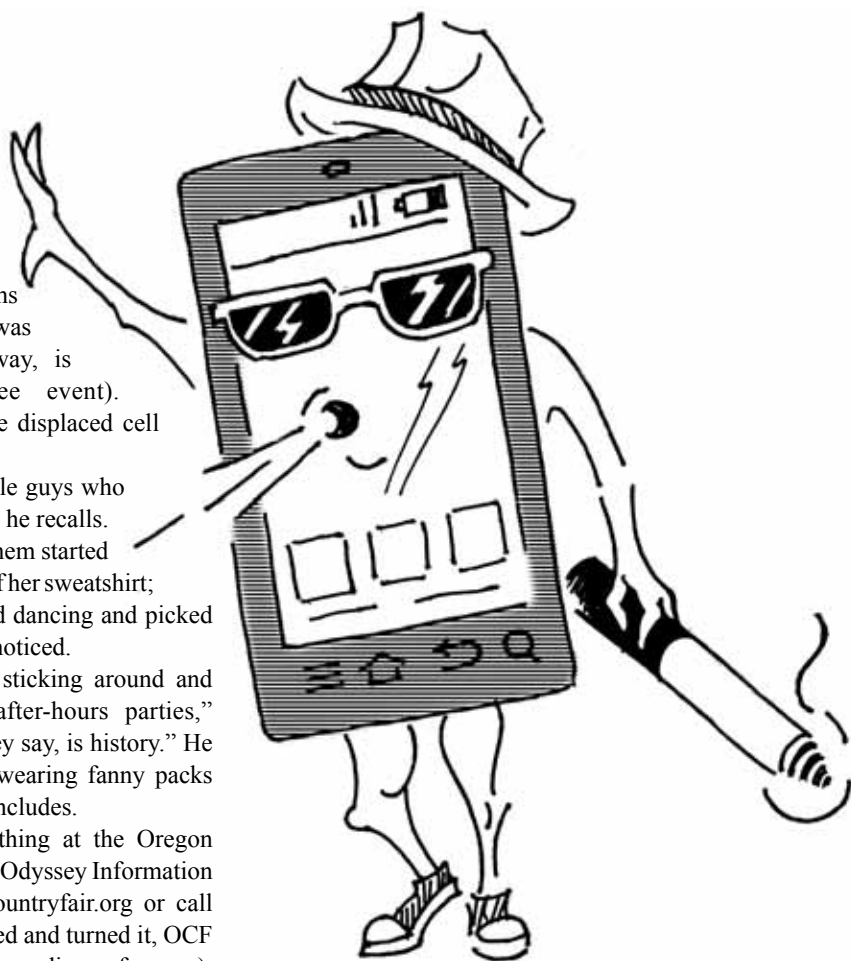
"Owner and her friend met a couple guys who drive up every year from Santa Cruz," he recalls. "They really hit it off and the four of them started dancing. At one point, Owner pulled off her sweatshirt; I was in the pocket. After she finished dancing and picked up her sweatshirt, I fell out. Nobody noticed.

"The boys said something about sticking around and hitting some of those legendary after-hours parties," Sammy explains. "And the rest, as they say, is history." He heaves a rueful sigh. "Some family wearing fanny packs and tie dye turned me in," Sammy concludes.

If you happen to misplace something at the Oregon Country Fair, report the lost item at the Odyssey Information booth; email lostandfound@oregoncountryfair.org or call 541-343-4298. If your item is recovered and turned in, OCF staff will even ship it back to you (on your dime, of course).

"Yeah, it's really a bummer I got lost," says Sammy. "We were all having such a good time. I mean, my guts contain all of my owner's contacts, music and photos. Now those photos are never gonna get Facebooked."

I reassure Sammy that there's still time — that his owner may yet come to claim him. He thanks me and then hops back inside the OCF offices.



So have fun at Country Fair 2012, and don't lose your stuff; in fact, it's not a bad idea to tag your gear with some form of personal identification. If you do happen to lose something, despair not: The Fair folks will do their best to reunite you with your possession.

Don't wind up like Sammy: You want those cool photos of the Oregon Country Fair up on Facebook ASAP. **EW**

The Pro Turn Weird

FAMOUS FACES AT THE OREGON COUNTRY FAIR BY ANDY VALENTINE

Sorry folks, there's actually no definitive evidence suggesting that Dr. Hunter S. Thompson, to whom the reversed title of this story can be credited, ever made it to the Fair, but it didn't take more than three years — after the Fair's beginnings in 1969 — for our annual psychedelic parade in Veneta to start taking on other famous faces.

Carlos Castaneda, peyote proponent and author of *The Teachings of Don Juan*, was reportedly a multiple attendee to the abstruse happenings of the Fair in the early 1970s, but he wasn't the only icon to grace OCF grounds with his presence.

In 1972, a benefit concert for the Kesey family creamery

in Springfield was held off-season on OCF grounds, emceed by Ken Kesey and Merry Prankster Ken Babbs. The outdoors gig coincided with the filming of a movie for the Grateful Dead. Unfortunately the film was never released, but those in attendance certainly got yet another wicked, late-set Dead show under their belts. Apparently the creamery was in dire straits back then, and without this particular show — with its monster turnout at three bucks a head — it would probably not be the Nancy's Yogurt franchise we know and love today.

"The Grateful Dead said it was the stark-nakedest scene they'd ever attended," Chuck Kesey says of his then-not-so-well-to-do Creamery.

That may have been OCF's finest hour, in all reality, but that doesn't mean such events could never again be possible; they're just highly unlikely. The early '70s were simply a different time, and maybe we'll never get the chance to see Grace Slick, leading lady of Jefferson Airplane, dancing in a pseudo-conga line of hemp-clad hippies with a head full of acid, as she supposedly did during one of her visits. And perhaps we won't get a chance to meet Bob Dylan or John Lennon (who only *supposedly* dropped by, but fuck it, we think it's a cool piece of lore).

At the end of the day, famous people and iconic moments only serve to strengthen the Country Fair's *feel*: equal, open and humane, no matter how many records you've released, what movies you've starred in or how many books you've published.

At the Country Fair, you're a human being, and that's how you'll be treated. As Castaneda used to say, "I like to walk the fair to be with humanity again." **EW**

A Benefit Event *silent auction*

for
Water For People *Live music by*
Laura Kemp and
Neil Bjorklund

presented by Sweet Cheeks Winery

Sweet Cheeks Winery
27007 Briggs Hill Road,
Eugene
July 19, 2012
6:00-9:00 pm
\$20/person
purchase tickets at the door
or by emailing
eugenewaterforpeople@gmail.com

www.waterforpeople.org



listen live

Oregon Country Fair Main Stage

Visit our booth near the Main Stage

July
13, 14, 15



89.7

www.klcc.org **npr**