

ROOTS And Branches

By MAIJA YASUI

Calendar swirl never stops

June is jam packed with celebrations of every manner. My day planner notations look like a Spirograph has had its way with each date, recording a whirlwind of grandkids, family and friends celebrating birthdays, weddings, babies, graduations, talent shows and dance recitals.



With my retirement from the public sector slated for the end of June, there has been a plethora of work related celebrations as well.

Fellow prevention colleagues with the cagey assistance of the Hood River Prevention Department concocted a fairly convincing story to get me down to the Prevention Summit and then surprised me with a lunch hour roast.

Remembrances were humorous as well as moving, but as my husband so bluntly put it, "You are just retiring; this is not your funeral." Leave it to a spouse of 45 years to put you in your place. I have been trying to figure out why my normally strong instincts of "there is something fishy in Denmark" didn't kick in and warn me there was a surprise at the end of the journey. Maybe it was the multitude of commitments in my calendar and the myriad of details that surround retirement compounded by Medicare, Social Security and health care applications that left me senseless.

Traditionally June is the month of graduations and weddings. I almost missed my granddaughter Kendra singing at her eighth grade promotion when I had written the wrong start time for the event into my infallible planner. Once it is in the book, it is official.

Besides, who in their right mind starts a promotion at 6 rather than 7 p.m.? A frantic phone call from the anxious parents along with a blessed late start got us to the football field just as her lilting voice swept across the goal line. I had time to wipe my tears as I climbed the stadium stairs and joined hundreds of others watching hundreds of 8th graders go through promotion. As the promotion progressed, my hindsight reminded me of the irony of being seated on the creaking stadium risers built over 60 years ago by Kendra's great grand dad, Ray Yasui.

June is also the premier month for wedding and baby showers, followed by the actual weddings and births. We had a baby shower two weeks ago for Mandy and Andrew Moe, bringing four generations together. There were stories to be told! There are two more showers and one more wedding in the calendar, followed by a class reunion and family reunion to round out the summer events.

June brought us a flurry of coach pitch T-ball and minor league baseball games as the Little League season was winding down. Rayla and MacKenzie still share the innocence of playing just for fun, a premise that Little League was founded on years ago. Their faces and fingers are dusty from playing in the dirt, waving to their parents, or running off the field to the snack shack.

Their dad, Corey, coached the little ones and did an exceptional job in keeping it fun, keeping it safe and teaching them to love running and throwing and on some rare occasions, even hitting and catching. Cooper moved up to Minors and it was a different world. The stress of competition begins to flow through the veins of many of the parents and coaches, seeping into the psyche of some of the kids.

The team he joined has some players who were on a "traveling" team, playing in other leagues throughout the year. It was obvious they had more skills and understood the actual strategies of baseball. Secretly I found myself hoping that these little ones could still play ball just for fun, not concerned about their batting average or their errors. Cooper's coach Sal Rivera was gentle with the less experienced younger boys, but there is the natural expectation they will become more competitive with each game they play.

Aunika at 12 has two more tournaments of softball in the OYSA U14s. They travel to places like Longview, Newberg and West Linn to play in weekend tournaments, while others are traveling to California, Arizona and Texas to become more competitive. It has become a huge industry. And it covers everything from dance to basketball, cheerleading to tennis, soccer to volleyball. For some it is a wonderful experience, for others, not so much. They learn early on that it takes a lot of time, effort and money to be highly competitive in this era of sports.

Then there were the school talent shows to watch, with singers, dancers, piano players, magicians and joke tellers. Close on their heels were the dance recitals, for the little ones at Hood River Middle School and for the older girls at Hood River Valley High School. So many parents and grandparents go to watch that there are multiple performances over multiple days. It is quite an extravaganza. I always enjoy seeing my classmate Charlotte Arnold perform with that fluid dancers body and over 50 years of teaching under her tiny little belt. We are blessed with a community filled with opportunities for kids of all ages. Sometimes it just comes down to affordability and access for all kids to participate.

May and June are right behind March in the abundance of birthday celebrations. The little ones, Cooper, Ren and Aya, have parties with their school friends and family making them bigger each year. They aren't over the top extravagant birthday parties, just overly crowded with loved ones.

Cooper is into Minecraft, Ren into the Book of Life sword fighter Joaquin and Aya is in love with Unicorns. Those marketers are exceptional in shaping the desires of the smallest of kids, even those who have limited screen time.

The calendar is a series of hen scratches, bursting at the seams. Guess I had better keep it handy even after I retire. And I had better make sure I get the correct time entered so I don't embarrass myself.

MID VALLEY NEWS

Fifty-Plus Expo comes to Hood River County Fair this summer

BY TRISHA WALKER
Mid Valley correspondent

I know it's been a few months (or six), but rest assured, the Odell community column really does still exist. Grab your calendar — there's a lot going on in our little community over the next few weeks.

Odell's Gorge Grown Mercado del Valle returns to Mid Valley Elementary School June 20, from 3-6 p.m. in the covered area of the playground. New at the market this year is the Power of Produce — or POP — program, where kids get \$2 in tokens to spend on fruits and vegetables from vendors.

Also new this year is an expanded SNAP Match program; those who use \$10 in EBT (food stamps) at the market will receive an additional \$10, for a combined total of \$20 to spend on local food.

The market will feature fruit, vegetables, eggs, fish, prepared food, art, kids' activities and live music; SNAP, WIC and debit cards are accepted. Mercado del

Valle will run on Saturdays through Sept. 26.

The Odell Garden Club is hosting a free workshop on June 30 to help Hood River County residents and youth in grades K-12 learn how to do floral designs, enter horticulture, and fill out entry tags for the upcoming Hood River County Fair. There will also be a booth on fruit and vegetable contests.



Trisha Walker

"There will be demonstrations of how to do a line design, line mass design and a creative line design," said club president Norma Curtis. "This can be used with many of the Design Classes in the Hood River County fair book."

Plant material will be available for participants to use to make designs with Garden Club instructors.

Children and youth are particularly encouraged to attend.

The workshop will be held

in the Community Building at the fairgrounds from 10 a.m. until noon. For more information or to register, contact Curtis at nlc Curtis@hrecn.net or 541-806-1019. While the workshop is free, tickets will be available for purchase to win a variety of containers, educational books and "country store items."

The Hood River County Fair takes place July 22-25 — and has been named "Best in Oregon." You'll find entertainment, kid and adult activities, exhibits and displays, exotic animals, horses and livestock, carnival and midway rides and games, flowers, vendor booths and food.

Wednesday's opening will include the first-ever 50 Plus Expo in one of the Wy'east gyms, scheduled to coincide with Seniors Day at the fair. Booths will cover a wide variety of products, services and information for adults over 50. Admission is free with your fair entry. Look for more information in upcoming News issues.

The annual Fourth of July parade through downtown Odell begins at 4 p.m., with parade lineup at Mid Valley Elementary at 3:30. The parade will again be sponsored by Gorge Goodtimers Snowmobile Club.

For more information, contact Jean Stone at 541-490-1901.

The Odell Lioness Club's annual May Basket was won by Jan Veldhuisen Virk of Hood River. Group members collected nearly \$2,000 in items from local merchants, including hats from Pistil, luggage from DaKine, and several restaurant gift certificates. The items filled not one, but three baskets.

Proceeds from the sale of tickets goes towards scholarships for two Hood River Valley High School girls, Lions Club charities, and many local causes.

If you have an item for the column, please send it to Trisha at twalker@hoodrivernews.com or call at 541-386-1234.

PARKDALE NEWS

A sizzling summer of activities in the Upper Valley

By TAMARA EMLER BALL
Parkdale correspondent

There's no need to wonder what you are going to do with your summer in the Upper Valley. With all the events going on, you'll need to get out your calendar and write them in so you don't miss anything!

The summer fun starts this Saturday, June 20, with the huge Bette Benjamin Memorial community garage sale from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 8675 Cooper Spur Road in Parkdale.

Bette always enjoyed a great yard sale and many of us remember her coming to ours over the years, with her smile and infectious laughter, always finding fun in our white elephant items.

When we all lost Bette recently to pancreatic cancer, family and close friends gathered together and decided a fitting memorial to her would be a community sale with 100 percent of the proceeds going to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

Everyone is encouraged to come out and buy, buy and buy some more in honor of Bette!

If you have items you would like to donate to the sale, you can drop them off this week at 8675 Cooper Spur Road from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day, or contact Lindsay Holmson at lholmson21@yahoo.com.

After you've had all the fun of bargain shopping this Saturday, get ready to party with your neighbors that evening at the annual Mt. Hood Town Hall fundraiser starting at 5:30 p.m.

Something a little different this year is a BBQ Celebration at the Town Hall, with outdoor dining with Apple Valley BBQ putting up some delicious food, and local beer, wine and cider available to purchase.

There will also be a live auction this year and it's not too late to donate items such as vacation rentals, ski or

windsurf lessons, house cleaning, or anything else you think someone would like to bid on!

The live music this year will be instrumental provided by Tim Mayer.

"Each year money raised at this fundraiser helps keep the Mt. Hood

Town Hall a vibrant part of our community and the continued support helps keep the historical building alive and running," said Board Chairperson Christina McGhee.

Many renovations have been sponsored by events such as this and this year the Town Hall board plans to use the money raised to help remodel the Hall's kitchen into a viable commercial kitchen that can be rented out to the community.

"Come enjoy an evening of fun, food and community at the Mt. Hood Town Hall," said Town Hall Manager Nikki Stansel. "The whole family is welcome!"

Tickets are \$35 per person and you can RSVP at rsvp@mthoodtownhall.org or by calling Christina at 541-490-6844.

If you have auction items to donate, please contact Nikki at 541-645-0341.

Theater and Art Summer Camps will be held during the weeks of July 6 - 10 and August 3 - 7 at the Mt. Hood Town Hall for kids ages 4 through 12 in need of activities this summer, or parents looking for something for them to do.

New Vision School teachers Heather Laurance and

Rachel Beitler will be holding classes from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day during those weeks.

Cost for the camp is \$250 a week per child, with sibling discounts and partial scholarships available.

For more information contact Heather Laurance at 541-390-0352.

There are more classes for the kids this summer as the Upper Valley community churches of Parkdale Community Church, Parkdale Nazarene, Parkdale Baptist and Pillar Bible Fellowship of Odell together will hold Vacation Bible School the week of Aug. 3-7.

"Outrigger Island" classes will be held at Parkdale Community Church on Baseline Road in Parkdale, where children will learn about Jesus through songs, bible stories and crafts.

Families are invited to gather at the church at 5 p.m. and enjoy a light meal, then children ages pre-K through incoming fifth graders are invited to attend VBS classes starting at 5:30 p.m.

For more information or if you would like to help, contact Pastor Mark at Parkdale Community Church at 541-352-7747 or at 541-490-4511.

Parkdale Elementary School is getting in on family fun this summer by hosting Family Library Nights every Thursday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the school library.

The evening events will include popsicles, fun activities and free books.

Students will also be able to check out books from the school library to read over the summer.

Students are required to bring an adult to be in charge of them during these fun evenings, so grab your mom or dad, grandma or grandpa, aunt or uncle, and come to the Parkdale School library for some fun!

More family fun can be had at the Mercado del Valle at Mid Valley Elementary in Odell beginning this Saturday, June 20 from 3 to 6 p.m.

The Mercado offer something for everyone with a diverse set of vendors selling locally raised vegetables, fruit, meat, cheese, eggs, honey and bread, hot food and authentic Mexican cuisine, and includes live music and dancing and children's activities.

Send items to: uvupdate@yahoo.com.

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