

ROOTS And Branches

By MAIJA YASUI

The smiles of Aya and Mr. Soup



JULY CAME in June this year. Not only was the sun working overtime to keep the temperature in triple digits, it never seemed to set. The nights were unbelievably bright with sunrise coming before the sun was laid to rest properly. It reminded me of Alaskan evenings in the land of the midnight sun. The bamboo

surrounding our koi pond grew over a foot in just one day, seeming to thriving in the intense heat, while other flowers and fruit wilted in spite of an early morning sip of recycled water.

Cherry harvest came a good two weeks early this year, allowing us to finish harvesting the weekend of the fourth rather than just beginning to pick on that all American holiday. While we typically worry about rain destroying the fruit's marketability, this year we were faced with another quirk in Mother Nature's bag of tricks, the oppressive heat softened the tender cherry morsels and reduced their shelf life. We scrambled to get them packed and delivered to the fruit company before they lost their luster; a tell-tale sign of the perfect cherry.

The heat took its toll on everyone, from those harvesting the fruit, to the bucket dumpers, tractor drivers and sorters. We kept saying how unusual this year's harvest was, but one wonders whether it will become the norm given the dire projections of global warming.

I look south to Mt. Hood as my beacon of weather change. I can still see the pristine white glaciers on the north facing side so familiar to us all. The mountain is breathtaking with its graceful curves and white and dark undulations, but when viewed by satellite technology from high overhead, you can see that only the upper reaches of the mountain are still snow covered. The vast majority of the mountain's surface is a deep charcoal grey, naked rock skirting most of its mass, their dark jagged profile in sharp contrast to the white glacial cap. An epiphany in my conceptualization of global warming occurred with this shift in perspective. If Mt. Hood is our local barometer, we have much to do to protect its ice pack from evaporating into thin air.

Choosing to view life from a different perspective is an experience I am rapidly encountering as the moment of retirement from public service has come and gone. Adapting is an important skill set, simultaneously fascinating and fear provoking. One thing is for certain, change is inevitable and learning how to adapt to an ever changing physical, social and political environment is crucial to survival.

Some folks have expressed how envious they are that I am retiring. Others have said they cannot fathom that I will not be serving the community in some manner, and they are right. This need to serve is in my DNA, I just won't get paid for it.

Retirement has given me the luxury of more time to reach out to some new found friends, and reconnect with some of those special senior citizens long neglected. I use to tell myself I just didn't have the time to stop by and visit. But now I do, and it is immensely rewarding.

I took a very special "new" friend up to Celilo for her cancer treatment last week and was able to share in that joyous moment when she was fitted with a stunning hair piece that helped her feel whole again. Icing on the cake was the news that her mammogram was clear, just one of a multitude of tests she had agonized over these last few weeks. I would have missed these moments if I was still working.

I was able to stop by Hawks Ridge and take Soup Fukui out for a little drive, and listen as he shared memories of early life in Dee, the hard winters that destroyed some of the crops he had so carefully tended, a short stint in the service and the pain of losing his wife and only child. He has been a peripheral part of our family for years but on this car ride his loneliness is palpable. I tell him his smile lights up a room. His twinkling eyes remind the grandkids of Santa Claus. I don't think he believes me.

We stop at the house for lunch hoping to catch up with Flip and find out how the pear crop is growing. We are in luck, not only is Flip in for lunch but Aya and Ren stop by. Aya runs over to Soup her outstretched arms offering a hug. His smile lights up the room like last week's lightning.

"Mr. Soup, you have a band aid on your head. What happened?" she asks. "I fell" says Soup somewhat sheepishly, brandishing a purple eye below the covering. "Don't worry" Aya consoles him, "I have one too." She brushes back her bangs and shows him her very own band aid a mirror image of his. "It's okay Mr. Soup. It will get better." She turns on his smile once again.

As we ride back to Hawks Ridge Soup counsels me. "Make the most of every day and those kids and grandkids. Do you know how lucky you are?"

Mr. Soup, I do know that I am truly blessed. And you are one of my blessings. Your sweet smile lit up our home and the heart of a little girl. When Aya came over this evening, she ran through the front door and asked, "Is Mr. Soup here? I want him to see that my head is all better."

We will continue some of these road trips and see where they take us Mr. Soup. We may not put many miles on the speedometer, but you will fill many hearts with your smile.



Photo by Maija Yasui

NEW FRIENDS Sumio "Soup" Fukui, and Ren and Aya Yasui, get acquainted over lunch and bandaids.



Dorothy Milford celebrates 100 years

Dorothy E. Milford will celebrate her 100th birthday with an open house on Saturday, July 18 at the Parkdale Grange from 2-4 p.m. Cake, ice cream and snacks will be served, and all are welcome to attend. Cards are appreciated; no gifts, please.

Dorothy was born in Fort Scott, Kansas on July 21, 1915 to her parents, John and Ada Bruner. She very proudly calls herself an "Old Kansas Farm Girl." As a young adult, she married her husband, Theodore W. (Walt) Milford and in the early 1940s, they moved from Kansas to Oregon, with short periods of time spent in California and Washington. When they came to the Hood River Valley, they knew they had found "home." They purchased a house in the Mount Hood area of the Hood River Valley and to this day, Dorothy lives in the house which her husband remodeled and rebuilt. Three children were born to them,

two daughters and one son. Their oldest daughter passed away in 1982 and Walt in 1989.

Dorothy has many friends and her family laughingly says that "she never met a stranger." For the most part, as a young woman, she was a stay at home mother and wife; however, she did work in retail for a while at Paris Fair Department Store and Safeway, when it was located in the Pietro's Pizza building. She also sold Avon for a few years, but her family was sure that she purchased more items than she sold. Dorothy loved to sing and could play many musical instruments, including piano, accordion, guitar and more. Her favorite past time has always been socializing and visiting with friends. She currently enjoys going to church on Sunday at the Parkdale Baptist Church and to the senior dinner on Thursday at the Mount Hood Town Hall.

'Peace Village' seeks campers, donations

Columbia Gorge Peace Village is gearing up for its eighth summer, and there are still several spots available for campers. This year's camp runs August 3-7 at Mosier School, and serves kids aged 6-13. Peace Village is a day camp full of fun activities that support its "Principles of Peace" mission: Authentic Self-Expression, Connection, and Empowerment.

Kids are placed in small camper groups with counselors that lead them through activities that teach the core concepts of non-violent conflict resolution, media literacy, earth connections, service, movement, music, art, and peace heroes.

Campers also enjoy Village Fair activities which expand on themes of peace, the environment and nature, sustainability, food, and the arts.

All of these experiences are developmentally appropriate and model a deep respect for cultural and religious diversity. We celebrate that our children are

nurtured by many faith traditions and welcome this opportunity to learn from each other.

Sixty percent of our campers need financial aid in order to attend Columbia Gorge Peace Village. Last year, we provided 45 full scholarships and approximately 40 partial scholarships to our campers. This year, we are still fundraising to make sure that any child is able to attend camp.

We have special support from a grant from the Jubitz Family Foundation, and from our Regional Peacemaker Sponsors: Jody Behr, Hood River Valley High School Community Work Day, M.L and J.D Hattenhauer, Gorge Ecumenical Ministries, and Bethel UCC.

If you would like to join our sponsor list with a donation of any amount, contact us!

To register a camper or to make a donation, visit columbiagorgepeacevillage.com.

First Book gives new books to local families

First Book Hood River works with existing literacy programs throughout the County to distribute new books to local children who, for socio-economic reasons, have limited access to books. The mission of First Book is to increase literacy in children in Hood River County.

On April 27, the Hood River Valley High School Teen Parent Program held the First Book Hood River book distribution party. Because of a generous grant First Book received this year, each child was given five books for their home libraries. Ali Church attended as a special guest and representative of the United Way. As a special treat children at the center read to the group, underlining the goals and benefits of the program — everyone loved their stories.

First Book Hood River receives generous support from Hood River Lions Club, United Way of the Columbia Gorge, Gorge Community Foundation, and individual community supporters and volunteers. "We could not continue our work without these local supporters and are endlessly thankful," said Kym Zannmiller of First Book.

First Book Hood River grants book awards four times a year and the next grant application cycle will open in September. If you would like more information, contact



Submitted photo

FIRST BOOK'S Nancy Paul, center, meets with moms and kids receiving First Book donations, from left Lucy Munoz and her son Anthony; Ali Church of United Way holding Harper Weseaman, Aya Yasui, Ren Yasui, Violet Lorenzen, Kelsey Dorzab and her baby, Kaylee, and Claudia Chamonica holding her baby Yureli.

Kym Zannmiller at zannmiller@gorge.net. If you would like to volunteer or donate, call Nancy Paul at 541-490-5330 or write First Book Hood River at P.O. Box 221, Hood River, OR 97031.

Krummel makes Dean's List

Duncan Krummel, a Music Composition major, was named to the Dean's List in Ithaca College's School of Music for the spring 2015 semester.

Krummel, a Hood River Valley High School graduate, can be seen on stage this month at Columbia Cetner for the Arts in "Next to Normal." Details in Happenings, page B3.

From day one, Ithaca Col-

lege, in upstate New York, prepares students for success through hands-on experience with internships, research and study abroad. Its integrative curriculum builds bridges across disciplines and uniquely blends liberal arts and professional study. Located in New York's Finger Lakes region, the College is home to 6,100 undergraduate and 460 graduate students.

Free weekend comes to Maryhill

Maryhill Museum of Art invites residents of Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, and Jefferson counties to visit free of charge during the weekend of July 18 and 19. Residents of those counties need only present their driver's license to receive complimentary admission.

On Saturday, July 18 at 3 p.m. Maryhill will host a free performance of The Taming of the Shrew in the museum's gardens, produced by Portland Actors Ensemble as

part of the company's Shakespeare-in-the-Parks series. Visitors are invited to bring a blanket or camp chair for seating; Bake My Day food cart (Goldendale, WA) will be at Maryhill serving a Renaissance menu in keeping with Shakespeare's day, or bring your own picnic. The event is sponsored by Judy Lackstrom and Bob Morrow, PACE Engineering, and Phil Swartz. Preceding the per-

formance from 1 to 3 p.m., Chalk It Up To Shakespeare will take place.

Everyone is invited to create a temporary museum masterpiece inspired by Shakespeare, during this free, drop-in program adjacent to the Sculpture Garden.

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Recycle Tips
MILK CARTONS
- Are NOT recyclable locally.
- Also known as 'gable tops', milk cartons and shelf-stable "aseptic containers (juice cartons) take too long to pulp up at Northwest paper mills, which are designed for newsprint. If you put milk cartons in recycling, they end up at the landfill and add cost to garbage/recycling service.
- Purchase milk and juices in recyclable plastic containers if possible.
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