

CASCADE Observations

By PEGGY DILLS KELTER

Some other roadside attractions

What do a flat tire, a cloth diaper, a nuclear cooling tower, a gargantuan jug of maple syrup, and a poet's grave have in common? The answer is "road trip." On a recent family adventure via a silver Nissan, old memories of trips long past were recalled, and new memories were made.

My passion for road trips began in 1979, when I left Connecticut in a packed Chevrolet Vega and headed out west via the asphalt Oregon Trail, accompanied only by an AM radio and an AAA card. It was an uneventful, scenic trip until I was within several hundred miles of my final destination — Hood River, Oregon. My trusty Vega (which on this trip had carried me over 2,500 miles without a problem) began shaking uncontrollably. Climbing out of the car, I discovered that I had a flat tire. Thankfully, a Good Samaritan from northern Idaho helped me unload the back of the car to extricate the spare, and then proceeded to jack up the car and change the wheel. I continued on to Les Schwab's, and then to Oregon.

A 28-year old cloth diaper, which I now use to clean the bathroom floor, once protected our daughter's bum. On one particular road trip to Montana, Rose was at an age when potty training had begun, necessitating cloth diapers at times, and "big girl pants" at others. Traveling on a highway in eastern Washington, Rose informed us that she had to "go." We pulled off onto the graveled shoulder and battled the wind as we opened up the car doors. Placing the potty seat on the ground and our child on the potty seat, we encouraged her to poop. Blowing dust and tumbleweeds were not her idea of an idyllic place to relieve herself. No amount of coaxing could convince her otherwise. We resorted to pinning her into a diaper and continued on our way.

In 1982 my husband and I decided to take "The Mother of All Domestic Road Trips." We outfitted our Dodge truck with a plywood bed, curtains, and a camp stove and set off on a month-long adventure around the U.S. We slept in highway rest areas, public and private campgrounds, and when we needed some pampering, inexpensive roadside motels. We bought regional foods whenever we could, including a bag of pine nuts we purchased from a vendor on the side of the road in New Mexico. Days later, sitting on a picnic bench in the shadow of a nuclear cooling tower in Arkansas, we dined on Chicken Dardanelle, a delicious concoction which featured the prized pine nuts.

This spring, our daughter and her husband invited us to join them on a trip to Boston and Vermont. With only a week available, we were forced to travel cross-country via airplane. Of the four of us, only my son-in-law travels with ease on a plane. To survive the experience the rest of us resort to positive visualization, distracting movies and books, and once in a while, pharmaceuticals. Happily, our flights were without incident, though the sustained turbulence on the trip east had me clutching my seat handles.

After a car-less evening in Boston, we rented the silver Nissan sedan and headed north destined for Vermont. We stopped in New Hampshire at an elegant public rest area and attempted a visit to Hanover. Every tourist in New England must have had the same idea — after a frustrating search for a parking space, we gave up and headed across the river to White River Junction, Vt. At a lovely café there, the occupants of another table took up conversation with us. Our mention of "Hood River" proved once again that there are less than "six degrees of separation" in the modern world. The woman's daughter had recently met, and traveled with, Hood River's own Barb Williams, our intrepid mail carrier who recently retired.

Daughter Rose and I had small bucket lists of "must dos" while in Vermont. Rose wanted to visit the Maple Syrup Museum, and I wanted to find my grandparents' graves, and their home, in Bennington. The Museum proved to be more sizzle than steak, but the King-Kong sized maple syrup jug was a perfect backdrop for family photos.

Arriving in Bennington, we used Tom and Rose's GPS talents to locate the Old First Church, where my grandparents are buried. Thanks to a sketch my brother made, it was easy to find my grandparents' understated gravestones. Just a row away lays Robert Frost, a fitting eternal friend for my grandparents. My mother introduced me to poetry by reading Frost's poems. On this trip to Vermont we tried to follow "the road less travelled," and indeed it did make "all the difference."

Rose would have appreciated traveling on "the road more traveled" as the rural highway leading to Bennington, full of curves and hills, caused her to take Dramamine and close her eyes. She was a trooper, though, and I was able to find my maternal grandparents' home, a place I last visited almost 50 years ago. To my surprise, it was almost unchanged, and I found myself in tears as I gazed at the typical white Vermont house and surrounding red dairy barns where the Palmer family once lived.

On our return to Boston, our car began to make small lurching motions when traveling at a slow speed. We crossed our fingers that we'd make it back across Massachusetts without incident, and named the formerly nameless Nissan "Buck." For the rest of the trip, we offered encouraging words to our silver steed. With a sigh of relief we pulled into the rental car return lot and handed over Buck's keys.

Outside Northshire Books, a wonderful bookstore in Manchester, Vt., a chiseled slab of marble read, "Nothing Is Written In Stone." The clever sidewalk message drew us into the store, where I purchased Tom Robbins's memoir "Tibetan Peach Pie." I first read one of Robbins's zany novels in 1977, when the idea of a road trip was merely my fantasy. Though the Washington author wasn't physically with us on this trip, he joined us in spirit, as we travelled in search of "Another Roadside Attraction." Back home, we're already planning our next excursion on four wheels.



Archery Tag event benefits BBBS

Global Sessions, an event and destination management team specializing in event coordination, hosted an Archery Tag tournament on Saturday, June 6 at Hood River's Waterfront Park. The event was a huge success, with 11 teams raising over \$2,000 to support Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Columbia Gorge.

Matt Sweeting, co-owner and founder of Global Sessions, says he was "really stoked with the community rallying like that." He says Global Sessions plans to hold Archery Tag tournaments in Hood River every quarter, rotating the recipient of the proceeds. The next tournament will take place in September and will raise funds for the Columbia Gorge Dyslexia Fund. The tournament is by invitation only, so contact Matt at matt@globalsessions.org for information about putting together a team.

Archery Tag is played similar to dodgeball but with bows and patented foam-tipped arrows. This thrilling, action-packed game offers an engaging, team-building experience for participants of all ages.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Columbia Gorge, a program of The Next Door, will benefit from next summer's



Submitted photo

SPECIAL THANKS to the teams who participated to make this event a bulls-eye: Copper West, Sheppard's, Andrew's Pizza, Double Mountain, Full Sail, Insitu, Slingshot, Doug's Sports, Blue Collar, Global Sessions, and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

relationships with adult volunteers. To become a volunteer mentor, contact Justine Ziegler in Hood River and Klickitat Counties at 541-490-9979 or Kateel Muhs in Wasco County at 541-296-8118 ext. 216.

PARKDALE NEWS

'It Takes a Community' project makes progress

BY TAMARA EMLER BALL

Parkdale correspondent

When one of its own needed help with a safe place to live, the Upper Valley community responded with donations, fundraisers and offers of help.

The process has taken several months and is still in the works, but organizers are hopeful the house plans, being drawn up by local builder Tobias Ammon, will be completed soon and all the permits will be in place to move forward.

Christie Clarke is one of the volunteers helping Cedar and his little dog Piper to have a home of their own.

"It's taken longer than I expected and has been an education for me, learning how to get everything approved," said Clarke. "Right now we're getting all the permits pulled and are hoping to build the home before winter."

The house plan is modeled after the "Tiny Home" idea with just about 200 square feet, but it's enough for Cedar and Piper.

The project has an estimated price tag of \$25,000 and so far nearly \$8,000 has been raised online at www.gofundme.com/gdxa98. Over \$10,000 was raised by the community at a dinner fundraiser sponsored by Solera Brewery and Parkdale BBQ in Parkdale.

Donations are still being accepted online and at CenterPoint Community Bank in Hood River, where donors can ask that their donation go to "Cedar's Account."

"Any money left over from building the house will go towards paying Cedar's utilities or other living expenses," said Clarke. "So people know their donations will go directly to the person we are all trying to help."



Tamara Emler Ball

The recent garage sale fundraiser in memory of Parkdale resident Bette Benjamin, who lost her battle with pancreatic cancer this past spring, was a big success.

Bette, always an avid attendee at yard sales, was remembered in a very fitting way with all the proceeds benefitting the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

"Between the sale and all those who donated directly online, we raised nearly \$5,000 in my mother's memory," said her daughter, Lindsay Holmson. "Thank you so much to all of the wonderful and hard-working volunteers, to those who were so generous in donating items and those who contributed funds directly to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network in memory of my dear Mother. She loved garage sales and any way to bring friends and family together, so this event was such a blessing and so fitting to do in honor of her."

Donations can still be made in memory of Bette online at www.pancan.org.

The Mount Hood Town Hall will be showing "Big Hero 6" at a free Movie Night on the Lawn for the community this Sunday, July 12.

Community Ed will do the honors of putting on the movie, which will start at dusk, sometime between 8 and 8:45 p.m.

Everyone is invited to bring their family and a blanket to sit on or chairs for

the back row and join their friends and neighbors on the lawn in front of the Town Hall to enjoy this family fun night and friendly movie.

Popcorn, cotton candy, soda, candy bars and water will be for sale and all of the proceeds will go towards the planned kitchen remodel project at the Town Hall.

If everyone enjoys this event, the Mt. Hood Town Hall board hopes to bring more Movie Nights on the Lawn to the community in the future.

Lifelong resident Stephen Nance was honored recently for his 41 years of service to Valley Worship Center as Church Secretary-Bookkeeper and Church Treasurer.

Nance was born and grew up in the Upper Hood River Valley, attended Mt. Hood Grade School, Parkdale Junior High School and Wy'east High School and only left the valley when he served his country as a United States Navy Hospital Corpsman from February 10, 1960 to January 25, 1965.

He began to serve the church, first established as the Mount Hood Assembly of God, in 1974 and continues to this day.

Membership and Leadership of the church and Reverend Don Howell, pastor of the Valley Worship Center, honored Nance on Father's Day, June 21, with a plaque commemorating all his years of service and a cake and punch reception afterwards.

Pastor Howell said a one-word summary of Nance's life would be "faithful."

"Steve has faithfully served the church in the position of Secretary-Treasurer and Bookkeeper for longer than most individuals have attended the church," said Howell. "During this time Steve has blessed the church with his gifting and talents."

If the community that prays together stays together, then the Upper Valley should be doing very well!

Sunday, August 30 is the date of this year's annual Joint Churches Sunday at Toll Bridge Park presented by Parkdale Community Church, Parkdale Church of

the Nazarene, Parkdale Baptist Church, Valley Worship Center and Pillar Bible Church.

The combined service will be held at 11 a.m. and a friendly neighbor potluck lunch will follow.

Everyone in the community is invited to attend this almost end-of-summer event and bring a dish to share, your own service, and chairs if you would like.

Here are some additional reminders for the rest of the summer:

Five upper valley churches will hold Vacation Bible School titled "Outrigger Island" the week of August 3-7 starting at 5:30 p.m. at Parkdale Community Church.

Children ages pre-K through fifth grade are invited to learn about Jesus through songs, bible stories and crafts and families are welcome to gather at the church at 5 p.m. and enjoy a light meal beforehand.

For more information contact Pastor Mark at Parkdale Community Church at 541-352-7747 or 541-490-4511.

Every Thursday night this summer is "Family Library Night" at the Parkdale Elementary School Library from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

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

Students can check out books, enjoy activities and free books, and a Popsicle, but must be accompanied by adult supervision.

For those of you who don't already know, this reporter is leaving our beloved community to move to the Bellingham, Washington area.

I want to thank all of you readers who have supported this column, and myself, for the last five years that I have been writing it.

I will dearly miss you all and our beautiful mountain, but I'm grateful I've had the opportunity to live in such a wonderful place and for the friends I have made here.

Now it's time for my next big adventure.

To all of you ... all the best in what your lives bring you next!

Set your calendar for July blood drive dates

Blood donations happen on rare consecutive days in Hood River this month.

The American Red Cross urges eligible donors to help offset a seasonal decline in donations and prevent a shortage this summer by giving blood.

During June, July and August, there are about two fewer donors than needed at each Red Cross blood drive. This can add up to more than 100,000 fewer donations during the summer. Many schools that host blood drives are out of session, and vacation schedules can make regular donors less available — both contributing to the seasonal decline.

Donors of all blood types — especially those with types AB, O negative, A negative and B negative — are needed to help ensure blood

products are available to hospital patients this summer. Type AB donors have the universal plasma type, which can be given to patients of all blood types. Plasma helps maintain blood pressure and supplies critical proteins for clotting immunity. It is often needed for burn, trauma and cancer patients.

To make an appointment to give blood, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Upcoming blood donation opportunities in Hood River County are:

■ Hood River — July 22, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Hood River Inn, 1108 E Marina Way

■ Parkdale — July 23, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Mt. Hood Town Hall, 6575 Highway 35



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