

THE SMILE GUYS

What makes you smile? For everybody it's a little different. Some people like baby animals. Others chuckle over sound effects. Me, the thought of a Chicago-style hot dog. A comfort food extraordinaire, food of my youth, a meal (replete with veggies: tomato, pickle, peppers) on a poppy seed bun.

That's why when I first moved here I made it a point to visit Jim Mudd of Manzanita, whose Chicago-style hot dog cart was parked on Laneda to serve up the Windy's City comfort food. It was a great dog: Mudd had the knack and I was an immediate fan.

Little did I know the epic impact that Mudd, who died on Oct. 1 had on people in the region, especially in Tillamook, our neighboring county to the south. James "Jim" Malburn Mudd, the self-proclaimed "Manzanita Man of the Century," according to his obituary, dedicated himself to making others happy.

He shared a smile for everyone and his self-proclaimed motto was: "Life doesn't get any better than this."

In 1990, Mudd and his friend Doug Nicholson, who had met as students at Oregon State University, decided to launch a coed golf tournament, which they christened the "Mudd Nick Invitational."

The founders opened their arms to both OSU and rival U of O, with a duck dressed as a beaver the logo, satisfying alumni of both schools, reported the Tillamook Headlight-Herald.

The invitational was a hit early on, and Jim's wife Lynn proposed the Mudd Nick charity golf tournament as an annual event.

The first tournament took place in 1993 and the nonprofit Mudd Nick Foundation formed in 2006.

Since that time, the foundation has raised more than \$1.4 million. Funds support up to 50 educational and recreational programs every year.

A former Bridgestone executive, Mudd and his family "moved all over the coast" before settling in Manzanita.

After frequent trips to Chicago, his love affair with Chicago-style hot dogs began.

"When we retired, we came out here," he told me over an all-beef Vienna frank in the summer of 2016. "This was my parents' home. Since this is the last chapter of my life, I thought what can I do to help? I thought we could open a hot-dog stand, a Chicago-deal like I've eaten all my life, and we'd draw people in and we'd talk about the Mudd Nick Foundation."

As he envisioned, the hot dogs drew people in, and Mudd spread the word to the benefit of arts and humanities.

Donations for science, technology, engineering and math, higher education and careers, camps, literacy, sports came in from around the world.

The foundation continues to benefit children with special needs, the talented and the gifted, providing "learning experiences that stimulate children to aspire to their greatest potential and pursue their dreams."

"It's been a great ride," he said in 2016.

The 'gurgle pot king'

I didn't know what a "gurgle pot" was until I read about Richard Ortez.

Ortez was the subject of many newspaper articles for the pots that made a distinctive "glug glug" sound when they poured. The gurgling reminded me of the character "Ix" my



Jim Mudd serves up a culinary classic.

R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

CANNON SHOTS

R.J. MARX



dad invented to my delight when I was three or four, an ulular sound ("ung-diddy-ung-diddy") that could reduce me to uncontrollable laughter.

Ortez had that effect on people — delighting customers at Sabra J.'s Attic in Cannon Beach since its opening in 1998.

Ortez died Sept. 4 in his King City home.

Born in 1936 in Los Angeles, Ortez was a sergeant in the Marine Corps and stationed in Camp Pendleton, California, and Okinawa, Japan.

He was an expert instructor and mechanic of amphibious landing vehicles and tanks.

He married his wife of 62 years, Diane Porterfield, in Los Angeles.

The couple had four children in California before moving to the Portland area in the 1980s, where he was the top performing salesman of heavy-duty brakes for a Fortune 500 company.

Richard and Diane became ministry leaders for Worldwide Marriage Encounter and Walk To Emmaus before they opened up their Cannon Beach store, "with no experience, just (our) faith," Diane said in 2015.

Sabra J.'s Attic — named after Diane's great-grandmother — became a destination antique and gift store, with a specialty in the aforementioned gurgle pots, fish-shaped pitchers that make a whimsical gurgling noise when pouring, modeled after an 1885 invention.

Richard Ortez became known as the "gurgle pot king."

Between 2008 and 2011 alone, he estimated he sold 1,200 gurgle pots. "People always commented when they came in that they just felt the peace," Diane Ortez said. "No matter how tired I was or what was going on, whenever I would go in and walk into that shop it would feel like I was in a different, wonderful place."

The couple sold the original store on Beaver Street in June 2014. That store became Harding's Trading Co.



FILE PHOTO

Richard Ortez and Chloe keep watch at Sabra J's Attic in Cannon Beach.

and they moved next door, where they continued to do business.

Richard Ortez had more than his share of challenges: a cancer diagnosis, and a fall that left him confined to a wheelchair.

That didn't stop him from spreading life's joy.

After his fall, his mission remained "to make people laugh and smile," Diane Ortez said in a 2015 interview.

With a singing voice "like Frank Sinatra," he offered a song with every gurgle pot sold.

The store carried three sizes. Each one came with a song — sung by Ortez — and a history lesson of the pot.

Ortez sold 42 gurgle pots in one shot to one customer at one point.

In recent years, he became a welcome face at Fred Meyer in Warrenton, offering a "smile award" to "people who smile with their whole face."

"He gives out the awards because he knows 'how a little compliment just changes somebody,'" the Daily Astorian's Elleda Wilson wrote in a 2015 profile. "You might also get one if you look like you could use a smile. After all, who needs it more?"

"Richard really loved life and lived it to the fullest," Diane Ortez recalled shortly after her husband's passing. "He did his best to uplift others, and touched many lives. He will be dearly missed by family and friends."

For those who love to laugh, the loss of two of the South County's happiest fellows will be felt. We need them more than ever.



EVE MARX

A family souvenir finds a home in coastal Oregon.

Souvenir from another world

I was messaging with my cousin J., who is not a blood relative but a cousin through marriage. She lives in South Africa, where she was born and raised. We came to know each other in the late 1970s when she began her legal immigration process to become a U.S. citizen; her first step was becoming a New York nanny. It was a volatile political time in South Africa and Jill was running away from apartheid, looking to spread her wings and fly away from the life her family hoped and planned for her as a card-carrying member of the Cape Town bourgeoisie.

We were introduced at the Manhattan apartment of her cousin, Z., who was married to B., my mother's baby brother. B. and Z.

were obviously quite a bit older and had a young son, L., who was at the time in primary school. Although still her early 20s, J. seemed to me so sophisticated and self-assured. And she was traveled; after all, just to get to New York, she'd already traveled halfway around the world.

J. had seen London. She might have seen France. She spoke a highly accented South African English and was fluent in Afrikaans. Her circle of expat friends her own age in New York were an urbane crowd.

The first time J. and I got together outside B. and Z.'s apartment, we met at an Italian coffee shop in Greenwich Village. The first thing I noticed was she rolled her own cigarettes. I still remember the shock of seeing her pull a little pouch of tobacco and a packet of rolling papers from her shoulder bag.

"It's not pot," she said, raising her eyebrows.

J. and I became friends. She liked spending time in my apartment. She finished out her nanny contract and secured an apartment of her own on lower Fifth Avenue. Her place was really tiny. It had once been a very snug hotel room. The kitchen was inside a closet which was OK because J. didn't eat or cook. For awhile she dated a film producer friend of my cop boyfriend who had a rule about the women he went out with. The rule was they couldn't weigh more than 100 pounds.

Things went the way they often do for young women. We got married and had kids. I moved to the suburbs an hour north of the city; J. moved to Staten Island. Once a year we met Manhattan in November to celebrate our birthdays, which are two days apart. Our rendezvous always took place at a tiny bistro on Cornelia Street so small the new smoking laws didn't apply.

J.'s father passed away, and for awhile she went home to South Africa. When she returned to New York, she brought back some of his small things, among them a rather imposing paper clip. It's embossed with the word "Greece" and appears to be handpainted. Her father likely picked it up on one of his work-related travels. It's got potential as a handy weapon; for example, if you struck someone in the throat or temple with it, you'd cause a lot of damage. I was very surprised and honored one day when it arrived in the mail, along with a note from J. saying she wanted me to have one of her dad's treasured desk items.

That was well over a dozen years ago. J. didn't stay married. Her son grew up. She moved back to South Africa. We still communicate, although mostly via Facebook message. Today, as I am writing this, is her birthday. I'm not sure if J. still smokes (she probably does); the paper clip, by the way, has never left my desk. I've never used it to clip paper, but it feels good in the hand.

I think J., who is a legal U.S. citizen with a dual passport who came back to the U.S. last week to vote, would appreciate that.

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



LETTERS

Nehemiah Project

If you were in downtown Cannon Beach on the sunny Friday afternoon of Nov. 9, you most likely saw or were approached by a group of people on a scavenger hunt from The Nehemiah Project International, Inc. They were in town for a staff retreat. Part of the scavenger hunt was to find the oldest candy store and take a picture with a city official and a veteran.

The staff represented people from different regions of the world. Such as the founders Patrice and

Gina Tsaque from Cameroon and Haiti, along with other staff from Mexico, North America, the Pacific Northwest and Malaysia. It was challenging for a few members of the team since English was not their first language. But everyone they approached were welcoming and helpful. The Nehemiah Project is a business development and support organization that works in partnership with churches, marketplace ministries, educational institutions, associations and individuals around the world. They train and support kingdom companies through biblical entrepre-

nurship training, coaching and access to capital.

**Nora Goodman
Cannon Beach**

Trap, neuter and return

My stepdaughter and her mom often vacation on the West Coast not far from your city. They made me aware of your overabundance of bunnies and also gave me part of the article from Oct. 19.

I agree, it would be a shame to round up the rabbits and shoot them. The article said you were looking for ideas and I may have one for you.

To humanely take care of community cats, dedicated people use trap-neuter-return. Community cats are cats and kittens with no homes, who are attached to each other and to where they live. Kitties over eight weeks of age are trapped, taken to participating vets, humane societies, etc. There, they are neutered, given thorough physical exams and treated if need be. Then they are returned to their community. In the case of the kitties, people often feed them and provide for their needs during cold winters and hot summers.

Something similar to trap, neuter and return might be useful for your bunny population. In your situation,

food is less of a problem. You might be able to fund this through normal donations to animal societies or perhaps by a Go Fund Me page.

There are several organizations that support TNR across the nation and around the world. Two that come to mind and that might be able to help are:

Best Friends Animal Society, Kanab, Utah: bestfriends.org/straycats. Alley Cat Allies, Bethesda, Maryland: alleycat.org.

I hope this information is helpful. Good luck.
**Karen Seligman
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

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