

## BRASWELL

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much different store that's long since become the site of the Cottage Grove Community Center.

Back then, Braswell, who was born and raised here, was attending classes at Lane Community College when he began bagging groceries at Safeway, and in the years since, he said the people and experiences that made the job enjoyable back then have kept bringing him back for decades.

"Every time I thought about doing something else, I was offered a different job at the store or a little more money, and here I am 50 years later," Braswell said. He's quick to point out that a lot of the little things about the way business is done at Safeway have evolved, though his interactions with employees and customers haven't changed all that much.

Of course, Braswell didn't spend his entire 50-year career in Cottage Grove. For a 20-year period between 1975 and 1995, he worked at two Safeway stores in Eugene, five different stores in the Portland area and a store in Vancouver, Wash.

"When you're an assistant

manager, you get moved around quite a lot," he said.

Still, Braswell always wanted to return to his hometown, and when he was offered the opportunity to come back, he jumped at the chance. And so a 50-year career was born.

"I didn't have a plan to work here for 50 years, but I also

**"Fifty years goes by a lot faster than you might think."**

— Safeway Manager  
Roger Braswell

didn't want to leave," he said, adding that his father worked at the Post Office in Cottage Grove for a comparable amount of time. "I enjoyed my work and the people I work with, and that's what makes it fun. And 50 years goes by a lot faster than you might think."

Like many effective managers, Braswell gives much credit to his employees.

"You try to help as a resource, and a lot of times they're the ones that come up with the solution," he said. "You give the best you can in the way of encouragement."

At a major grocery store, there's always something com-

ing around the corner. This week, Braswell said the store is busy preparing for the Super Bowl, and holiday gatherings are the focus in November and December. Summer brings a packed event schedule to Cottage Grove, and Braswell said Safeway works to stock the community's needs for each of them.

"We keep notes on the past history of such things," he said. "That's the nice thing about being here so long; you can have expectations about what's coming next."

Now, Braswell will concentrate on a new adventure, though he said he has no big plan for his retirement.

"I'd considered going before, but I thought, 'We've got a lot of work to do still, so I better stick around,'" he said. "I haven't really thought about what I'm going to do next."

Braswell said his assistant, Tim Glenn, will take over in an interim capacity, though he added that the company hasn't offered a long-term plan.

"I'm excited for him to get to do some of the things he hasn't had time for," Glenn said.

## WATERFALL

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other commitments had a way of cropping up to stall his progress.

"I started out writing it by hand," Bachelder said. "I'd fall away from it for awhile, and it got to the point that I'd basically rewritten it a couple times. Then not long ago my wife bought me a laptop and said, 'Ok, now why don't you get this thing done?'" Like any good husband, Bachelder obliged, and his first book, "The Wish and the Waterfall," was released Jan. 1. And as if that's not ambitious enough, Bachelder said the second in what could be a three or even a multi-part series should be complete by Christmas.

"The Wish and the Waterfall" tells the story of a 14-year old

boy who's finding himself in trouble before relocating to a small Oregon logging community very much like Bachelder's hometown. There's plenty of Indian lore and more to bring the protagonist around and transport him to another world where anything could happen, and there are plenty of "character models" from Bachelder's experiences here that have helped tell the tale.

"It's a coming-of-age story, and it's not necessarily unique as far as the concept goes," Bachelder said. "But the book has a life of its own, and it may grow beyond where I had envisioned it."

Reviews for the novel have been kind so far, and Bachelder said another aspect of his own adventure has been finding a

way to publish the book himself through a Eugene publishing company.

"You tell people you're writing a book, and they say, 'Oh, that's kinda nice,'" he said. "Nobody ever really believes you, but the day a lady handed me a book with my name on the cover, there was quite a feeling of accomplishment."

Along the way, Bachelder said he's become a better writer with the passage of time, and he's expecting to be able to devote even more time to writing when he retires in July.

"The Wish and the Waterfall" is available on Amazon and Kindle and at local bookstores the Bookmine and Books on Main.

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