

Who are They?

... the inside “scoop” on some of your favorite local writers

Herbert “Herbie” Medlin

By Pat Edwards

(Herbie Medlin has agreed to be first in a series of profiles on some of the writers who have shared their special talents with the readers of *Groundwaters*.)

Herbie first submitted his poem, “Once Upon a Dream” to *Groundwaters* for the Fall 2007 issue. Actually, he submitted a number of poems and writings at once and has allowed us to print them “as needed.” We’ve since published one or more of his writings in each issue, my favorite being the poem, “Winter Rose” (*Winter 2008*) and I have become his biggest fan. There is a gentleness to his writing that reveals a quiet respect for life and the people who live it and a depth of emotion.



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Herbie grew up in the Bethel-Danebo area of Eugene and graduated from Willamette High School in 1972. He spent his childhood on a farm – milking cows, gathering eggs, feeding livestock – and he earned money for school clothes in the area’s bean and berry fields and walnut orchards. He joined the local fire department as a volunteer when he was 16 and remained a member for 16 more years. After graduation, Herbie joined the U.S. Army as a firefighter/crash rescue specialist and was stationed at Fort Stewart, south of Savannah, Georgia. He was assigned to the 238th Aviation Attack Helicopter unit.

“Most of our time was spent 20 miles from the main post at a heli-pad in the swamp – not much to see there but snakes and opossums.” He earned his EMT certificate while there. Nineteen months later, he was transferred to Puukuloa Training Area on the big island of Hawaii.

Herbie has worked a lot of jobs since then, trying to find something that he really enjoys doing, but allergies and a permanent wrist injury have limited his options. His favorites over the years were horse logging and auto body repair, but he had to give up both eventually. He is now driving a truck for Delta Sand and Gravel Company.

When he is not working or taking care of his elderly father, Herbie enjoys spending time in the Coast Range, picking mushrooms, camping, hunting and relaxing.

“There are some days I just drive from Horton all the

way to the coast on the mountain roads. The serenity and beauty always refresh me.”

The stress caused by his inability to do the work he loves and an unsuccessful marriage have turned him inward and his “scribblings” over the years have been therapeutic, providing him a much-needed outlet for the stress and resulting depression that occasionally begin to build.

“A friend gave me a copy of *Groundwaters* and said I should submit something. After much thought, I did and have been surprised and humbled at your response. *Groundwaters* is the only place I have submitted anything to so far. You have spoiled me with your kindness.”

Be assured, Herbie, we’ll continue to do so as long as you want to be a part of the *Groundwaters* family.

In Honor

Somewhere today
A mother cries
Trying to show pride
Through her pain

With feet like clay
And red-rimmed eyes
She takes the long ride
To where her child will be lain

For her Soldier she prays
Who paid the ultimate price
In war they died
From the rockets’ rain

Taps will play
The salute will fire
As the Soldier’s final ride
Ends in a stone-filled plain

~ Herbie