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Betty Kaiser

Hey, Grovers! We’re Famous! Did you know that our “quaint, charming village” of Cottage Grove has been discovered and is receiving rave reviews in magazines and travel articles across the country?

I didn’t. Not until someone showed me an article in Oprah Winfrey’s “O Magazine.” In it, she rates our Cottage Grove as #2 on her Top 10 ‘charming’ towns to visit ASAP in the country.

Hmm. What do you think? Did Oprah visit the Grove or send someone to check us out? Just wondering.

Then I saw another travel entry from a 2019 House Beautiful magazine under the heading of “60 Charming American Towns You Haven’t Heard of But Should Visit ASAP”

They also rate the Grove as #2 on a travel list for the following reasons:

“The town, is known

Betty Kaiser: The Chatterbox

Cottage Grove getting its due

as the Covered Bridge Capital, it offers a trail studded with seven covered bridges that connect the village across rolling hillside and a series of waterfalls and rivers. The delightful setting is home to plenty of great hiking and bicycling spots, as well as several cozy B&B retreats.”

Sounds good, doesn’t it?

Now aren’t you glad you live here? So, I’m wondering: Did you move here for any of the above reasons?

Or were you just born here, know it’s a great place to live and stayed here?

Our C.G. adventure began in 1987. Chuck and I had no intention of moving anywhere from Ventura, Calif., when we first crossed over the Oregon border.

We had sold our business and were touring Oregon in our Tioga RV with a motorcycle on a rack in the back. We both thought of our visit as a tourist stopover on the road of life. What we didn’t know was that this place would capture our hearts.

We discovered C.G. by pure happenstance. We

were camping at Crater Lake with no agenda. After a couple of weeks on the road, we needed a good meal, a shoe store for new motorcycle boots and a place to spend the night.

Our AAA map said C.G. had it all.

The next day, we drove into town, passed the historic Dr. Pierce Barn, then the Village Shopping Center. It housed a Hub clothing store, Tiffany’s Pharmacy and a grocery store.

Sadly, all of those places are now history.

We continued on to the Main Street shopping area. Downtown was bustling with business. There were antique stores, hardware stores, banks, gift shops, Ruth and Elsie’s Dress Shop, a jewelry store, The Bookmine, Schweitzer’s Men’s Wear, Homestead Furniture, two shoe stores owned by the Hoover family and more!

At that time, Safeway was also downtown, where the Community Center is now. Across the street was a Cornet store (the local five & dime).

There were no McDonald’s, Taco Bell, etc., but there were other places to eat, including the wonderful (but now long-gone) Copper Rooster coffee shop at the Village Green. So, we ate at a tiny café near the post office: “Tilly’s Top Hat Pies.” Oh, my! Talk about great home cooking!

My husband said that tears ran down my face after just one bite of Margaret Tilly’s apple pie a la mode. Yum! After lunch, we went to Self-Select-to-Shoes.

There, manager Mike Thiess found us just the

boots that we needed and then asked where we were spending the night. He suggested that we head out to C.G. Lake and Pine Meadows Campground. We did and that is where we fell in love with the house that we now call home.

It was only later that we would discover the many other places this area is known for, including the area’s lumber and mining history. We went to Bohemia Mining Days, drove through the covered bridges, rode the Blue Goose Row River train, camped and enjoyed the lakes.

The Grove and its people had stolen our hearts. We decided to move.

As we said goodbye to our lifelong California neighbors, family and friends, I remember describing the town of Cottage Grove with words like “beautiful, quaint and charming but just a temporary stopover on the road of life.”

What I didn’t know was that this place would capture our hearts.

We, our moving van, cats and dogs, 2 cars and a 1941 pickup, arrived here in a pouring rain on March 3, 1989. Our temporary stay became permanent. And every spring on our moving anniversary, as the rains come down, the flowers bloom and the grass turns green, we feel blessed that we heeded the call to a new adventure and moved to The Grove.

So, welcome, visitors! You’re gonna like it here!

Contact Betty Kaiser’s Chatterbox at 942-1317 or email bchatty@bettykaiser.com.



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