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A FREE MAGAZINE BY AMATEUR WRITERS FOR LOCAL READERS

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Vol. 7 No. 1

# *Groundwaters*

Fall 2010

*"Bubbling up in our own good time"*



*Teamwork* by Kirsten Wilson

**Editors & Publishing Team:**

Pat "Old-Timer" Edwards, Managing Editor  
Jen "Metamorphosis" Chambers, Assistant Editor  
Pat "Evolution" Broome, Copy Editor  
Jim "Masks" Burnett, Contributing Editor & Business Mgr.  
Judy Hays-Eberts, Foundress Emerita

*Groundwaters* magazine is a grassroots, community-oriented nonprofit literary quarterly which serves the West Lane area and all its connections through publication of the local arts, history and information. It is made possible by gifts and donations and the volunteers who create, produce and distribute *Groundwaters* magazine. It is distributed free of charge through local businesses and libraries, and is mailed to subscribers across the U.S. for a small annual fee. Material may be submitted from anyone, any age.

Check out our new site at <http://www.groundwaterspublishing.com/>

Also keep up to date with the self-sufficiency, art and written word treasures in Judy and Sonny's website at <http://www.groundwaters.org>

**GUIDELINES FOR THE MAGAZINE**

1. **Email submissions are preferred.** MS-Word or WordPerfect, please; no headers, footers, or in-line graphics. Typed or legible handwritten submissions are also acceptable. Don't send originals.
2. **Include a phone number or email address with each submission.** You may use a pseudonym, but all work must be signed.
3. **Submission limit is 2,500 words.**
4. **Please be respectful to all.** Read *Groundwaters* to understand its audience, and speak from the heart. Every age is welcome here. Featured artists and authors are representative of all ages and levels of experience. We do not accept political or religious opinion pieces for the printed magazine.
5. **Themes:** Each issue of *Groundwaters* is assigned a one-word theme with multi-meanings. Submissions do not have to reflect the theme, but those that do are welcomed.
6. **Include a bit of information about yourself and your submission** to share with our readers.
7. **Artists, as well as writers, are invited.** Please submit scanned images as at least 200 dpi email attachments in either .jpg or .tif format after first notifying us that you are going to do so.
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9. **Works in the public domain may be submitted to reprint, but credits to authors/artists must be included.**
10. **No payment (other than fleeting fame) is offered.** *Groundwaters* will provide two copies to a contributor of the issues in which their work appears. Please include a mailing address for this purpose.
11. **Changes may be made in submitted material due to grammatical errors and space constraints.** Whenever possible, the material and content will not be altered. Authors need to be aware that published material will also be available on the *Groundwaters* websites.

**Deadline for next issue is November 15, 2010**

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[submissions@groundwaterspublishing.com](mailto:submissions@groundwaterspublishing.com) (submissions)

Mail to *Groundwaters*  
P.O. Box 50, Lorane, OR 97451

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**Contributors to Fall 2010**

Artists & Authors: D.J. Barber, Michael J. (Hoss) Barker, Samantha Bolsinger, Pat Broome, Jim Burnett (aka Jimminy Cricket), Jane Capron, Jennifer Chambers, Gene Conrad, Gus Daum, Nick DeAngelo, Kimberly Jo DeFin, Dale R. Dickson, Pat Edwards, Evelyn Searle Hess, Marv Himmel, Barbara Isborn, Theresa La Whon-Burt, Gary L. Lewis, Herbie Medlin, Larry Melvin, Christie Nicholas, Jean Marie Purcell, Rhonda D. Rauch, Rachel Rich, Joseph Ringo, Avis Rust, Martha Sargent, Vicky Sourdry, Jessie Stinson, Gloria Wells, Karen Wickham, Kirsten Wilson.

With Sincere and Abundant Gratitude to ART, Inc., Hoss Barker, Grace Biggs, Lee Darling, Pat Gill, Martha Sargent, Oregon Country Fair, cash box donors and readers everywhere!

Locations for extra copies: **Alvadore Library** and **Fern Ridge Market** in Alvadore; **Cheshire Darimart**, in Cheshire; **The Book Mine**, **Kalapuya Books**, **Books On Main** and **Cottage Grove Library** in Cottage Grove; **Creswell Library** in Creswell; **Bloom's Automania**, **Crow Grange** and **DS Market** in Crow; **Junction City Library** in Junction City; **Lorane Family Store**, **Lorane General Store** and the **Rebekah Lodge** in Lorane; **Alpha-Bit Café** in Mapleton; **Noti Post Office** in Noti; **Broadway Events Center**, **DS Market**, **Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce**, **Fern Ridge Library**, **Kelley's True Value Hardware**, **Robbie's Windowbox Caffe**; **The Farm Store** and **Veneta City Hall** in Veneta. Wama

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**Mail Subscriptions:**

*Groundwaters* can also be mailed to you, family and friends. Subscriptions are available for \$10.00/year (four issues) to cover postage and handling. Back issues are also available for a nominal fee.

**Advertisements:**

*Groundwaters* reaches a substantial local audience and it continues to attract more readers. We now offer space for local advertisements to help support the costs of producing the magazine. Email [contact@groundwaterspublishing.com](mailto:contact@groundwaterspublishing.com) for more information.

*Groundwaters* is produced entirely with volunteer labor and is offered free of charge to the public. Therefore, we also gratefully accept donations to help defray the costs of printing. Gifts and donations should be made to **The *Groundwaters* Magazine Project**. In accordance with provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, donations are **tax deductible** for the donor.



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**CORRECTION:** The bridge on the cover of the July 2010 issue of *Groundwaters* was actually the Cape Creek Bridge near Devil's Elbow State Park in Lane County -- not Coos Bay. It was designed by Conde B. McCullough and is one of his most unique bridge designs. Our thanks to Doug Card for bringing it to our attention... pe

**About the Cover**



This picture was taken in October 2009, at Lone Pine Farms. My family and I were there picking out pumpkins and saw these horses. I thought they were beautiful and would photograph great. I have always loved horses so anytime I can get a chance to snap a shot of one, I do.

~ Kirsten Wilson

**Upcoming Deadlines**

- Winter** - Nov 15
- Spring** - Feb 15
- Summer** - May 15
- Fall** - August 15

<b>Issue Themes</b>	<p>Current Issue  <b>"Change"</b></p> <hr/> <p>Upcoming Themes</p>
	<p><b>2011</b></p> <p>January - "Heart"                  April - "Possibility"                  July - "Lost"                  October - "Warmth"</p>

When I first read Martha Sargent's story, "How I Learned the Blues," that we printed in the last issue, I was quite moved by it. However, when she read it at *Groundwaters Live!* on August 15, she brought a special poignancy and depth to the story. Reading one's own writing frequently puts a special quality to the words and Martha's soft, slow Southern drawl made it come to life for me. The same is true for the stories read by the other readers – Jo-Brew, Vicki Sourdry, Gus Daum, "Hoss" Barker, Palmer Vilagi, Gloria Wells, D.J. Barber, Rachel Rich and Paula Krug Keys. Each author and poet put their own emotions and special meanings into their words that we may not have done with our own readings of them. That's what makes *Groundwaters Live!* such an enjoyable experience for me, especially, being one who has never been involved with the performing part of writing.

After the August event, we sent out a call for interested people to meet with the *Groundwaters* and ART, Inc. staffs to form a committee to plan future *Groundwaters Live!* events. Few showed up for the meeting, but several people have offered suggestions and help in the planning and directing of it. Once the new theater is available for use, we hope to provide visual aids and audio facilities for background effects, live music and entertainment at intermission and hopefully, continued free admission if we can obtain the necessary grant support that fund the arts in the area. If you have information or contacts we can use towards this end or if you want to become active in planning the direction that we take, please let us know.

The 37 people who attended the August 15 event, were able to get a glimpse of the new theater-in-the-making at the Broadway Events Center. The stage is complete and the cushioned theater seating, donated by Lane Community College, and the huge velvet theater curtains, also donated, are ready to be installed and hung. The electrical work will soon be completed by the Veneta Moose Lodge #2656 which owns the building, and a final coat of paint needs to be put on the walls which have already been primed. Grant applications are being prepared to obtain funding for the hardware and tracks for the curtains, but its conditional use can go through, even if we don't have curtains for awhile. So, it's very possible that the November 14th *Groundwaters Live!* will be taking place on the big stage. It's really happening!

Thanks to all of you for your continued support of not only *Groundwaters Live!*, but also of our magazine and the love and energy we are putting into each issue.

### Winds of Change

By Jimminy Cricket

As I write this, I am standing on a precipice, with an ever-shifting wind blowing around me. Ever feel that way? You may know the feeling... the plunge into the deep gorge is but a short step away and with the wind pushing at your back. You bear down on your feet, bracing against the push and then the wind swirls about you challenging your fragile balance. You take a step sideways to compensate and the wind shifts again. Then, a gust rises from below and pushes you a step or two backwards, before beginning anew its ever-changing whirl. The seeds of change ride the relentless winds of life...

Thoughts, buffeted about by the winds of potential change race through my conscious mind, persistent thoughts vying with each other to be the one that pushes me beyond self-imposed limitations. Thoughts fed, perhaps, by the dark energies of doubt – the uncertainties of unspoken fear. Should I continue to... or, quit and move on to something else? I wonder – does an inner knowing that I am somehow unwilling or afraid to give in to drive this indecision?

Will the wind ever quit blowing? No... not for long, anyway, and that is a good thing. How else would I be moved to step over the line that change seems to draw for me in the sand? Somewhere in my upbringing, I have been taught to resist change. I have also come to know that resistance is rooted in the mysterious fabric of fear... most often the fear of the unknown. I engage in a game without rules, that of "What if?" The game serves to preserve the status-quo, to keep me in a mental limbo, inside of a box of my own making.

Beyond the "surface" thoughts reeling through my head, there is an inner knowing reminding me that whatever good has come into my life has come on either the winds or the gentle breezes of change. By whatever means, change is what makes things better always. I know that, yet from a corner of my mind rises a persistent "yah but" / "remember when." Yes, I do remember. I remember the devastating pain of an unwanted divorce, the worst time of my life. Now, looking back, I clearly see it paved the way to an even better life. The pains of change are simply of the moment unless I opt to wallow in them, thereby blocking the greater good hidden therein.

I seem to have come full circle. What am I resisting up there on that precipice? Change is the challenge, the question, and is always the only answer. What prevents me from just taking a deep breath, finding a moment of inner silence and letting my inner knowing overcome the swirling thoughts of indecision? From the quiet moments the way is revealed, be it right, left, forward or backward, becomes clear and change prevails once again. Once again, the brink of the precipice teaches me that I have a choice to make – to continue resisting or to get quiet, listen to my inner knowing and let change lead me on.

## Our Readers Write

I'm a "lifer" for *Groundwaters*. I'm so impressed with the work that's being done by Pat, Jennifer and all. I was particularly struck when I saw the last issue, Vol. 6 no. 4. From cover to cover, it was just really good.

Jim Burnett's photo of the Cape Creek Bridge reminded me of other coastal bridges I've admired. How old is it, I wondered? Could it be duplicated today?

Thanks again to Pat Gill, who's frequently listed in the credits. Pat G. is a stalwart supporter, I know. *Groundwaters* has benefited greatly from her faith and steady contributions behind the scenes. The help from her and so many others has felt like a gift from God.

How wonderful to hear about the scholarship awarded to Joe Lay, and to see *Groundwaters Live!*, the amateur writing contest and outreach to youth offered. The magazine clearly has a life of its own, thanks to continued efforts by its dedicated staff and featured authors. I look forward to further developments!

Many of the authors' names are new to me. Good additions, all, to those more familiar. I'm ever thrilled to see pieces from Avis Rust and Norm Maxwell and Karen Wickham and Liath McTire; humorous poetry from Jean Marie Purcell and cartoons by Nick DeAngelo; stories and drawings by Riley Chambers... I've learned a lot about people through these pages and been enriched beyond words. I was introduced to Herbie and Mia Narayan and Wanda Edwards and others, through their poems over time. Now I'm getting acquainted with the next generation of contributors, such as Hoss Barker, Rachel Rich, Gus Daum, D.J. Barber, Stephanie and Linsey Kau...too many names to list. Each one's work touches me in some way. Keep writing!

I appreciate the community info included on the back cover, as well; it's an appealing assortment of local events.

A note to readers: *Marj's Diary* is yet worth a look at [http://groundwaters.org/pt\\_marj.htm](http://groundwaters.org/pt_marj.htm) as there's much more than could be published in the magazine. Interesting to see from beginning to end.

Thanks again for everything. I'll always love *Groundwaters* and everyone who makes it happen. It brings all sorts of people together in a beautiful way.

- Judy Hays Eberts  
Philomath, Oregon

*Judy is our much-beloved founder of Groundwaters magazine. It was her vision, blood, sweat, tears and those of her husband Sonny that started this whole endeavor. Judy is now living in Philomath and is a regular contributor of community profiles to the Philomath Bulletin. Thanks Judy for your kind words and continued support!*

*Editor's Note:* Our apologies to Pat Gill and the contributors, who deserve to share in her words, for not getting this wonderful letter in the last issue...

The Spring issue of *Groundwaters* is simply wonderful.

The new masthead and logo are so soothing and capture the feeling of the magazine.

Pat, I so enjoyed your article, "The Sweet Sauce of Labor." I too grew up picking my summers away – what fond memories I have of shared laughter, ice cold pump water, the sweet taste of strawberries and green-stained fingers from picking those endless rows of green beans!

As was your story, "Lambs" (by Gene Conrad) was so well written and enjoyable to read.

The poetry this issue was superb. Each one gave me something to ponder, to smile, to nod and to think...

"When to Play and When to Rest? That is the Question" (by Paula Krug Keys) – a wonderful meditation in simply reading...and, something to take with you mentally and attempt to practice. I speak for myself.

"The Gorgeous Hussy; In Memory of Dorothy Jean" by Patrice Broome... what a lovely tribute!

Each story, poem, contribution, deserves an encouraging comment – so interesting, enlightening, encouraging, comforting.

Thank you for keeping *Groundwaters*, this oh so unique and vibrant influence, alive.

Blessings  
Pat Gill  
Cheshire, Oregon

**And, from Karen Wickham:**

"Thanks for giving me the opportunity to put my writing out there. What a gift!"

Jim and Pat Edward's

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October 2010

*Groundwaters*

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## Wild Turkey Watch

By Avis Rust

**N**oti, Oregon has a flock of 14 wild turkeys that range between Highway 126 and Noti Loop Road. Their main headquarters is close to the little

blue schoolhouse. They have come to visit us around 8:00 a.m. almost every day and stay for a short time. While they are here, they scratch up the leaves we have worked so hard to place as mulch under the rhododendron bushes. Those turkeys can move a lot of leaves in five or ten minutes – which is about as long as they stay.

They must have one that is a leader as that one bird starts to take off for another location and the rest give up their scratching and follow the leader. They usually head towards Fir Street, sometimes taking a short break at Pastor Steve's yard, then... off they go!

They visit several of the families on Fir Street and then we do not see them until the next morning.

One morning, when six of them were in our yard, I noticed a dog coming down a driveway towards them. The turkeys saw it and began to fly. All six flew up onto the top of our house. I ran in and got my camera. They hesitated long enough for me to get their picture.

This year has been the first time I have experienced "turkey watch." They are interesting for me, as I am a wild bird watcher.

See Avis' regular Noti column, "The Rusty Gate" in the new weekly *Fern Ridge Review*!!

All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves; we must die to one life before we can enter another. ~Anatole France



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## Must I Be a Cowboy?

Must I be a cowboy to make up cowboy rhymes,  
And dream about the days,  
Of the wild and wooly West?  
Though not long in the saddle, I'm no stranger to hard  
times,  
I was just a young'un,  
When I left the feathered nest.

A man's calling is his calling, no one would argue that,  
He does what he has chosen,  
While seldom looking back.  
Though I made my living logging, I wore a cowboy hat,  
Instead of reins and saddles,  
I had caulk boots for my tack.

Instead of bucking broncos, I rode a D-8 Diesel Cat,  
I bulldogged logs instead of cattle,  
And I used a steel rope.  
Most times I wished it was tall in the saddle that I sat,  
I know wishing does no good,  
But I ain't run out of hope.

I logged once using horses, they was ornery and they  
stank,  
They really pulled the wood, though,  
They worked me 'till I dropped.  
Percherons I think they was, big as Sherman tanks,  
Once I got 'em goin',  
I couldn't get 'em stopped.

Do you eat your beans and biscuits from a rusty old tin  
plate?  
Do you really have a chuck wagon,  
With a crotchety old cook?  
Do you sit around the campfire and tip the jug until way  
late?  
Are there coyote and rattlesnakes,  
Everywhere you look?

Are your best friends really horses and bedrolls your  
homes?  
It sounds like the life of Riley, boys,  
Could I ride the range with you?  
Do I need to be a cowboy to make up cowboy poems?  
If my writin's to your likin',  
Could I be a buckaroo?

~ Michael J Barker

There is a certain relief in change, even though it be from bad to worse! As I have often found in traveling in a stagecoach, that it is often a comfort to shift one's position, and be bruised in a new place. ~Washington Irving

# 2010 Groundwaters Amateur Writing Contests

By Pat Edwards

The deadline for the *Groundwaters* Amateur Writing Contests was September 1, and you will find the winning entries printed on pages 16 and 17 of this issue. Only the adult categories are being awarded this time as we did not receive any youth entries. The timing was bad; the kids were not in school, and most were too busy with summer activities to settle into a writing mode. So, we're going to reschedule the youth awards for a March 1, 2011 deadline. Guidelines will be printed in the January 2011 issue of *Groundwaters*.

The theme for each genre of the adult contest was "change." Each entry was to reflect the theme and be no more than one page in length. Though we were not flooded with entries, what we received were well done. According to our judges, selecting a winner was not an easy task in either genre. **We congratulate our winners and sincerely thank our judges!**

## Poetry - Adult category

The poetry award goes to **Michael "Hoss" Barker** with his poem entitled, "The Mill." It was a unanimous choice by the judges. (see it on page 16)

The judges for the poetry were Quinton Hallett and Sharon Munson.

Noti poet **Quinton Hallett's** third chapbook, *Refuge from Flux*, was released in January, 2010, by Finishing Line Press. Her work has appeared recently in *Tiger's Eye*, *Thresholds*, *Groundwaters* and online at *La Fovea*. She co-coordinates readings at the Springfield Public Library and poet visits to Crow High School for the Oregon State Poetry Association's Eugene-Springfield Chapter. In 2004, she founded Fern Rock Falls Press which has three titles in circulation. In June, she shared first place in the Raven Gallery's (Eugene) Ekphrasis contest with Sharon Munson.

**Sharon Lask Munson** grew up in Detroit, Michigan. After thirty years of teaching overseas and in Alaska, she is retired and lives in Eugene, Oregon. She has poems in *Sandcutters*, *Manzanita Quarterly*, *Windfall*, *Verseweaves*, *Earth's Daughter*, *Thema*, *Drash: Northwest Mosaic*, *Goose River Press*, and many others. Her chapbook, *Stillness Settles Down the Lane*, was published in the Summer, 2010, by Utter Chaos Press.

## Prose - Adult category

The prose award goes to **Christie Nicholas** with her story entitled, "He's Not Heavy, He's My Carry-On." (see it on page 17)

The judges for the prose competition were Carola Dunn and Jim Burnett.

**Carola Dunn** is the author of over 50 novels, including the Daisy Dalrymple mystery series and the Cornish mystery series, both published by St Martin's, and many Regencies. She was born in England, where most of her books are set, and now lives in Eugene. Visit her website: <http://CarolaDunn.weebly.com> or come and say hello on Facebook.

**Jim Burnett** is a Contributing Editor and Business Manager for *Groundwaters* magazine and has long been a reader for a statewide writer's association. According to Jim, he "wears the masks of Son, Brother, Husband, Father, Grandfather and Great Grandfather. In my wardrobe I have other masks -- that of Friend, independent New Thought Minister, Prayer-Partner, Writer and a bunch of worn out masks including Crisis Counselor, Chaplain, Parts Manager, International Trade Consultant, Safety and Environmental Compliance Specialist, Shoe Salesman and... I'm not sure that in the course of a single lifetime on planet Earth we can ever strip away all of our masks to reveal the divine spark of our true natures."



## Groundwaters Live!

Sunday, November 14, 2010, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
Broadway Events Center  
5th & Broadway, Veneta, Oregon

**FREE!**

Invited local writers and poets will perform readings of their works which have been published previously in *Groundwaters* magazine. Join us for an afternoon of words and fellowship!

Sponsored by **Groundwaters Magazine** and the **Applegate Regional Theater (ART, Inc)**

[http://www.groundwaterspublishing.com/Groundwaters\\_Live.html](http://www.groundwaterspublishing.com/Groundwaters_Live.html)

## Change a Child

I sought to push  
a child and he showed  
the strength of  
his resistance.

I sought to tell  
a child and he  
showed  
indifference.

I began to show  
a child and he  
showed  
mild interest.

I learned to lead  
a child and  
he showed me  
his skill.

I chose to work  
with a child and  
he showed me  
himself.

~ Gus Daum

---

## Spare Change

He looked hot and dirty, standing there with his card-board sign  
Hand-lettered in black marker: "Homeless, Hungry,  
Please Help."  
The light changed, so I had to stop, the second car in  
line,  
Far enough away so I could look at him without his  
notice.  
His eyes were red and rheumy, staring without focus;  
His boots were scuffed and gray with dust, his shirt and  
pants  
An indeterminate shade of khaki or maybe denim blue.  
Beside him lay a dog, company and warmth; vigilance  
After dark. No hand from the car ahead held out  
change  
Or food. The light turned green; I drove beyond his  
range,  
Turning my head to avoid his eyes. He'd just buy beer  
Or cigarettes instead of dog food. Besides, I'm not his  
keeper.

~ Jane Capron

## Change

There is a special moment  
when I can decide  
how to live my life,  
and that is  
each moment.

There is no moment  
when I can decide  
how you  
shall live yours.

~ Gus Daum

---

## Birkenstocks

I was in the midst of my "poor years"  
Too long out of work, back on the job just a short while  
I splurged and bought my first pair of Birkenstocks  
I had never worn such things, they were a sign of change  
I was starting over again, it felt good  
And they felt good, those trendy leather sandals

I was driving down the highway on a warm summer's  
day  
Wearing my Birkenstocks, of course  
And then it happened, I passed one of those guys  
You know, walking down the shoulder of the road  
Shabby backpack on his back, long greasy hair,  
Clothes worn a few weeks or months too long

There, on the gravel-strewn shoulder  
He walked ... barefoot  
A sudden impulse hit me  
Already passed him, I pulled over  
Took off my Birkenstocks  
And dropped them onto the shoulder

I don't know if they fit him  
Don't know if he'd ever wear them  
But he obviously needed them more than I did  
I waved and drove on knowing someday  
I'd be able to get another pair

And, somehow, giving felt so much better than having.

~ Jim Burnett

It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory.  
~W. Edwards Deming

## Ode to Kathy Davis

Broke down near an old town  
Five miles out of Crow  
One hundred yards  
An old car  
So close to Doane Road

Glad to see her high school teacher  
Claim to fame  
I shook her hand  
I asked her name.  
Kathy Davis  
Was her name.

Hand up, not a hand out  
Cell phoned, Hell! no one's home!  
Tried the son to reach his father,  
My best friend on the road.

She stood by  
Till help arrived  
We talked a lot  
Of life gone by.  
We laughed and joked  
She had a smoke  
We just killed time.

A friend is where you find them  
Home town  
Broke down  
A country road  
She saw a stranger  
To lend a hand of hope

~ Gary "Spyder" Lewis

**Editor's Note:** *Spyder wrote the above poem/song as a thank you to Kathy Davis of Crow. After Kathy had read it, she commented:*

*"Pat, Thank you very much for forwarding Gary's poem to me. That was nice of him... and you, too! I helped Gary push his car to the side of the road and helped him to get someone to come get him. I wish everyone in our community would give just a moment to someone else. It would help to make this crazy world a better place. Thanks for all you do. ~ Kathy Davis*

---

What can we take on trust  
in this uncertain life? Happiness, greatness,  
pride - nothing is secure, nothing keeps.  
~Euripides, Hecuba

## Sun and Shadow Over the Columbia Gorge (a villanelle)

Morning light flickers through quaking leaves  
And smoky clouds billow against clear sky,  
While trees bow toward river, their branches heave.

Gusts whip through canyons, oaks, and eaves,  
Roaring past houses and barns like the express.  
Still morning light flickers through quaking leaves.

On Columbia's gorge sun and shadow weave  
Over grass and stone, hill and gully,  
As trees bow toward river, their branches heave.

Now clouds burst, pouring like sieves.  
Again skies open, pushing back storms.  
Then morning light flickers through quaking leaves.

More wind hits water, white caps wave.  
Bushes thrash and rustle and quake,  
As trees bow toward river, their branches heave.

Horses hide and fishermen leave.  
Families gaze out windows in awe,  
While trees bow toward river, their branches heave  
And morning light flickers through quaking leaves.

~ Rachel Rich

---

## Battle of San Romano

Wish I mighta wanted  
The love of you, Kid  
And the assistance of God  
For after all the  
Hardships and difficulties  
I can still  
Be with a patient heart  
As I exhale  
With the hope of  
One among us.

~ Rhonda Rauch



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# Cats Can't Back up

By Martha Sargent

Ajax was lying comfortably in Allison's arms. So nice, so nice.... He was dreaming as he dozed. His whiskers twitched, and he made little noises.

Ajax loved his owner. Her body was just right for dozing. She fed him, too, and talked to him while she fed him. He had no idea what she was saying, but her tone was soothing – just as soothing as her heartbeat was now.

Her arm was just right. Held tight against her chest it made a valley he could ease his body into and prop his head against. Her arm supported his back, and on the other side was the nicest pillow, where he buried his face. Sooooooft, he acknowledged. As icing on the tuna, he put one paw across her chest for balance and to assert ownership. He suspected this woman thought she owned him, but he knew it was the other way around and he used his paw to make sure.

He wondered if he could get her to give him nerbles. You know, nerbles – those exquisite little massage strokes just between the eyebrows. Ajax was debating whether it would be worthwhile to stretch toward Allison's hand to coax it into the nerble position when the doorbell rang. Drats! he thought... or bad rats. For Ajax they meant the same thing.

The doorbell rang again and Ajax cracked one eye to give it a sour look. Allison sighed and moved Ajax off her lap. Now he was truly disgruntled. He glanced around the room for another place as comfortable as Ally but gave up the search and just stood, waiting.

Ally opened the front door and a blast of cold air swept in along with a younger woman in red. Ugh. Ajax didn't like red, and she was definitely red; red clothes, red fingers, red mouth. Ugh. He dashed to his first line of defense – peeking out from behind the TV. Ugh. She was still there... and loud.

Ally wasn't comfortable with Red Woman either. She left the door open a bit, hoping the intruder would go back out. "Are you looking for Mike?" Ally asked and took a step back. Monique Walsh, Mike's ex-wife, was standing a little too close.

"He said he'd pay for my car repairs. I want the money. Where is it?"

"I think that was before he found out you wrecked the car yourself."

"Where is he?" Monique demanded. Ally took two more steps backwards.

This alarmed Ajax who jumped from behind the TV to the ottoman, then to the TV top. From there Ajax sailed to the top of the eight foot bookcase; then from the bookcase to the mantle and from the mantle to the top of the valance over the living room window. Neither woman noticed.

Oh, oh, ooooooh, thought Ajax. Now his own heart was

beating so he could hear it. What can I do? What can I do? How to get away?

Red Woman was waving her arms and making a lot of unpleasant noises. Ally, like Ajax, thought it was time to panic, so she headed for the hallway bathroom, grabbing her purse on the way. She locked herself inside.

Ajax watched Red Woman as she stormed around the living room smacking at things. The front door was still open, and it flashed to him that he could jump on her on his way down to escape through this open portal. Instead he hissed as Monique came closer to his side of the room. He wasn't quite ready to make his leap and Monique was sneering at him. Now Ajax was embarrassed. Worse yet he couldn't hear Ally anymore. Had she abandoned him?

In the bathroom Ally had her boyfriend Mike on the cell phone. "How do I get your ex-wife out of my house?" she asked.

"I'll be right over." Within a minute Mike was in the living room displaying a set of handcuffs.

"You think you can scare me just because you're a cop?"

"Yes. And I've already called the Maryland State Police. They're on their way."

Monique stamped her foot and then hurried out the door. Ally peeked around the corner of the hallway with a relieved smile.

"You don't mind giving a report, do you?" Mike asked her.

"Certainly not. I'm just glad you live next door. How come she didn't go to your house?"

"She did, but I had the lights off. I knew it was her and I didn't answer the door. I didn't realize she'd come here."

Ally and Mike hugged and she offered to make drinks.

"I think we need to get your cat down first," said Mike. "He's really stuck. He can't back up to jump to the mantle." Mike moved the ottoman to the window and climbed on top.

From his nine foot roost Ajax gave Mike a suspicious look. "Mewwwwww." I like Ally better, Ajax thought to himself. Mike's all muscles and funny smells. Ally's all food smells and so sooooooft. Still, he begrudgingly allowed Mike to pull him down from his impossible perch. He squirmed in Ally's direction and Mike handed him over to her.

"I'll make us our drinks while you take care of Ajax," said Mike.

Ally installed herself on the sofa and let Ajax curl up in her arms. His little heart was still racing, and he was very embarrassed. He lodged his face in her elbow.

Ajax took a deep breath and sighed. So glad that red thing is gone, he thought. He sighed again and wriggled deeper into Ally's arms and began to relax. After a minute he started to purr. He thought about dozing.

So soooooft. I wonder if I can get her to give me nerbles.

## I Have Worms

By Gus Daum

I do have worms. If you are tempted to move away from me, I've been assured that my condition is not necessarily contagious.

Years ago, at least one of our children was diagnosed with intestinal worms. We won't go into gruesome details, but the only medical condition as dreaded by a mother in our circle of friends at that time was head lice. Either condition raised fears in mothers about being drummed out of the Fit Mother's Society.

My condition is different and may be described as composting-crazed, and the worms are certified red wrigglers. Lured by the enthused conservation messages that flood Eugene, I had attended a *Vermiculture* training meeting, led by the Lane Extension Service, to learn about conserving all the food scraps that flood my garbage disposal, and endanger nearby rivers. For only twenty-five dollars, the instructor explained, trained and gave each of us a special composting bin... and best of all, a squirming group of "starter worms" or brood stock. Further, we went home with careful instructions about the dietary needs of these little critters: vegetable and fruit scraps, stale bread, coffee grounds but no dairy products, no meat scraps, no citrus. The bin needs proper bedding materials such as dampened but not wet newspaper clippings, brown but not green garden waste, and lawn clippings. Straw clipped to short lengths can be used to aerate the bin. The result could enrich our gardens and flower baskets with worm castings, i.e. worm poop.

They overlooked a major selling point. The little fellows make ideal pets. Our kids had blessed us over time with a variety of dogs, from a teacup size Chihuahua named Faunita to a ninety pound tri-color collie registered as Wellington Charles Minster but called Chris, as well as many mongrels, cats, a chameleon, hamsters and rabbits. We once had a parakeet, but it left a child's shoulder to fly over our barbecue. Carbon monoxide fumes caused an awkward swan dive to its death on our patio. However, let a frugal pet owner sing praises to my worms.

I now have hundreds of worms quietly producing fertile soil each day. In five years there have been no veterinary bills, none. We have no food cost for my pets. Our son owns three boxer dogs and his only valid reason for owning a pickup truck is to bring home dog food. There have been no sitter fees or boarding costs for pets to enable us an occasional weekend trip out of town. Motels or hotels don't worry about our pets, left safe at home. There are no grooming costs for my worms. A daughter has a doggie, a mixed breed Lhasa Apso; the accumulated annual receipts for its bi-weekly grooming for the year may exceed the weight of the dog.

## A Midnight Dance

Again, I peer through panes of Glass  
Each picture pleads a case for the past  
Each Love, every plan that would outlast  
The one that came before  
Shutting that skeleton's closet door.

Looking back through a mist  
The last one I held and kissed  
Moments remembered, the past, in my mind,  
re-arranged to fit in more kind.  
YESTERDAY is her name ...  
She holds on to it ... it's who she'll always be  
Different from the others, yet, in time  
Just the same, Her and Me.

Now, Today, YESTERDAY and I dance  
Around the vacant room  
Two Lovers from a tomb  
Gladly we dance ... We know it will be perhaps  
Our last and over soon.  
And then she cries and says goodbye  
And once again here alone I lie.  
In my silent and sad retreat  
Re-arranging in my mind  
A past without defeat.

YESTERDAY's Sweet smile reflected in candlelight  
Ghost images of that first night  
Laughing, making Love to our delight  
Time speaks, "it matters not"  
Who was wrong or right.

YESTERDAY is the name she'll keep  
Again seen, in my mind, sometimes awake or asleep  
And SOMEDAY replaces a familiar YESTERDAY  
A smiling, haunting face ...  
Makes Her way to an older picture's place

~ Larry Melvin



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# What Makes a Home?

By Evelyn Searle Hess

I hunched over the camp stove, waiting for it to heat my morning tea water. Together, the stove flame and the simmering kettle emitted enough warmth that my shoulders began to relax, and my shivering slowed a bit. When steam started to escape from the spout, I plucked a couple of fir needles from yesterday's tea bag and poured hot water over it, watching mini-clouds form above the cup. Clutching the cup with both gloved hands, I leaned my face close to breathe in the steam. When the cup got too hot, I held it between my knees, shifting it back to my hands again when I began to feel the burn. Once the tea had cooled enough to drink, I put the kettle on my lap, wanting to absorb every bit of its residual warmth.

The olive oil was solid, so I knew the temperature was well below 40¼ F, but fir twigs bristled with dew – not ice. So it must be 34¼ or so. I'd managed fine in colder. Still, I looked inside our 25-year-old Toyota wagon, parked beside the kitchen table, wondering about its bedroom potential. I had slept in it from time to time, but it seemed overly cozy for two. For now, the leaking tent would have to do.

Standing by the car, I caught my reflection in its side mirror. Collars of two coats, one tan and one navy, a wool plaid shirt, and a bulky, turtle-neck sweater bunched under my chin, my head pulled down, turtle-like, within them. My brown wool watch hat peeked out beneath a fuzzy white cloche. Wisps of gray hair escaped around the edges, testifying to my reluctance to bare my head to the cold for long enough to brush my hair. Blood-shot eyes surrounded by puffy flesh looked out over a red nose, a lone drop about to slide from its tip.

"I look like a homeless person... Funny thing," I snorted.

It was now late November. David and I had been camping by the pond most of the past year and a half, but had never really considered ourselves homeless. Until 17 months ago we had owned a home, although we rented it out. And for several years before that we at least had a dilapidated trailer to sleep and cook in when the weather was bad. But with time, the trailer disintegrated, sections sinking into the ground and exposing a nine-inch space that invited wildlife to find refuge. Battles between unidentified creatures and the paranoid occupant cat spewed papers across the floor, overturned containers and knocked spice jars into the sink. Meanwhile, a garden of mold crept across the counters. We would eventually retrieve anything worth salvaging, but for now, we both kept our distance except when we needed to refill the cat's dish. And I wasn't interested in ever sleeping there again, even as water rose on the tent floor and my fingers turned numb.

But for all that, we certainly weren't homeless. "Homeless" referred to people without anything, didn't it? David and I had land and a garden, and were beginning to build a

house with what was left from selling our old one, after we'd paid off our debts.

As I shivered under a fir tree, I stifled a humorless laugh, thinking of the old line about education being the path to success. So how was it that my inter-disciplinary Master's degree found me pondering the meaning of homelessness as I neared age 73? But in truth, I'd always known that education came with no guarantees. My father graduated from law school and was admitted to the Montana State Bar in 1929. After the stock market crashed, he wandered Washington and Oregon with itinerant laborers, his hard-earned papers in his pocket as he shook prunes. He fell in love with the lush, green Pacific Northwest, but no law firms there were taking on newly-minted attorneys in the midst of a depression. In 1932, in a move that must have been as frightening as it was exciting, he took over the office and library of a retiring lawyer in the little town of Chehalis, Washington. He, with my mother and year-old big sister, rented a tiny house on stilts on Prindle Street, where floods lapped at the foundation each winter. But even in hard times people needed legal advice – and found ways to settle their accounts. For his counseling, my father was sometimes paid a jar of honey, a bag of potatoes or the hindquarter of a pig.

As Daddy struggled – sometimes anxiously, but usually happily – to develop the career he loved, many whose success was measured in money abandoned hope, family, even life itself. As my sisters and I grew up, Daddy often mentioned the absurdity of working – of spending one's life – for monetary gain alone. It had to be for passion.

And so it was that I left jobs that I lost the passion for, and found great joy living where I felt a part of the changing seasons – the return of hummingbirds, turkey vultures, wood warblers; flowers turning to fruit, green leaves transformed to gold and ruby. But at the moment, I was cold. It was all very well to warm the heart and soul with memories, but it didn't do much for the extremities.

Thawed a bit by the tea and the kettle, I decided to try to move my icy bones. A tiny bird caught my eye, darting from twig to twig in a willow across the nearby pond, glean-ing invisible bits of breakfast. The edge of the pond was bare, though a few weeks earlier, squeaks and plops had filled the air as bullfrogs, startled by a visitor's presence, leaped from their sunning spots back into the water. A fat half-foot in body length, these living gargoyles sat on the bank looking haughty and a bit disgruntled until someone neared, then like age-group breast-strokers at the sound of the starting gun, they sailed through the air and disappeared into the water.

But days both short and cold had sent the frogs to seek sanctuary in the mud until the return of warm weather. I, on the other hand, had no winter refuge, mud or otherwise. Then

it occurred to me that rather than standing around feeling sorry for myself, I could follow the lead of the active bird and get my blood circulating, a sure way to warm up.

Hiking up the hill, I came upon mushrooms in a multitude of shapes and colors: orange fairy cups, black elfin saddles, mushrooms with gills and teeth and pores, some with white fringes around the edge, some nearly black and grotesquely contorted, colonies of tiny white mushrooms, big burgundy-colored ones, tan and gold and brown-paper-bag colored, red and plum and even nearly blue. At one spot the ground was littered with bits of tan, white and mauve caps and stems where deer or perhaps elk – some kind of messy, feasting megafauna – contributed left-overs for the mini and micro-crews to clean up. It reminded me of when our son and daughter-in-law expressed wonder that their friend's baby ate so sloppily while their own young son was meticulous. And then they caught their dog (who was *supposed* to be in the other room at meal time) eagerly polishing up under the high chair. The memory made me laugh as I thought of the many levels of potential visits to the mushroom crumbs – from rodents to slugs to beetles and microorganisms.

Golf- and tennis-ball sized divots under fir trees showed where creatures – perhaps flying squirrels — had been digging for truffles, putting to mind one of my favorite examples of Nature's networking. In fall and winter flying squirrels, along with many other small mammals, smell the strong fragrance of truffles, a major winter food. They dig and eat these small tuber-like fungal fruits and, as they travel through the forest, deposit spores that have moved through their digestive tracts unharmed. The spores germinate, forming underground fungal networks that connect to tree roots, augmenting the roots' ability to collect water and minerals. And as the trees grow they provide shelter for the squirrels as well as for owls, a major predator of these small mammals.

*We're all intertwined*, I thought. *The squirrels and fungus, the trees and owls, bugs and slugs, rivers and wind and stars, babies in their high chairs and canine vacuums. What a system!*

On the way back down the hill, I came upon myriads of mosses. Mosses like velvet, mosses flat and feather-like, moss that looked like tiny trees, and some a woolly tangle like a poodle's back. As a child I lay in moss in the woods of Washington, and still remember its thick and springy feel. How many forest creatures must make it their bed, or bring it to line their sleeping quarters? And other beds came to mind: I remembered, on rare and cherished camping trips with my parents, watching them lay blanket-rolls on thick fir-bough mattresses. We slept deeply and awoke refreshed.

What makes a home? A place to sleep? Warmth? Something to care about? Connections? How wonderful that the definition of home need not be confined to the space between walls!

I knew evening would come early back at the pond kitchen. Those who live outside must tune their schedules to the tilt of the earth. To get anything out of the garden, I

had to be able to see, and at this time of year that would be possible only until about 4:30.

I was amazed to find tomatoes – December was just around the corner, yet they were partly ripe and still solid – and I harvested three different kinds of kale as well. I retrieved a big onion from its current storage place (the back of the car), put on rice and began chopping onion and tomatoes. The beans had been simmering for an hour or two.

David had moved our tent inside the empty shell of the house-to-be – upstairs, in what would eventually be the bedroom. And after washing dishes, he had used the still-warm dishwater to thaw the olive oil, wrapping the bottle in a thick bath towel once the oil was liquid. As I began fixing dinner under a lantern's light, David built a fire in the stone ring behind where the tent used to be.

Blue sky turned peach, fading to opal gray as if distant techies played with the stage lights. Fir trees' green became black, and a wisp of a waxing moon glimmered beyond the trees. We pulled chairs close to the fire, watching logs glow red, swell, pop, turn darker. We ate relaxed, contented, warmed to the core.

With dinner so early, I decided there would be time to fix something extra. Maybe Patrick would stop by. Patrick, a young friend from Ireland, dropped in occasionally, pulling out his tent when it was warm or sleeping in his car when it was not. He roamed the Pacific Northwest spring to fall, farming or doing odd jobs, helping people out, earning his way. He spent winters in Mexico or India or the Pacific Islands – someplace warm. For Patrick, the world was his home.

I could chop some apples from our tree into the cast iron frying pan, simmer them a bit with cinnamon and honey, and top it all with cake batter. Add a heavy lid, adjust the heat just so, and before you knew it, I'd have an apple upside-down-cake fresh from our two-burner camp stove. If Patrick didn't come by, maybe the next day I would take the cake to town for the woman who sits with her cardboard sign on the corner of Hilyard and 30th. Or perhaps for the guys who sleep under the rhododendrons by the Episcopal church.

As the fragrance of cinnamon and cooking apples filled the air, Pegasus began to emerge from the now-dark southern sky. And there was Cygnus. Before I was ready for bed, Orion would take his place, hunting as always. Basho said that the journey is home. I have loved the journey. It was good to be home.

*Evelyn counts stars and her blessings on the 21 acres she shares with her husband David in the hills north of Lorane. On their property since 1992, Evelyn and David have owned a native plant nursery and designed, built and maintained gardens for others. Now they are trying to build a house and keep ahead of the weeds in the daytime while Evelyn writes at night. Her book To the Woods was published by OSU Press in May 2010.*

# Love on the Lost Continent: An Atlantis Mystery

By Jennifer Chambers

*(Continued from the previous issue)*

They walked into an English pub. Like so many northwestern brewpubs were modeled after, it was comfortably furnished in wooden paneling, rich colors, and polished countertops.

Abby pinched herself. Yep, she was still here. She closed her eyes briefly, and then opened them. Uh-huh! Okay, there was a city twelve hundred feet under water. Where were the people? Or did they want to know?

Max was too busy exploring to notice Abby second-guessing their presence here. His scientist mind had catalogued the contents of the room. He looked over the top of the bar and saw a hinged door, with a large circular ring, in the middle of the floor. "Come on," he signaled with his hand.

They rounded the bar, which had the usual glasses and bottles, though the labels were inexplicably in what looked like Japanese. Max looked at Abby.

She eyed him warily, unsure whether she wanted to go where he was going. Fear bubbled up in her throat. He grabbed the ring and pulled. When it revealed a stairway, he put his foot on the first wooden step, and Abby put out her hand to stop him.

"Wait. We don't know what's down there," She spoke slowly so he could read her lips. "Be careful!"

"Don't worry. Come on." He walked down the stairs.

Abby was too afraid to stay and too afraid to go. She saw a tiny crab crawl across the table at the edge of her vision and scampered as best she could, in her flippers, behind Max.

When they reached the bottom, they found themselves in a room that ought to have been a basement, but was a sort of living room, or a deluxe "safe" room. A family of four was scrunched up against the wall on a padded bench. The man was dressed simply in brown cloth pants, a rough blue shirt, and no shoes. Gill flaps crept up the sides of his neck and he bared sharp teeth under a short blonde haircut. His bare feet were covered with what looked like short hair. He approached Abby and Max with purpose, arms folded over his chest menacingly.

"Who are you and why are you here?" The man's mouth looked the same as a human's, but he seemed to have trouble with the "r" sounds, rounding them softly so that the word "are" came out "aaaar." As he came closer, they could see that what has looked like blonde hair on his legs was instead

interlocking, shimmering scales. He flicked out a blue, pointed tongue to trace around his lips. "Eh?"

Abby looked at Max, and then inwardly cursed herself for being weak. She didn't need anyone to stand up for her. "We are oceanographers. I've been searching for you my whole life." Dazzled, she made as if to step forward, but Max stopped her with a backward hand across her waist. She sputtered, but Max opened his mouth to speak.

"Hi. I'm Max, and this is Abby. Like she said, we're oceanographers. Everybody said we were crazy to search for Atlantis." He held out a hand.

The man scowled. "You can take off those masks. You don't need them here. There is a permeable barrier when you enter the town, and beyond that exists by the laws of our land that do not correspond with the laws of yours." The woman and children crept forward, inquisitive. His wife had a similar shirt, except hers was sleeveless and embroidered with spiral designs around the collar, and a knee-length skirt of the same material. Her hair was bound in a spiral on the top of her head and held in place with a copper band from temple to temple. The children's attire mirrored that of their parents, including the wide-eyed mixture of fear and curiosity on their faces.

"You must go." The woman was stern but she sounded like liquid silver, like the song of the whales in translation.

The man stepped closer and sniffed. His nostrils were thinner, snakelike even, but other than that and the blue tongue, he would have fit in at any surf shop top-side.

"We are trying to save the animals of your oceans, and you," he spit the word, "Humans, are not helpful."

"But, we're here to save you!" Abby burst out. "If only the world knew you were here. Maybe we would be better to the oceans if we knew something actually lived down here."

The boy stood up from behind his mother. He had a ragged tear in the knee of his pants. "Lots of things live here besides us." He was fresh looking, with curly short blonde hair and dimples, and looked directly at Abby with green eyes.

"Oh. Yeah." She was silenced until a thought came to her. "But what about that Japanese stuff behind the bar? You must talk to somebody. Otherwise, how can all that stuff be down here? What about all this?" She looked around the safe room, the stocked shelves with loaves of bread and little jugs of olive oil, the rows of preserved fish strung on rope from the walls.

*(To be continued)*

# Changes

By Theresa La Whon-Burt

Sometimes I do realize that the world is moving rapidly. I also realize that it is moving faster than I can comprehend at times. For example: Take the I-Pod. I am pretty sure that it somehow, in some way, stores music. I guess that is good. I am still trying to adjust from records to cd's.

Then someone tried to explain a "blackberry" to me. I know what a blackberry is. I am 51 years old. I have been out picking them every summer since I was 6. A blackberry is sweet to eat. Blackberries make excellent jam, pie and syrup. I know that blackberry bushes can run amok in my field. So I do know: I can eat, can, bake and kill a blackberry. I am just not really sure about the electronic doo-dad that some people call a blackberry. Although I am pretty sure if I stepped hard enough on their blackberry I could kill it too.

I love to read. I read everything. Novels for fun, bio's to learn, sci-fi to expand and history to understand. I love the smell of a book. I enjoy the excitement of what the next page might bring to me. I ordered a book the other day from Barnes and Noble. Eagerly I awaited my new adventure only to discover the book I had ordered was a "book" that had to be read on some sort of electronic gadget. Lord! I don't even want to know how that gadget works. A book, especially a good book, should be loved. It should have creases in its spine. It should be read more than once. I can't cozy up under a lap quilt, rain falling softly on the window panes, to some sort of computer screen! That is just somehow wrong.

I write letters, real letters, not a quick e-mail with abbreviations and weird symbols that are supposed to mean something. I use my best penmanship and finest pens and the nicest paper I can afford, for my letters mean something. I am taking the time to write to family and friends. I tell them of those events in my life, my feelings and my love for them and I put them into an envelope with a stamp and I mail these letters to them. And they smile when they get something other than a bill in the mailbox. These days

I can hardly find stationary.

Yes, life and times have changed. But I don't have to.

I will continue to write letters. A stamp is still only 44 cents. I will continue to read books. Not words off a screen but real books, that I read more than once and then pass on to a friend. As far as my thoughts on blackberries go. I will freeze them. I will make jam with them. I will make a blackberry pie that can make my husband drool and, on occasion, I will kill the blackberry bushes. I also know that I will never own a Blackberry.

I cannot stop the electronic age. Perhaps I might be able to alter some of the changes that are happening around me. Yet, in reality, I am only me. For me the simplest things, a good book, a slice of pie, a letter and the sound of soft rain, these things never change.

I have heard that change is good. I am not really sold on that idea. Yet, I don't think change is bad either. I think change can only change you if you allow it to.

*I studied Cultural History, Cultural Anthropology and English in college. I am now and have been one of the few female mechanical insulators in Oregon. (Local #36) Born in Washington State, I moved 42 times in 46 years, never leaving the PNW. I arrived home when I moved here 5 years ago.*

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## Delivery


In the skids in L.A. men –  
mostly men – push wheeled possessions,  
lean against walls, squat  
on cardboard where they lay out lunch,  
or cocoon in sleeping bags till noon.

Some argue politics, God or war,  
some murmur to selves or invisible friends,  
or stare unseeing through wind-swirled dust.  
Fingers dip into bean cans, pinch smokes,  
clutch brown bags searching for lips.  
Their camp blooms with plastic, paper,  
bottles – the leftovers of their lives.

Midnight, a car drives up  
Lexus, black – discordant amid the rubbish.  
Designer suit – gray? – emerges with a bundle.  
Could it be clothing? Blankets? Groceries?  
Approaches sleeping forms and dispenses  
from home or office  
a week's supply  
of trash.

and goes.

~ Evelyn Hess



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# The Groundwaters 2010 Writing Contest Adult Division

## The Winning Poem By Michael "Hoss" Barker

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### The Mill

It's been idle for years and sits rusting away,  
Just off the path of a well traveled road.  
It's disheveled, in shambles, in complete disarray,  
A long time forgotten, a hobo's abode.

The old wigwam stands guard beside the broken down gate,  
The windows and doors are all shot full of holes.  
She's lonesome like, foreboding, a victim of fate,  
Boarded up and abandoned deprived of her souls.

The whistles are quiet, the chains are all slack,  
The clock in the lunch room stopped right at noon.  
There's men out of work who'd love to go back,  
But they won't be doing it any time soon.

The old pond has dried up and the log dump is bare,  
Ain't nothin' worth keeping on the whole damn claim.  
The watchman has quit or he just don't care,  
No beans in the kettles now, who gets the blame.

The A-frame's still standing but not for much longer,  
The parking lot has turned into a dump.  
The old town is dying, no more to grow stronger,  
A man could do time for making a stump.

The days turn to weeks and the years fly by,  
Long gone are the tavern and the old café.  
But things keep changing as the mill towns die,  
As another time and era, slowly fades away.

*Hoss is an Oregon native... 50 years in Eugene. He has a wife of 37 years, Kristine, and two sons, 35 and 33 years old, and 6 granddaughters who call him Boompa. He is a Marine Corps Vet and has worked most of his life as a logger. In 2001, Hoss decided to start writing poetry and wanted to write on The Rogue River in Southern Oregon, where Zane Grey wrote. He wound up just 2 miles downstream of Grey's cabin at Paradise Lodge where Hoss stayed for 6 years as manager, handyman, gardener and resident poet. While at Paradise he wrote four books, mostly over the long secluded winters when he would be upriver for 3-4 weeks at a time with no crew or guests to bother him. The books, all self-published, are Out of Oregon: Logging, Lies, and Poetry, The Ballads of Lewis and Clark, Tin Cups and Horse Shoes: Cowboy Poetry From the Heart and My Time in Paradise. Oh yes! He enjoys "fishin' and poemin'!"*

# The Groundwaters 2010 Writing Contest Adult Division

—♦♦♦—  
The Winning Prose  
By Christie Nicholas

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## He's Not Heavy, He's My Carry-on

I spent a month in New Hampshire caring for my broken, youngest son. I spent a lifetime in Philly trying to come back home to Oregon. I missed my second of three flights, by 30 seconds. I was left crying at the gate... unbelievably watching my bags being loaded on a plane that would not let me on.

The layout of the Philadelphia Airport requires you to board buses, sprint, long jump and cross country traverse to get to any connecting gate. Herds of people were running in all directions.

Having reached my gate after the mile run and bus ride from my arrival gate, I was told, "Yes, I see your reservation but you cannot board." WHY??? I whine as the tears well up in my sweaty face.

"Someone is in your seat." "MY seat! Tell them to get out!" I fumed petulantly. The blank-faced employee with the computer, and all the power, clicked furiously for ten minutes, as I watched my plane and luggage slide away from the gate.

She looked up and said, "There are no other flights for days," then went back to clicking.

"You have my bags, clothes, what do I do?" She continued to click, click, click, avoiding any eye contact.

To the right side of me was a woman, also abandoned. I remembered her on my last flight. They offered her a \$5 off coupon for dinner at a burger joint. No hope of a flight, no hotel, no taxi vouchers, she also started to cry. She wore a brightly colored blouse, same disheveled, winded look. In her arm she had a vase.

My computer zombie continued to not find anything that would take me closer to the West Coast. I offered to be dropped in Denver, Salt Lake? No. She continued to click.

The girl on my left was 17...also abandoned. Her zombie clicker was on the phone to her parents in Alabama, asking them to drive to Philly to pick her up. I could hear the shouting and hysteria coming through the phone.

The woman to my right continued to sob, her clicker put her on a flight for the next day. "Where am I to go till then?"

"Wait at the gate," she was told. I stopped crying and smiled my best smile, told my clicker, "Send me back, send me back to New Hampshire." In two clicks, I was handed my "return to GO" tickets and nothing else. No apology, nothing. The sobbing woman left the counter at the same time. We walked away in shock.

Our gates were at least a mile away, I had two hours to make it, she had 28. We walked together as our gates were close to each other's. When we reached the area, we sat in the sticky plastic seats like refugees.

She put the vase down on the seat next to her. She told me it was her husband's ashes. She was bringing him home. She didn't want to risk losing him again, packed in her luggage... the very luggage that left without her and traveled alone with my luggage.

We sat, the three of us, calling our rides. Telling in more and more abbreviated forms, that we are abandoned, in a pitiless place, in sticky, hot chairs. My trip seemed a lot less a hardship sitting with this woman.

I was able to fly back to my starting place without problem, without luggage, makeup, toothbrush, anything. I was numb to the inconvenience. Standing in line to board, I saw her sitting with her carry-on, waiting to go home alone.

*Born, raised and educated in the Boston, Massachusetts area, recent transplant to Oregon, Christie Nicholas is inspired by the day to day, and folks in her life. Having worked with Special Needs children and adults for decades has kept her an admirer of the quirky and little, shiny moments. A proud mom to two sons and eight bantam chickens.*

# Walking With Lucy

By Marv Himmel

*I am writing this now so that when the day comes when my light dims, my memories begin to fade, I can be reminded once again of this exquisite but all too brief time I spent walking with Lucy.*

I looked over my shoulder at a very large chocolate Labrador Retriever sitting in the back seat of Karen's car. Lucy looked back at me, neither afraid nor aggressive, almost stoical but with a hint of warmth in her rich brown eyes, clearly evaluating me, waiting to see if I were to be trusted. I reached around, scratched behind her ears and under her chin and got only a polite response. Deciding there was no threat she lay back down as we drove off. I wasn't at all sure she cared much whether I was there or not.

The next time I met her she was rounding the corner of the garage at her apartment home. When she saw me she tossed her head like an ingenue flicking hair out of her eyes, gave a little hop lifting her front quarters slightly off the ground and broke into the sinuous, waddling, full body wiggle of a trot she used when she was happy to see you. She lumbered over and jammed her snout into my crotch. I bent over, scratched her back and patted her butt. We were fine. She liked me and it was going to be all right. A month or so later she had moved into my place.

Lucy was a big girl. Too big. She weighed somewhere in the neighborhood of one hundred and fifty pounds while her ideal weight, according to the vet, should have been around ninety pounds. Lucy was what they call an English Chocolate Lab, the type with a naturally heavy, barrel-chested body and shorter legs than the typical American Lab. Because she had spent a number of years living in an apartment and not getting enough exercise, she had put on too much weight. So, one of the first things we did was to begin a walking program. I had no idea at the time how important our daily walks would become, how they would become the center around which nearly every morning of the following three years would be built, and how they would engage me in one of the most gentle, quiet, subtle and important relationships of my life.

She didn't have a lot of endurance those first days so our walks were fairly perfunctory; one lap around the short half of our block was about all she could handle and since it was summer, and hot, and she wore a rich, heavy, dark brown coat still full of last winter's sheddings, she rapidly soaked in the heat of the morning sun and was soon panting away trying to cool down. By the time we got home she was ready for a large slurping of water from her favorite watering spot, the family toilet, before going into her bedroom to snooze away a good share of the day waiting for Karen to get home.

But even on these first walks I began to notice that there was more to her than first met the eye.

By nature Lucy was a trusting, gentle, eager-to-please and generally compliant dog, even with strangers. She was extremely curious and highly intelligent. She also had a stubborn streak that, when so moved, was difficult to overcome, especially with one hundred and fifty pounds of dog dead weight on her end of the leash when she decided she wasn't ready to go yet.

I hadn't had a dog in the house for years. My pets had been cats. Sandy, my ex-wife and housemate through some twenty or so years before her death, (yeah, I know, its complicated) had been an absolute cat fanatic so cats were pretty much all I knew until Lucy came along. Sure, I had seen plenty of the neighbors walking their dogs. It all seemed

pretty basic: dress for the weather, grab the leash and a couple of plastic bags, hook up the dog and off you go for a brisk turn about the neighborhood. Exercise for the dog; exercise for me; all good. That was my model, my dog walking paradigm so to speak. But it wasn't Lucy's.

Lucy's was more that of "Hey, wanna go for a really slow walk and stop and sniff all the vertical stuff along the way?" She was out to smell the flowers, or fence posts, or telephone poles, or tires, or shrubs, or, more accurately, to smell whatever had been deposited on them over the last twenty four hours. Such investigations I was to find out, were not to be rushed. A good thorough aromatic analysis had it's own clock; one that had to be honored.

Sandy's mother was a dog trainer, a good one by all reports, and I had, for all those years, been exposed to her version of having a dog, or in her case, many dogs. It seemed too highly organized, too structured, too confining for my tastes. Dogs were taught to heel, to sit, to stay ... whatever, and every night they were confined to their cages where, I was assured, they liked to be because they felt safe in their home. Me, I have always been more of the "fly, be free" type when it comes to pets. I didn't have any particular need to be in charge and I always enjoyed watching them just as they were. They could choose how they wanted to relate to me.

Most animals can be trained, even re-trained and, as it turned out, I was no exception. In our first month, we gradually lengthened the walks to the point where Lucy was capable of completing a circuit of the whole block rather than just the short loop. (I should point out that our "block" was really three blocks long — the city never finished putting through two of the streets — so our circuit was actually a



loop eight normal city blocks in total length when you count up and back and the two end lengths. She was getting fitter while I was getting educated.

My expectations for walking a dog were based on what I had been told and what I had seen others doing. I figured my biggest problem would be in holding her back. I had seen any number of svelte young women dressed in running gear out with their dogs racing down the sidewalk, their dogs leading the way, or bicyclists along the bike path with their dogs running tirelessly along side. My first lesson that month was understanding the “Immovable Objects Law of Walking Large Dogs.”

*Right now, I'd like everyone to try this experiment. Tie one end of a length of rope to the bumper of a parked car. Grab the other end tightly then turn and march smartly away without looking back. You may, if you wish, say something like “Let's go, Lucy!” or “Come along now.” Now tell me, what did you just learn?*

We would eagerly set off down the sidewalk side by side until Lucy came to her first vertical mystery. She would stop to investigate and I, being ever so attentive, would stop too. I figured a few moments to check things out seemed perfectly acceptable. But after those few moments I would become impatient and ready to move on. In my mind walking a dog was a physical activity that did not include much standing around. I would step

off figuring that Lucy, being a well-trained, obedient dog would turn and march along with me. That didn't always happen. What did often happen was that I would come to the end of the lead only to have my shoulder nearly wrenched from its socket. Once I regained my balance I could see Lucy still deep in the midst of her investigations — not even a glance up to see what had just happened.

I had begun thinking that if I could get Lucy out on walks she and I would likely lose some weight as well as get into better physical condition and that, in turn, would lead to a better life. But sometime during the month I realized that on nearly every walk I was getting impatient with her stops and that she would, over the length of the walk, gradually capitulate to my nagging and tugging and slowly plod along beside me stopping less and less frequently on our way home. Lucy had no interest in aerobics and I was wasn't getting any exercise. I needed to reassess. Clearly I had to separate the two activities. Lucy's walk needed to be her walk. My workout had to be mine, and, “ne'er the twain shall meet.” So, by the end of the month we had come to an understanding. Lucy's walks were to be the highest priority for the morning (after coffee, of course), she could spend as much time as she wished in her investigations, she could choose the route, and she would never, never, ever be asked to jog or trot or any other activity that faintly hinted of physical exertion. I was no longer “walking the dog.” Lucy did, however, allow me to come along. And for the next three years this is what we did nearly every morning.

Lucy was not a noisy dog. She was not one of those yappy, barking, growling, whining dogs. She was, for the

most part, quiet, but her communication skills were consummate. For instance, if it was getting well into the morning and I hadn't shown any signs of getting ready to go, she would come sit next to my chair and stare at me with those lovely large, rich brown eyes. How long can you ignore a dog that is staring at you? In my case not very long. It was unnerving but highly effective. So when I did get up to dress, she would follow me into my room and supervise my dressing, making sure I included my good walking shoes. She didn't have a lot of patience with me having to tie the shoes however. She was ready to go. She would belly flop to the floor and roll back and forth grunting and shaking her head playfully in anticipation until I had them tied and was on my feet heading toward the door. Admittedly, her approach to communication was not what you might expect from another human. Hers was more of the “I know what I want. I know the words you use to describe what I want. When I sit close to you and stare at you, I want something. Guess. When you get it right, I will let you know.” For instance, in the evening Lucy liked her treats. When she felt the need, she would first go to Karen and sit and stare. Karen can concentrate really well. Better than I can. So, if Lucy didn't get a quick response she would wheel around and come stare at me. That always got a response. Because Lucy really liked her food we would first ask if she wanted to go outside or if she needed to go pee hoping that would be the right answer. If it was, she would stand up and head toward whichever door suited her taste at the moment. If going outside was not what she wanted she would simply continue staring while I walked through the list of possibilities. “Do you want a carrot?” “Do you want a chew?” “Do you want a cookie?” “Do you want a treat?” When we got to the right choice she would stand, back up a few steps to make room, and then herd us toward the source of her desires. And if all else failed, a simple “show me,” would always get us started toward the target.

When Lucy ate, she ate lying down. None of this fast food eating on the run nonsense for her. A meal was to be savored and the plate licked clean. Her feeding dish was a large black bowl with sharply vertical sides. When she had finished her meal, which she always did, and felt she hadn't had enough she would use her paw — her paw was about the size of my hand — to tip the bowl on edge and she would lie there, often for hours, with one paw holding the bowl, waiting for one of us to notice and give her more. She would stay that way until she either got more food or until one of us told her that she could have no more for now. Then she would simply get up and go on to other things.

Every day for three years we looked forward to meeting Sylvia or Boomer or Hedley or Angel or Raven or Silkie the Cat on our daily outings as we gradually expanded our horizons to include longer jaunts down by the canal along the bike path or over into the Westmoreland student housing complex or across the “No Animals, No Bikes, No Trespassing” signs surrounding a nearby meadow. It was fun to watch Lucy's strength and endurance grow in lock step with her self confidence. She lost the extra fifty pounds from

sheer, plodding, aggregate persistence. More and more she decided where, how and when we would walk. Lucy was never the leader at least in terms of wanting to walk in front but she was very clear in her mind as to the best route for any given day's walk. It was up to me to figure it out. If we came to a corner and I picked the wrong direction from amongst left, right or across, she would simply stop. She wouldn't look in the direction she wanted to go. She wouldn't look at me. She would simply stop until I stepped in the right direction then she would follow quite happily along, knowing full well that she gave great directions. Later, near the end of our walks together, she must have truly found her confidence for she began wanting to randomly walk back and forth across the streets in mid-block, and then, in her most audacious act she decided that it would be really cool to just walk right down the middle of the street. Cars could use the sidewalks.

During my time with Lucy I joined a writer's group down at the local Senior Center. Our walks became my dog walking/writing meditation. While Lucy explored an olfactory universe inaccessible to me, I would mull over a piece I was working on or explore various ways to write our weekly assignment. The walks became my quiet time. We never walked with other dogs or people — happy to greet them along the way, yes, but our walks were not to be shared. I believe Lucy and I both wanted it that way. It was our time, not community time.

Karen and I both knew that Lucy was getting old. We had even talked about how we would be lucky to have her through the coming year and most prophetically about a month ago Lucy began slowing down. She had had a continuing urinary problem that made her feel as though she had to go all the time even when she didn't. The vets could never identify or solve the problem so we had her on anti-inflammatories to control the irritation and that had worked pretty well. She began to slowly lose her appetite and her strength. On our last few walks together she had only wanted to complete the original "short loop," the one on which we had started our walks together three years ago. And then, on May 27, 2010 she stopped eating. That was a Thursday. By Saturday morning she could hardly rise. We knew that her time, our time, had finally come.

I have been through this too many times. Death or perhaps dying still makes me angry. It hurts. But perhaps not for so long as it once did. I have spent the thousands of dollars trying to save an old friend only to watch them waste away with no quality of life, no fire in their eyes, just tired, worn out resignation. I vowed I would never do that again. Quality of life not length is all that truly matters I believe.

I still hear her embarrassed, "Sorry to wake you but I've really, really, really gotta go" yip in the middle of the night. I miss our sham rasslin' matches where I would get down on the floor and for twenty seconds or so we would shadow box and head lock and grunt like wild boars before stopping to catch our breath and then do it over again for an-

other twenty second match – never any biting. She had the softest mouth I have ever known in a dog. In my office I look over my shoulder to make sure I don't scoot my chair back onto her. It is incomplete not to be able to share my morning peanut butter toast. In the middle of the night I notice when I get up to use the bathroom that the floor is dry. When we go grocery shopping it doesn't seem right not to say "We'll be right back!" or for her not to be there to greet us when we do get back. When I look she is not lying out in her yard by the pond, or exploring the back fence, or waiting on the front porch for Karen to come home from work or out under the tree just watching over the neighborhood. She loved her yard. There were no constraining fences but she never wandered. She knew her yard, her home, her sense of place, and she was happy.

I have only one regret. There was one corner on the outer edge of one our longest routes where Lucy would always want to cross the street and go up over the hill and into new, unexplored territory. I would never agree, fearing that it would turn into too much of a walk for her and end up wearing her out and causing her arthritic shoulders to act up unnecessarily. I wish that just once, I had done it. She didn't worry about how hard it would be to get home. She just wanted to go where she hadn't gone before. I am going to try to remember that.

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# In the Time of Light

By D.J. Barber

Time dripped by in an unsteady rhythm here at *The Edge*, where the courses of the fourth dimension wavered.

Seventeen millennia ago the last creature on Earth gasped its final breath in the putrid atmosphere and died, alone. Seven *water* planets had been found, explored, and settled in the decades just prior to that final, gasping breath.

The fourth dimension spread out, unending, growing ever more as the Big Bang expanded. Those of Earth pondered the impossibility of space travel. Oh, limited voyages to the Moon, Mars, perhaps even, Jupiter, its moons, were within reach to be sure. However, the things of science fiction would never be.

And then the miracle.

Hebner Craymon, Student of Mathematical Theory at Bynder Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio, NA, discovered what he believed to be a patchwork pattern of minor black holes in fixed rotations about the proximal area of the Sol System. Upon further study, these suspected anomalies were found within the Sol system itself; one just beyond the orbit of Mars.

A hasty mission was sent, a small probe, and what a wonder was discovered. Not black holes at all!—but wormholes! The crux of science fiction itself come true.

Galactic travel across the Milky Way, seven water planets found—oh, Joy!

And so Earth was slowly abandoned, left to molder as men left their mother to her slow and fetid death. New worlds awaited, like secret lovers, warm and fresh, arms open, Mother Earth forgotten.

Seventeen millennia later, *Home* was many worlds. And adventurers went forth, discovering what they may, for better and for worse.

*The Edge*. Where dimensions grated against one another in an uncertain battle. Width, Height, Depth, Time. The Fourth. At *The Edge*, the Fifth, added what some junior scientific scholar dubbed: *RA*.

Light.

Oh, not the light you think of in a fourth dimensional mindset. A mottled, dark-matter sort of brightness. One not only visible, but heard, tasted, felt.

A felt light, not warmth, something quite different, much more.

But this added dimension of *Ra* seemed to agitate Time.

At *The Edge* the inquisitive wanted to cross over, see and experience what lay beyond. Not a place for the faint of heart, *The Edge* quavered and quaked, light was heard,

smelt, tasted, but only through the veil of *The Edge*. To penetrate, enter within the Fifth, were it possible, was the goal.

The goal of some, however, the horror of others.

What if some door were unlocked? Some disaster released? The perils were too great argued some, while others argued in return that ignorance was the only peril.

Difficult though, in a place where Time was uncertain, trifled with by an unknown, perhaps stronger force.

Well...what was the Fourth Dimension without Time?

A grid-like box of nothing? And what is the Fifth, with all the Fourth possesses plus *Ra*? How mighty is *Ra*?

The debate continued.

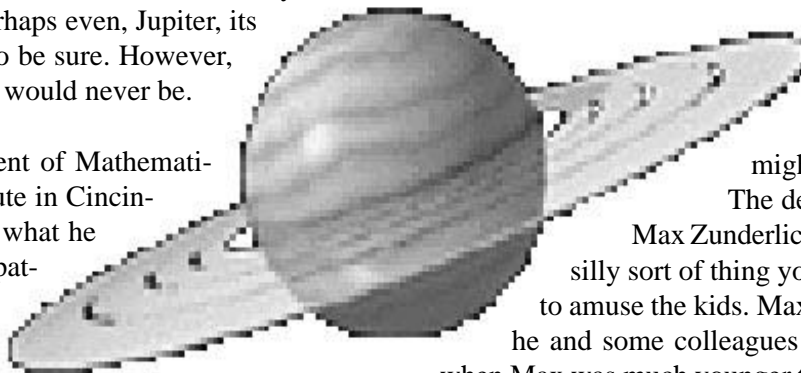
Max Zunderlick had a magnet. Oh, not the silly sort of thing you carry around in a pocket to amuse the kids. Max had a special magnet that he and some colleagues had developed orbits ago when Max was much younger than now. It had powered a rail-line before the hydrogen plants were erected on the planet where Max was born. It was now in the hold of an old freighter Max rented from a disreputable agent in the Tarm System—a place well-known to harbor criminals—murderers and thieves of every stripe.

He set a course for *The Edge*, just an old fool and his magnet. There was, of course, security measures set about in a sweeping arc around *The Edge*. But his elderly appearance, a card assuring his membership in the Sciences Academy, finest university in all Sorkius, and a rather sleepy-eyed security agent at the tail end of a double-shift he'd been mandated to work, Max was allowed entry to *The Edge*.

The security agent was just bedding down for a long sleep when Max began his work. Time sputtered to a stop like it was wont to do here at *The Edge* and Max waited, frozen in time, but the magnet slept not.

When whatever notch slips, slipped, and Max was aware of a deep and abiding light, not bright, just a sort of glow. It seemed the magnet had succeeded in opening the mystical lock and whatever the doorway between here and there now stood wide. His senses, all five of them seemed to have added a few more, tasting light, feeling color, hearing time. Oh, what a world, what a world!

Time and *Ra* together. What was never to be in four dimensions began an old, unknown before, battle for supremacy. The four known dimensions had lived in happy harmony. But, perhaps, *Ra* now supplanted Time; for Time was no more.



# Hunting (aka Armed Hiking)

By Gene Conrad

There are some things in life that if you don't learn about them when you are young, it can be very difficult to get started once you are an adult. Hunting is one of those things. I tried to hunt when I was a teenager, but did not have the help of an experienced hunter to give me any guidance. I did make some armed forays into the woods behind my house, but in several years of trying, I only saw a few deer. Of course, during the off season, they would graze in our back yard, but never once the season started. Do they have a calendar?

One of the nice things about getting married is that your bride usually comes with family attached. They bring along their own backgrounds and traditions and I have found this to be an important and (usually) enriching facet to marriage.

Early on in getting to know my future in-laws (does that mean they were out-laws at the time?) I heard about how Julie's folks survived attending college largely due to Dick's hunting and fishing skills. In fact, there were times when Jennie would go to class for him and take notes while he hunted or fished! What a gal!

It wasn't until after Julie and I were married that it finally worked out for me to go hunting with her dad, Dick. He had some property in central Oregon that was 7 miles off of the main roads with no luxuries like electricity. It did have running water in the form of a spring fed creek that bubbled down the mountainside.

The place was 240 acres, mostly sage and juniper. There was also about 80 acres of dry land alfalfa. With no competing livestock, the deer must have thought they had found heaven!

Dick assured me that this was going to be a great trip. In fact, the last time he hunted there he just stepped out of his truck and then had to make the tough decision of which buck to get! Sounded good to me!

Now you ladies know that real men don't plan their camping trips. After all, how much stuff do you need to just go out camping and hunting for three days? There was a camper parked at the "ranch" so we'd be fine! No doubt the camper was well-stocked with anything we would need.

We didn't get to leave until pretty late in the day on Thursday. It was about a 5-hour drive, so we didn't want to waste time with packing. We just grabbed a few necessities, hopped in the truck and took off. We were passing a grocery store when we decided that maybe we should take a little food, so we stopped and went in. We walked around the store a bit, impatient to be off on our adventure. We

settled on some pop and chips for the drive and a couple of loaves of bread and some peanut butter and jelly. After all, we just planned on being carnivores for the weekend and eating what we hunted. Plus, there was always whatever was in the camper for backup. We pulled in pretty late that night, rolled out our sleeping bags and sacked out.

Friday morning dawned beautifully. We got up and started rummaging around in the camper for some breakfast. There was some hot chocolate and some Cheez-It crackers. You know – those square yellow crackers that have less nutritional value and flavor than the box they come in. At least we had the PB&J.

After breakfast we decided to start scouting around for some "sign." For you non-hunters this means grabbing about 20 lbs of gear, putting on your clodhoppers and then tiptoeing through the brush looking for tracks and poo while listening for an animal breathing 100 yards away.

"Let's go this way." Dick whispered as we left the camper and started out. "They're always hiding back in this draw."

We put on our "sneak" and started working our way along. After only about an hour of looking we found... nothing.

"Hmmm," Dick said, "Maybe they are around the hill a ways."

More sneaking. Another hour. Another nothing. This was starting to remind me of fishing. Not even a nibble.

"Let's take a look at the other end of the place." So off we snuck.

A couple of hours later I spotted something! Poo!

"Hey Dick!" I exclaimed, "Look at that! Poo! How old do you think it is?"

"Judging by the fact that it is dry, shriveled and grass is growing up through it, I would say about a year."

"Is that bad?" I asked.

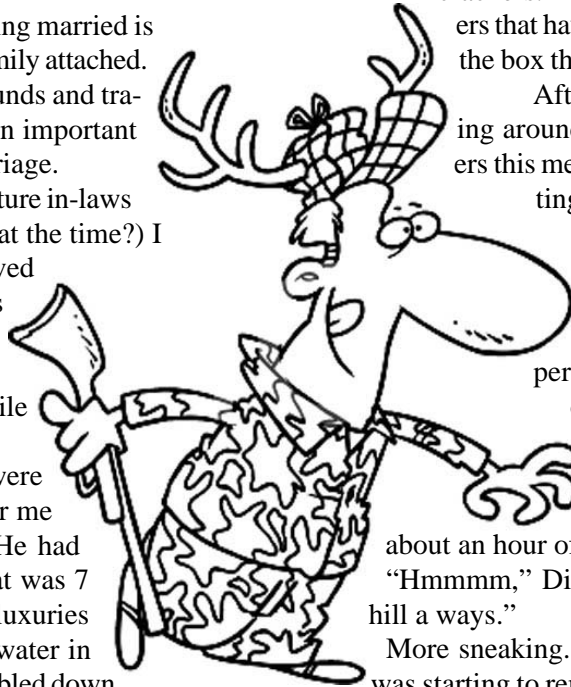
"I guess it depends on how slow the deer is moving." Dick said.

We decided to practice sneaking around a little more and still did not come up with anything. By that time, our PB&J had worn off and we headed back to the camper for lunch.

The Cheez-Its were still not looking too good, so we elected for more PB&J sandwiches. After lunch, we took naps and listened to the flies buzzing around.

That evening we poked around a bit more with no luck. Another round of PB&J sandwiches.

"Sure would be nice if we had something to go with this sandwich." I said. "Like a steak and a baked potato



with some apple pie ala-mode.”

“Cheez-It?” Dick offered.

“No, thanks. I’ll arm wrestle you for the box, though.”

“I think maybe we should save that for breakfast.” He said.

The next day, Saturday, was much like Friday. Lots of “sneaking” and snoozing. Still nothing. We did find a way to add some variety to our menu, though.

It was Dick’s turn to cook. “Do ya want peanut butter and jelly, or jelly and peanut butter?” Dick asked me for breakfast.

“Surprise me!” I said.

The jelly ran out by lunch time and we were working on the last loaf of bread. At that point, anything that moved would have been in serious danger of being invited for dinner. There was not a single bird, rabbit, mouse or anything on the whole place. We couldn’t even find a spotted owl.

By Sunday morning, I had a pounding headache and was a bit light-headed. We ate the last of the bread for breakfast and decided that it was time to give up and head home.

Our first stop was at the good ol’ Golden Arches in Prineville, Oregon. That Big Mac was the best tasting burger I’ve ever had! There wasn’t much talking going on at that point – we were both intent on our meals.

That was pretty much it for that hunting season. The next year we decided to try again, but this time things were different. We had learned something! We started packing a day ahead and we had enough food with us to feed an army. Especially steaks. Yessir, we were gonna eat like kings.

We managed to get off to an earlier start that year and arrived while there was still daylight. We unpacked and got the camper all set up. It was supper time, and we decided to fry up some of those steaks we had brought along. We rummaged around and found a frying pan, slapped it on the propane stove in the camper and flopped the steaks into the pan. We looked around and couldn’t find anything to season the steaks with. No salt or pepper, no other spices, no steak sauce, no hot sauce, not even some onions to toss in. Rats! We blew it again!

Now I want you to know that my wife, Julie, is an incredible cook. She has a natural gift for mixing flavors like an artist mixes paints to get exactly the flavor she wants. When I start mixing flavors it usually ends up tasting like paint. As I stood there looking at the steaks we were carbonizing, I was wishing I had even a spec of her talent to enhance our supper.

Suddenly, I was inspired! I was pretty sure in hearing Julie talk about the different herbs she liked to use that she had mentioned sage! And there was sage everywhere here!

“Say!” I said to Dick. “Julie cooks with sage sometimes – what do you think about throwing some sage on these steaks?”

“Great idea!” Dick said. “It sure couldn’t make ‘em any worse!”

So out I went and snapped a couple of sprigs off a nearby sage. This would be great! Julie will be so proud of me! I marched in and dropped this wonder-herb into the pan, stems and all.

About 15 seconds later, both Dick and I felt like someone had grabbed us by the throat and was trying to choke us. There wasn’t any smoke or anything like that, just the irresistible urge to cough our lungs out.

“I gotta go outside!” Dick wheezed.

We both went out and coughed for a while, sucking in great lungs full of fresh air. Every now and then one of us would take a deep breath, plunge into the camper and stir the steaks around a bit.

“These steaks are gonna be powerful good!” Dick said.

“Yeah, too bad there isn’t any skunk cabbage around and we could make a salad. That would go great with ‘em”

Finally, we figured the steaks had shriveled up enough that they must be done, so we grabbed the pan and brought it outside. We still couldn’t take being in the camper, so we left the door open and opened all the windows and vents.

We both speared a steak and started working our way through them. We both chewed thoughtfully for a few minutes.

“Well, it tastes kinda like an old boot.” Dick said.

“Yeah, but it sure does make my lips and tongue numb.” I said.

“Mine too!”

There was a strange numbness taking over our mouths. But, since there was nothing else but steak to eat, we finished it all off.

Not long after finishing supper and burning the dishes, we both were feeling pretty tired. The camper had aired out and Dick decided to turn in. It was a beautiful night, so I decided to put my sleeping bag in the bed of the truck and sleep under the stars.

I no sooner settled in when suddenly the sun was well up and it was about 9:30 the next morning! I was amazed because I have struggled with insomnia all my life and had never slept that long without waking up. About 2 hours later, Dick made his way out of the camper and had slept great also. We ended up having a great time and Dick did get a buck that year.

A few months later, Dick mentioned that he had bumped into a cowboy friend of his and told him about the sage seasoned steaks.

The cowboy got a big grin on his face and said, “Ya know, whenever we come to a new camping spot, we always build a big fire and then pile on some sage and leave. When the sage burns it gives off a type of nerve gas that kills all the bugs.”

Steak, anyone?

# Lost Love

By Gus Daum

I have had only one romantic affair during my marriage, and it ended in disaster more than ten years ago, but it still smolders at times. My wife suggests that it might be therapeutic to write about it. She is usually right.

As she has pointed out to me, I do have some other faults; faults which are quite minor in my view. Some, many, perhaps most have been made known to me on occasion. She stresses that such suggestions are to aid me in my efforts at self improvement. I sometimes suspect that it may be more a show of irritation on her part. One admitted problem is that I sometimes misplace things or, as I sometime suggest, someone moves the item in limbo to a different location. Others have so often done that with papers that I have carefully filed. A more frequent problem is with my keys and glasses. I am very careful with my wallet. But I digress.

Early in our retirement years we were avid RV travelers, and spent the several Oregon rainy months from November through June in RV Parks in the Southwestern states. The culminating incident occurred on January 13, 1999. We were spending several months in a park in Desert Hot Springs, just outside of Palm Springs, California. We learned of a charter tour to the J. Paul Getty Museum for the Arts, in greater Los Angeles about 90 miles away. Some felt that this might be a good opportunity to expand my understanding of The Arts. We rescheduled my golf tee time to another day and purchased tickets. Despite some quiet grumbling, I rather looked forward to the ballyhooed trip more than I admitted to my wife.

On the appointed day, we left our fifth wheel trailer in the park and drove the pickup truck to park at a large chain motel just off the interstate, one of several boarding points for the Getty tour. Now, a 90-mile bus trip, even on a luxurious tour bus takes a long time, but good friendly passengers and available snacks made it rather enjoyable. We were delivered directly to the main entrance at Getty, and spent hours and hours admiring sculptures, paintings, tapestries, and more of the art objects collected by Mr. Getty over the years. A day spent pretending to be admiring of Renoir's, Rembrandts, and Rodin's can last a long long time, especially while other touring members acted as though these R's were their one-time neighbors. I very much welcomed the chance to nap during the return trip in growing darkness.

Those of you who are only mildly bored, are perhaps impatient by now about my affair. I've been attached to few things as nearly precious to me as my wife and children. That pickup truck waiting in the parking lot of the motel was one. I had hand-washed, hand-waxed and protected it during its 20 year life. Even her engine sparkled with weekly cleaning. Only a favored few had been permitted to touch its steering wheel. My son drove it on his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Many Oregon males will understand my feelings toward what some may dismiss as "only a truck."

We reached our boarding stop, stepped off the bus, and I left my wife at the lobby as I trotted toward the truck with keys in hand, anticipating the strong purr of her 454 engine. I reached out to empty space. She was gone! Stunned for the moment, I looked to see if we were at the right motel. We were.

Where there was supposed to be my beloved was an empty space. I ran back to my wife in the lobby, gasping to her "The truck is gone!"

She smiled tolerantly and said, "You forgot where you left it. Let me help you. Where did you put it?"

More than impatient, I snarled, "Dammit, woman! I know I misplace things but I've never lost a truck." Only after she walked to where the truck was supposed to be, and finding a recognized decal she had affixed on a broken wing window, now on the ground, did she say, "It's not here." I growled, "Rriiiiiight."

Now fully engaged, she called the police, cancelled our two credit cards with fear that some forgotten receipt might be found by the thieves. Two of Palm Springs finest showed up very quickly, took our report and shook two heads as one. "That's bad. The Mexicans love those '78 Chev's. They know how to work on them. It could be over the border by morning." But they offered a three-mile ride back to our RV Park. We experienced a journey separated from the police by a safety screen and doors trapped by doors without handles. Inquiring minds among our park neighbors may have wondered what those people in site number 163 had been doing that brought them home in a police car.

We waited hopefully for several days until a call came from the policewoman, "We think we've found your truck."

Oh, wonderful," I said. She responded, "You may not think so when you see it," and directed us to the storage yard at some now forgotten address in Desert Hot Springs. Friends took us to the yard and there she was, or what used to be her. A shattered shell, with no engine, no hood, beautiful newly upholstered bucket seats gone, only tattered tires on rusted replaced wheels held her up. Not even the steering wheel that had been held in my hand over so many miles. She was a carcass of the beautiful thing to which I had devoted such care.

We had to replace the truck, of course, or desert the fifth wheel, and did purchase a much newer pickup. It was just as powerful, pulled our trailer just as well, but the steering wheel never felt so warm and responsive to my touch. We gave up RV travel soon after that. The thrill was gone.

Some have said that there is the one perfect woman for every man.

The same is true for my pickup truck.

There, I do feel better now.

# A Dream

By Kimberly Jo DeFin

I drag through my front door, weary from another day in the world of a working woman. I kick off my heels and rubbing my aching feet, anticipate my night's rest to come and wish for a dream, a beautiful dream to take me away from the stress of days that are all too harshly bright and busy with responsibilities of a working woman on her own, just making her way.

"Ah, I'll just stretch out for a little while," I say with a big yawn and sink into my soft and welcoming bed. Lightly dozing, I think about the night and how versatile it is. You can disappear into it. You can wear the night as shroud and sit darkly in it, letting tears, hidden and private, fall. The night is respite and healing. "I've always liked to sleep," I murmur into the dusk. My eyelids are so heavy. I let them close, wondering about the night and the possibility that dreams are simply us traveling to another reality. Do we visit a plane that co-exists alongside this physical world? I think of dreaming and the friends of old that come only in the dark of the dreaming night.

This night is cool and silent, illuminated only by a large full moon and its nightcap of starlights. Groggy from my catnap, I sit up on my bed and think I should get a bite of dinner before my shower and returning to sleep for the whole night. I rise up off my bed and start for the kitchen and find myself staring at the front of my back door... ? Hmmmmm, that was fast, I think. Dreamily, I reach down and pick up my favorite jelly jar full of glow-worms that I fixed up, suspended from a gnarled maple stick with a length of leather. Silently, I float out my back door and move through my misty garden. The old twisted and broken down cornstalks and sunflowers stand as spooky sentinels, reminders of the summer past and the cold winter to come. The old wrought iron gate creaks open. I glide through, crossing the meadow shrouded in mist and I suddenly find myself at the path leading into the woods.

A quiet, almost non-sound, stops me. I hear someone say; "Thlee jo kintle freen" (*Halt oh gentle friend*), as a whisper in my mind. "Now, how did I know that?" I whisper back as I stop and then notice six spiders sitting on a log waving their front legs at me. "Oos klin wattle ort freen." (*We make garment for friend*). "Oooooh-K! Now I'm talking to spiders." My voice is rising to a strangled scream. "Look, they're waving at me and I understand them!" Hysterical laughter starts to well up from somewhere. They want to make me a dress and their names are Thlirr, Fhlirr, Sklee, Isp, Brin and Ishpoo. Why not? "Go ahead; make me a dress." I'm at a complete loss for words. Getting past the shock of it I had to think they were awfully cute, kind of furry and colorful, tattooed dream-spiders. "MmmmmHm," I murmur, looking up at nothing. They shot out little web lines and with tiny "wheeeees!" of delight, land on me like so many tiny pirates boarding a ship for plunder. I can feel the points of their legs tickle my skin as they weave like quicksilver and I say, "Well, tickles me shivers," pirate-like.

I look with awe as the garment flows like soft liquid light to my ankles. My dress is like a cloud, shimmering silver. It floats around me... the laws of gravity do not apply to wispy "wattle." My spiders are finished and they scuttle up the tree. "So long my freens!" I think to them, gratefully. Then, drawn back to the path, I slip like a sylph into the forest, dark and deep.

I wear the night like a witch's cape. My bare feet feel the cool moistness of the thick, dark green moss. Gliding down the ancient path, my dress flowing behind me, I follow the pale pool of light from my jelly jar, taking in the smells of fir, cedar and the sweet apple-breath of autumn. The night breeze crosses my skin like a lover's fingers. I've arrived in the circle of the Old Oaks, and there I wait.

Inaudible at first, I hear sounds like the tiniest of silver bells. Tittering and chirring, laughing shyly, they come forth, floating and circling about me. I'm overcome with happiness. The forest spirits are here. My eyes brimming, I could cry with their sweetness, innocence and the memories they invoke of hidden, magical things long forgotten in our world. My gossamer-winged friends circle me, ever faster, ever higher. Lifted up, I'm whirling and dancing, rising and laughing, letting go with female joy. I surrender and I'm free. I'm light as air! My toes are tickled by the treetops and we whirl and dance by. My beautiful web dress shimmers and flows out behind me like wings. I arch back and swoop in a big circle, shooting through the trees with my gossamer spirits hot at my heels, streaming behind me like a sparkling comet's tail. My long red hair tickles my back like a thousand tiny whips as we fly breakneck through the ancient trees. We dive as one and break from the forest like a burst of silent fireworks, then hovering, I look down and see my little meadow below. Across the way I see the dim flame of the candle on my bedroom sill, dancing and flickering, beckoning me home. The night breeze that had caressed me before is now growing cold and I long for the warmth of my quilts. I turn in mid-air to bid my friends goodbye and wait until I see the last of twinkling lights disappear into the woods. "Another night, Friend," I hear like soft music in my head.

Sleep dissipates into dawn as I sit up in my bed. Wistfully I try to catch the remnants of a dream, but it is just out of reach. Absent-minded, I sleepily brush away some cobweb from my arm. As I rub sleep from my eyes, I notice a beautiful cobweb, perfect in its symmetry glistening in the corner of my bedroom window. Catching the first rays of early morning sunlight, clinging dewdrops shine like tiny diamonds casting rainbows about the room. On the side sits a spider waiting for its breakfast to fly in. A hazy word drifts through my sleepy head... "freen?" I ask myself. Laughing inwardly at such a silly word, I reach up to smooth the nighttime tangles from my hair and feel that it's damp. Startled at this, I look around wondering. Then I notice on the floor, under the open window, a jelly jar, a length of leather and a stick.



# My First School

By Dale R. Dickson

**M**y first school was a one-room, one-teacher, eight-grade school in the tiny village of Sheakleyville, Pennsylvania. I still have great memories of those times in that school.

Before I was old enough to attend school, I spent time at the school grounds and watched the kids play at recess. One thing I remember was my introduction to baseball. I lay in the grass next to the makeshift ball field and watched the boys play ball. I didn't understand why, when the ball was hit, and a runner was on base, the kids were yelling, "Go home, go home." Why would they want him to go to his house when he was playing ball at school?

Everyone at school knew our dog, Betty. She loved to play ball and could be a pest when the kids were playing baseball. She often wandered to the school to bide her time. When she got a chance, she would race onto the field, pick up the ball in her mouth, and run off, with the kids in hot pursuit. The boys would yell at my oldest brother, Don, "Keep Betty at home! She ruins our games!"

I could hardly wait to start school. There wasn't preschool or kindergarten in those days. I remember the night before my first day at school. I proudly showed one of our neighbor boys what I was going to wear. It was a teal-colored matching shirt and short pants. The pants didn't have a belt; they were fastened to the shirt with a series of buttons.

Mrs. Rose Perrine was our teacher. She was a large woman and a strict disciplinarian. She had to be strict. Some of those kids in the upper grades were as big as she. Most of the students were farm kids and not too bright. State law decreed a student had to remain in school until the age of sixteen, before they could drop out. So, some of the eighth graders were nearly sixteen years old. Mrs. Perrine had to keep right on top of some of those kids or they would get out of hand in a hurry.

We didn't have indoor plumbing; there were two out-houses. We got our water by hand pumping it from a well on the school property. We kept a container of water in the schoolroom, and everyone had a personal cup from which to drink. If someone said a naughty word Mrs. Perrine used their cup to wash their mouth out with soap.

The room was heated in the winter by a coal-burning pot-bellied stove. The room was ten feet high, and it took some time for the heat from the stove to first reach the ceiling and then work its way down to the desk area. The stove would sometime be glowing red hot from the burning coal. If you sat next to the stove you would be roasting; if you were on the other side of the room you could be freezing.

Every day someone read some verses from the Bible. Then we said the Lord's Prayer and recited the Pledge

of Allegiance. Then, Mrs. Perrine gave each grade an assignment and worked with a particular group on math, history, spelling or whatever was on her schedule.

Thursday was music day. One of the girls played the piano and all of us would sing songs. Most of the songs were patriotic songs like "America, the Beautiful" and "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." I really enjoyed learning and singing those songs; I remember them still.

Friday was art day. Art usually consisted of using crayons to color already drawn pictures or tracing leaves onto paper and then coloring them.

I was in school in Sheakleyville during World War II. All of us kids were aware of the war, but probably didn't understand what it was all about, and the seriousness of it. I remember drawing pictures of naval battles with enemy airplanes being blown to pieces by our ships' guns, and crashing into the sea.

We did our part in aiding in the war effort. We collected the pods from milkweed plants and brought them to the collection spot at school. The pods were used to make flotation vests for our aviators to wear and use if they were shot down over water. We also collected metal cans and scrap metal. It was an honor to be the one boy in the family to carry the metal to school. Evidently the school received some money from the items we collected and turned in, for Mrs. Perrine purchased a radio for the school. She let us listen to it once a week, for about a half hour. I remember hearing the music it played, but not the titles of the songs.

Lessons learned did not always come from my teacher. One thing I will always remember was a lesson I learned from my mother. I stayed home from school, feigning illness. For some reason I just did not want to go to my first grade classes that particular day. My mother relented, however, and I stayed home. But if I was sick, I had to stay in bed; a sick person doesn't play all day. I learned my lesson. The next day I asked Mother to write an excuse for my absence the previous day. She refused, stating that I wasn't ill, and she wasn't going to lie to Mrs. Perrine. So I decided I would write the excuse myself. I got a piece of paper and a pencil and started printing, for I couldn't write yet. "I was sick," was what I wanted to print. I asked mother how to spell the word "sick". She wasn't going to help me in my untruth, so I scribbled something that may have resembled the sought-after word, took it to school, and gave it to the stern-faced teacher.

My playing hooky could have warranted a swat on my bottom with a piece of firewood, but she only made me stay after school to make up missed lessons.

That was the only time I played hooky from school. I learned a lesson from my gentle mother, who didn't get all

upset with me, but taught me an object lesson I never forgot.

Not all of my education was obtained at school. I learned a lot from Dad, too. He was a school teacher in the Sheakleyville High School, which was located on the upper floor of the school building; the lower grades were on the first floor. Dad had us read to him at home and taught us math and proper grammar. All this home-tutoring helped me tremendously. Mother knew her English grammar well, also, and helped in this way. I didn't know all the grammatical rules, but I knew when it "sounded right."

That school, my first school, was quite an experience, and it really gave me a good start on my journey of formal education. It's too bad many others couldn't have shared this experience.

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## Ter'sa's Achievement

By Vicki Sourdry

Ter'sa Long had been on many planets in her 25 years working as a dowser. Her talent helped many colonies on frontier planets find water; various companies all over this sector of space find minerals and oil; and even helped one colony find a lichen that produced electricity! She was proud of her achievements and had many friends in the Guild, but she missed the closeness she had once had with her family, especially her sister Marjorie. As she stepped into the planetary shuttle from Space Transport Station #638 going to Alabaster, her heart raced and her mouth was dry. Her family lived here. Tears welled up in her eyes, remembering the day she left, so long ago.

But neither her parents nor her sister had understood or accepted her talent, or her desire to be trained to use it for the benefit of others. They had even refused to call her by her professional name, "Ter'sa," received after five long, hard years of training, making her a working Talent in her Guild. Over the years, they had eventually lost touch and there had been no attempt at reconciliation, from either side.

Now Marjorie had found her through the Guild. Her father was dying and Marjorie had asked that she come home. So, she was coming home, but only on vacation. Ter'sa had no intention of staying where she, and her talent, were not accepted.

Getting off the shuttle and entering the terminal, she wondered if she would recognize Marjorie. After all, it had been 30 years, and she had only been 20 when she left. But there was no mistaking the red hair – that and the sign in her hand – "Terresa Long." Shuddering inwardly at the continued slight to her professional achievement, she swallowed her pride and waved at her sister. Marjorie's smile seemed genuine. As she neared, Marjorie turned the sign over. It read – "Welcome Home Ter'sa."

## Pondering Change

By Karen Wickham

There is no one to write home to, no one to let me in, to welcome me when I go there. With Dad's passing, I am a motherless/fatherless child. Never mind I am well past 50. For adult children, losing both parents is a rite of passage of sorts, profound change deeply felt but hardly ever acknowledged. My two brothers and I have a new role, patriarchs and matriarch of our family.

I retired to a convent beach in Maine to grieve for the man I never knew and who never knew me, my father, broken, frightened and tilting toward insanity. I needed time and solitude to sort out our complex relationship, to assign some meaning. I needed immersion in nature's healing salve: Beach, expanse of wide sky, birds, cushion of sand and soothing sounds of sea. All my senses alive with the wonder around me, day after day I lay in the warmth watching the ocean's shifting moods and pondering my father's.

I became aware of an elderly gentleman daily sifting the sand with a metal detector. His eyes never left the surface in his dogged patient pursuit of small coins he hoped to extract. Apparently this was his day job. I wondered if he ever noticed the mystery and beauty of this place, grasping only what his mind perceived as worthy of his attention, blind to earth's riches that surrounded us. I thought of my Dad, blinded by his fear. He trusted no one, suspected most others were mean, dangerous and covetous of his stuff, barely aware of his caring family.

I felt sorry for this man with the truncated gaze. I wanted him to be happy. So next day I gathered all the change I could find. Smiling playfully at my silly plan, I lightly buried these paltry coins all over the beach. If I can't change his limited focus, I can positively change his day, with change.

I wonder how I might have eased my father's disease, even brought pleasure had I stopped wanting something from him he could not give and gave him something he could receive. I ponder if change was always within our grasp, if I had only been able to see his needs. I wonder.



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## A Wave Goodbye

I thought I left behind the past  
But, all along, I've been hanging on  
So tightly to the last  
Now it's so clear to see  
The past no longer belongs to me  
All things left, leaves the light to shine on  
Goodbye to that Old dead tree  
That kept me cool with shade when I needed it  
There is a time to walk away, not sit  
Any longer...  
Yes, eyes behind my head, I have had Blinders  
Now I don't need reminders  
Of where I once tread  
There must be plenty of room  
Letting new anticipation in,  
To fully explore the road soon to be taken  
Let the past sun set, welcoming the short  
darkness that consumes those shadows  
Then truly, the sun rises again,  
Yet, for the first time.

~ Larry Melvin

## The Enigma of the Elephant's Eyes

They're shriveled and relatively small.  
They take up such a tiny space  
on the crinkled vastness of his face.  
It bothers me that he can see at all.

~ Jean Marie Purcell



"2009 Winter in Oregon" Photo by Barbara Isborn

## Invictus

(As Julia Child might have seen things)

Henley may not have winced nor cried  
aloud, neither had he my guinea hen to savor  
In garlic, minced, and then stir fried.  
Among my friends, renowned for flavor.

Sautéed, my incomparable filet of sole  
should be good enough for the gods to eat.  
Now reclining in a pit of charcoal  
a steak carved from, this memorable treat,

A bull hobbled in place at the trough.  
His proud head brutally bludgeoned when downed,  
after a life of mass crowding in the rough,  
would match Henley's, bloody, but unbowed.

I am the mistress of my plate  
And I thank whatever gods may be  
(no matter, sipping wine, how un-straight my gait)  
for mushrooms, mangoes, shrimp, sukiyaki...

~ Jean Marie Purcell

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## Undying Hunger

(a song lyric)

My undying hunger like uncrying thunder,  
Now that's my reason above.  
High in the sky, just flyin' high  
Season for your love.

First, the thunder, thirst, the rain  
Worst of all I felt the pain  
Torn apart, not in heart  
Messed up in my brain

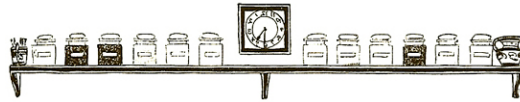
Classified, unsatisfied,  
A wanderer, a dream  
My melody, my poetry  
Finally set me free.

Free to dream, free to scheme  
Please free my memory yesterday  
Remember me  
It's farther than it seems.

My undying hunger like uncrying thunder,  
Now that's my reason above.  
High in the sky, just flyin' high  
Season for your love.

~ Spyder

# Cookin' With Jen



“The Salad-bowl and the Soup-Pot to the family are like the child’s tin “Savings-Bank,” the receptacle of the small economies of the house.” ~*Salads, How to Make and Dress Them*, (E.R. Durkee & Co., New York, 1907)

This fall is more changeable, weather-wise, than most years. It’s confusing to know what to make for dinner – I inevitably make soup on a day that turns out to have been better-suited to barbeque. So I thought I’d present some old-fashioned recipes for either warmish or coldish weather, and we can all rejoice in cozy comfort food next time. The salads would be great with a grilled chicken breast on the side.

## Cucumber Salad

Cucumbers... The fresher they are and the quicker they are served after being cut, the better; always have them as cold as possible. They need a good deal of seasoning, therefore add a little salt, pepper, and enough vinegar to thin out Salad dressing (Italian) slightly. Mix, set in the ice-box ten minutes and serve. ~ *Salads, and How to Make Them*

## Salad with Sour Cream Dressing

Take several heads (*of lettuce*). Carefully, take off the outer leaves and cut into 4 parts, then drain. For 3 heads of lettuce, cook 2 or 3 eggs hard and put into cold water. Then take 1 egg and cut up for garnishing and from the others remove the yolk, stir with half a teaspoon sugar, dilute with a cup of sour cream, add a little lemon juice or vinegar to taste and then add salt. Pour this dressing over the salad, mix well. Garnish. ~*F.W. Mc Ness Cookbook, F.W. Mc Ness Company, Freeport, Ill., 1908*

My husband’s grandmother first introduced me to the fried green tomato years ago, and this year it is the perfect way to eat all those green ones that never quite ripened.

## Green Tomatoes

Wash thoroughly as many green tomatoes as you want for a meal; slice, pepper and sprinkle flour over them. Fry until brown. ~*F.W. Mc Ness Cookbook, F.W. Mc Ness Company, Freeport, Ill., 1908*

And when it really is cold, I’ve always advocated in these pages a loaf of hot bread and a pot of soup. Try this easy recipe:

## Grumire Suppe (Old-fashioned potato soup)

8 Potatoes, cubed	1 T Butter
1 onion, chopped	½ c. flour
1 quart milk	1 egg, well beaten
Salt and Pepper	¼ c. cold milk
Parsley	

Boil potatoes and onion until soft. Drain. Add milk and heat, beating thoroughly, season to taste. Work butter into flour and add egg and cold milk. Drop by teaspoonfuls into hot mixture. Cover saucepan and cook about 10 minutes. Serve at once garnished with chopped parsley. ~*United States Regional Cook Book, Chicago, 1953*

Or try this one, from reader Rhonda Rauch, who says “If you’re hungry, try Crab Chowringri at any event.”

## Crab Chowringri

1 10 oz pkg. frozen corn	2 c. cream
2 T. sliced chives	2 T. pimienta
1.2 t. salt	1 c. heavy cream
½ c. clam juice	1 t. hot curry
2 shelled crabs	3 oz. pkg. cream cheese

In 3 qt. saucepan, cook corn according to package directions, do not drain. Stir in 2 c. cream, chives, pimienta, salt, heat to just boiling. Combine with heavy cream, stir in crab meat, clam juice, curry, and cream cheese. Season to taste.

Enjoy! I encourage readers to send in your recipes if you’d like to share.



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<http://www.groundwaterspublishing.com>



## The Exquisite Spider

Your place of residence, a courtly rose garden  
Your home is made of finest spun silk  
You share the district with other Araneidas  
Some neighbors are potbellied, while others are sleazy  
You claim your territory with an intricate web  
A masterpiece – silver threads of silk  
The morning sun glistens through  
The dewdrops, as diamonds in the sky  
Some claim you are canny, for your web is a trap  
You spring forward and entangle your unwary victim  
Your bite is a tranquilizer to preserve your food  
For a later snack to ensure your existence

~ Jessie Stinson

## Winds of Change

There is a change coming... I know not what  
Yet I can sense it, with the recent  
Tragedy that has shook my soul, it has set  
Something within me in motion, a restlessness  
That I can not control along with the  
feelings  
Of loneliness and a fear that I failed as a  
friend  
When a friend needed me the most.

I have been asleep way too long  
Afraid of the future, hiding from the past  
The wind of change is at my back  
Pushing me to new horizons  
Be they good or bad, we shall see.

~ Herbie

## Infinity

While sitting alone in a moonlit moment  
I sensed, rather than knew  
The night had something to tell me.  
Then I stood in the wind and  
Heard a star wish.  
My soul shifted.  
Turning toward the sound  
I realized how alone I had been.  
Looking inward for reflection  
I absorbed all light.  
Looking outward in reflection,  
I became all light.  
My aloneness seemed selfish...  
Now the warmth of joy  
Surrounding my seedling self  
Sends roots deep and strong.  
Never again a solitary spark.  
Never again viewing boundaries as static.  
Instead, expanding into the essence of time.  
The breath of all movement...  
Scattering me across the cosmos  
Like stars being born.

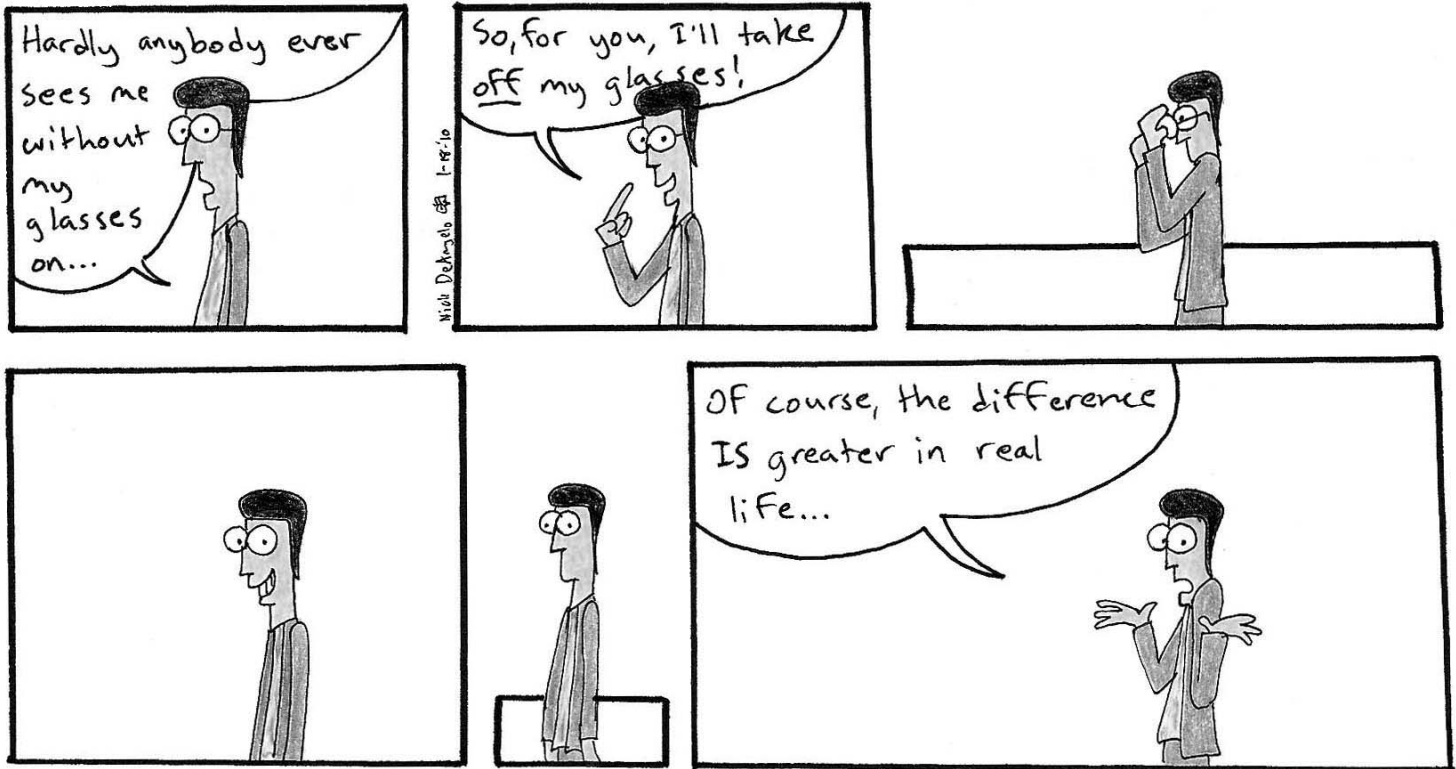
~ Gloria Wells

# FARM STORE & MUCH MORE

- \*Livestock Feed
- \*Pet Foods & Supplies
- \*New & Used Tack
- \*Carhartt Clothing
- \*Montana Silver Jewelry
- \*Wood Fuel Pellets
- \*Landscape Products
- \*Alfalfa, Hay & Straw
- \*Veterinary Supplies
- \*Grooming Supplies
- \*Wrangler Western Wear
- \*Western Gifts & Cards
- \*Propane
- \*Garden Plants & Supplies



# ...JUST ADD WATER



~ Nick DeAngelo

## Bubbling Up 18 & under talent

### The Old Man in the Hot Desert Sand

In the hot desert sand lays an old man.  
 He's looking for his glasses, which lay calmly in the sand.  
 When looking for his sight, his hand makes it's way to  
 my leg, picking out a hair to make a chair.  
 Then his hand creeps up to my torso, salvaging my lint  
 to buy his flint.  
 Then he sneaks up to my chest, and nips my nipple to  
 craft his fiddle.  
 Then his hand crawls up to my eyes and snatches my  
 own glasses right off my face.  
 Then he knocks out my eyes to make his pies.  
 Then SLAP, he makes a bruise to make me snooze, and  
 when I wake, I'm the old man in the hot desert sand.

~ Joseph Ringo  
 Age 10



Hayley Kau and Tanner Eastlick. "Today's Communication."  
 Photo by Samantha Bolsinger, sophomore at Crow High School.

### A Circle of Friends

By Pat Broome

A circle of friends is a group of people who enjoy working together while having fun doing it. The Applegate Regional Theatre, Inc. is looking for a group of people who enjoy being around the theater and are willing to do different things to support it.

What are some of the things that someone can do if they are interested? All sorts of things from ushering at events, grant writing, supplying refreshments for rehearsals, webmaster, set-up, participate in play reading to help select plays, sell tickets, etc.

What are some of the possible benefits?

Having your name on an event program stuffer, a tee shirt with the ART, Inc. logo, attending a preview party with the cast, tickets for a local show and hanging out with some really fun people.

If you are interested, the next meeting will be on October 7, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Broadway Events Center at 5<sup>th</sup> & Broadway in Veneta. For more information call Vicki Sourdry at 541-935-3636 or email at vsourdry@hotmail.com.



An early-day log truck operating near Lorane, Oregon in the 1930s or 1940s. (Printed in *Sawdust and Cider*, 1987 & 2006)

S.A.N.T.A. will be held on December 18 this year. The age requirement for your children is between newborn and 17 years old. You must live in the Fern Ridge or Crow Applegate-Lorane School Districts. You can provide proof of residency with any of these forms: a picture I.D., mail with name and address, student report cards, or medical card with your child's age and name. S.A.N.T.A. does not ask for proof of income. They serve all families in the local area who may just need a little extra help with the holidays! If you'd like to volunteer, come to a meeting Tuesday, Oct. 19, Nov. 9, Nov. 23, or Dec. 14 at 6:00 at City Hall.

Check your local news for information on the **Light Parades** in Veneta or Junction City. Take the kids down for some fun in the chilly air and maybe even meet Santa!

If you are in need of services and you're in the Fern Ridge Area, you can call the **Fern Ridge Service Center**. They are affiliated with the Love Project, a food pantry, the Silver Tree, where seniors can receive Christmas gifts, Senior Meals, and Meals on wheels. For more information, or to donate to or volunteer with the Fern Ridge Service Center, look at the City of Veneta Web Site at [www.ci.veneta.or.us](http://www.ci.veneta.or.us).

**S.A.N.T.A.'s Back!** Sharing Among Neighbors Toy Appeal, or S.A.N.T.A., is a local non-profit volunteer organization serving the Fern Ridge Area. They are asking for your help to change the lives of local children this Christmas. They have been helping give the joy of Christmas to the families of that Community of over 20 years.

They are holding their first "**Can Drive**" for donations, now through the end of October. This helps provide toys, clothes, books and games for the children in the community. Every donation helps a great deal for every child. They ask that donations be separated between glass, plastic and aluminum, and plastic lids need to be removed.

For donation drop-off or pick-up, please call Diann at 541-525-2363 or Liz at 541-968-1626. If you would like to donate but are unable to drop off, please call them and they would be happy to come to you.

Remember to keep the **Veneta Holiday Bazaars** in mind for your holiday shopping this year! The Bazaars, held the Saturday Before Thanksgiving each year, will fall on the 20<sup>th</sup> this year. Look for a map at any location for the multi-location event. Find everything on your Christmas List right in your community!



*If you like what you read, pass it on*