



The Chatterbox

Cottage Grove is home, sweet home

BY BETTY KAISER
For the Sentinel

Twenty-seven years ago on March 3, 1989, my husband and I moved from our home in California to a home in rural Oregon. We resigned from boards and committees, sold our house and business, said goodbye to our family and literally left behind everything that was familiar as we headed into uncharted territory. It was one of the best decisions that we ever made, but I'm still shocked that we did it.

I've written about this before, and I know it may sound a little dramatic to born-and-bred Oregonians. After all, we weren't riding up here in an oxcart on the Oregon Trail. No, we were in heated cars, an RV with two dogs and a cat, behind a moving van, over the snowy Siskiyou and up Interstate 5 to a challenging fixer-upper property. Still, for us, it was an extreme and challenging lifestyle change.

We city people were fulfilling a lifelong dream of living by a lake, smelling the fresh clean air, watching the sun rise and set, the wildlife scamper through the fields and the birds fluttering and nesting in the towering trees near our home. The fear? We didn't know a soul in Oregon, desperately missed our children and didn't have jobs. Anxious, sleepless nights punctured our euphoria.

The town we found had all the basics we were looking for: churches, doctors, a hospital, pharmacies, newspaper, grocery, jewelry, clothing, hardware, auto and variety stores, antique shops, covered bridges and a colorful history. It was also close to a big city—and a lake! Cottage Grove was almost too good to be true.

Of course, we had city people questions. I drove realtor Becky crazy:

Are you sure the well won't run out of water? (No.)

Why is our lake drained in winter? (Flood control.)

Is there trash pick up out in the boon-docks? (Yes.)

The neighbors live acres away. How will we get to know them? (They drive down the driveway and introduce themselves and you hold an annual Christmas cookie party.)

There were also questions we should have asked and didn't:



What kind of weather damage can we expect from Oregon winters? (Flooding, frozen pipes, mold, falling trees and more)

Does the electricity go out often? (Yep!)

Does it stay off very long? (Sometimes for days.)

Is it safe to leave building materials unattended? (No!)

Are there wild animals to be concerned about? (Bear, deer, cougar, deer, raccoon, deer, feral cats, deer, etc.)

When should we take the California license plates off our cars? (As soon as possible!)

Our first weather reality check came while escrow was closing. The house had been a rental and the renters had vacated the premises. Something called the Siberian Express hit the region, and guess what? Most of the pipes in the empty house were frozen. Of course, that led to the pipes breaking and water damage. Welcome to reality!

We dealt with all of the other unasked questions as they reared their ugly heads. Building materials were re-ordered and put under lock and key. The California license plates came off immediately, but other things took awhile. Twenty years into our residency, we finally bought a generator to help us through power outages.

But after a quarter of a century, the sunsets are wonderfully memorable and the wildlife exciting. I am still in awe when I see a ruddy colored fox with a bushy tail run across our meadow. Bears have destroyed our neighbor's beehives and come tumbling down the hill while we were walking the dogs. Cougars have been seen sunning on the pavement, drinking from

ponds and visiting a neighbor's dog pen. They are all an exciting reminder that we share our home with truly wild four-footed critters.

Our deer stories are legendary. We love watching them graze peacefully out in the meadow. Knowing, of course, that they are merely scooping out their nightly forage. They are voracious eaters, and one year I wrote a column on the 'Stalag 13' fence compound that Chuck built around his vegetable garden. We have hot-wired the roses. We spray "Deer Away" on potted plants. Still they come.

Sometimes our encounters have been deadly. One year a deer was hit by a car and died outside our fence line. We called the county to have it removed. No, they couldn't do that! If the deer was on our property...it was our responsibility. So, our neighbor came down with his front loader tractor, a deep hole was dug, the deer was picked up, dumped into the hole and given a proper burial.

Shortly after that a passing car on Reservoir Road hit another deer. In a last-ditch adrenaline rush, it jumped our fence, ran straight for the vegetable garden and died! Again, Chuck got to bury a creature that weighed more than he does!

One morning, a large deer decided to jump over Chuck's vintage El Camino as he drove into town. This deer misjudged and hit the left front fender, rolled over the windshield and ran away. Apparently he survived to chow down on our roses another day.

All in all, living in our lakeside home has been a joy. It has been everything we hoped for and more. Upon arrival, the neighbors were helpful and welcoming. They showed us the ropes of country living, and we couldn't have done it without them. We each found new careers, reveled in each new day and have made countless lifelong friends. As an added bonus, our grandsons got to vacation in the country every year and learn to drive on a tractor!

It just doesn't get any better than this. Oregon is truly home. Thank you, Cottage Grove, for making our dreams come true.

Betty Kaiser's Chatterbox is about people, places, family, and other matters of the heart. Contact her at 942-1317 or via e-mail — bchatty@bettykaiser.com

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Worship Directory

6th & Gibbs Church of Christ
195 N. 6th St. • 541-942-3822
Pastor: Aaron Earlywine
Youth & Families Pastor: Seth Bailey
Services: 9am and 10:30am
Christian Education
Nursery for pre-k - 3rd Grade
www.6thandgibbs.com

Calvary Baptist Church
77873 S 6th St • 541-942-4290
Pastor: Riley Hendricks
Sunday School: 9:45am
Worship: 11:00am
The Journey: Sunday 5:00pm
Praying Thru Life: Wednesday 6:00pm

Calvary Chapel Cottage Grove
1447 Hwy 99 (Village Plaza)
541-942-6842
Pastor: Jeff Smith
Two Services on Sun: 9am & 10:45am
Youth Group Bible Study
Child Care 10:45am Service Only
www.cgcalvary.org

Center for Spiritual Living Cottage Grove
700 Gibbs Ave (Community Center)
Rev. Bobby Lee
Meets Sunday 3:00 p.m.
(907) 230-5070
www.facebook.com/CSLCottageGrove

Church of Christ
420 Monroe St • 541-942-8565
Sunday Service: 10:30am

Cottage Grove Bible Church
1200 East Quincy Avenue
541-942-4771
Pastor: Bob Singer
Worship 11am
Sunday School: 9:45am
AWANA age 3-8th Grade,
Wednesdays Sept-May, 6:30pm
www.cgbible.org

Cottage Grove Faith Center
33761 Row River Rd. • 541-942-4851
Lead Pastor: Isaac Hovet
www.cg4.tv
2 Sunday Services: 9am & 11am
Full Children's Ministry available

Covered Bridge Nazarene Church
152 S. M St.
541-942-4422
Pastor: Cindy Slaymaker
Sunday School: 9:30am
Worship 10:30am

Delight Valley
Church of Christ
33087 Saginaw Rd. East
541-942-7711
Pastor: Bob Friend
Two Services:
9am - Classic in the Chapel
10:30am - Contemporary in the Auditorium

First Baptist Church
301 S 6th St 541-942-8242
Pastor: Steve Johnson
Sunday School: 9:30am
Worship: 11:00am
Come Worship with us

First Presbyterian Church
3rd and Adams St • 541-942-4479
Pastor: Karen Hill
Worship: 10:00am
Sunday School: 10:00am
www.cgpresbynews.com

Grove Community Church
77820 Mosby Creek Rd.
Cottage Grove, OR 97424
541-942-0123
Pastor: Bryan Parsons
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Nursery: Infant - Pre-K
Kid's Church: K to 5th grade

Hope Fellowship
United Pentecostal Church
100 S. Gateway Blvd. • 541-942-2061
Pastor: Dave Bragg
Worship: 11:00am Sunday
Bible Study: 7:00pm Wednesday
www.hopefellowshipupcc.com
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Living Faith Assembly
467 S. 10th St. • 541-942-2612
Pastor Rulon Combs
Sunday School All Ages 9am
Worship & Children's
Church 10:30 am
"The Bridge" Sat Evening Service 6:00pm
Youth 180 Mondays 5:30-8pm
Children's Breakout Class: Wed. 6:30pm

Non-Denominational Church of Christ
1041 Pennoyer Ave * 541-767-0447
Preachers: Tony Martin & Robert Evans
Sunday Bible Study: 10:00am
Sunday Worship: 10:50am & 5:30pm
www.pennoyeravecoc.com

Old Time Gospel Fellowship
103 S. 5th Street • 541-942-4999
Pastor: Herb Carson
Sunday Service: 10:00am
Sunday Bible Study: 6:00pm
We sing the old time hymns.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Philip Benizi
Catholic Churches
1025 N. 19th St.
541-942-3420 / 541-942-4712
Pastor: Roy L. Antunez, S.J.
Euch. Liturgies; Sat. 5:30pm
Sun. 10:30am
St. Philip Benizi, Creswell:
552 Holbrook Lane • 541-895-8686
Sunday: 8:30am

St. Andrews Episcopal Church
1301 W. Main • 541-767-9050
Rev. Lawrence Crumb
"Church with the flags."
Worship: Sunday 10:30am
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Seventh-day Adventist Church
820 South 10th Street
541-942-5213
Pastor: Kevin Miller
Bible Study: Saturday, 9:15 am
Worship Service: Saturday, 10:40 am
Mid-week Service: Wednesday, 1:00 pm

Trinity Lutheran Church
6th & Quincy • 541-942-2373
Pastor: James L. Markus
Sunday School & Adult Education 9:15am
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Comm. Kitchen Free Meal Tue & Thur
5:00pm TLC Groups
tlccg.com

United Methodist Church
334 Washington • 541-942-3033
Pastor: Lura Kidner-Miesen
Worship: 10:30am
Adult Sunday School: 9:30am
Comm. Dinner (Adults \$5, Kids Free)
2nd & 3rd Monday 5-6:00pm
cottagegroveumc.org

"VICTORY" Country Church
913 S. 6th Street • 541-942-5913
Pastor: Barbara Dockery
Worship Service: 10:00am
Message: 11:00am
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Our Worship Directory is a weekly feature in the newspaper. If your congregation would like to be a part of this directory, please contact the Cottage Grove Sentinel at 541-942-3325.