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Dammit Joe

By Don Wendt

Introduction

There are many parts of my dad's life that I wanted to know more about, but by the time I was old enough to ask the right questions he wasn't around anymore.

I know he grew up in Idaho near the Lapwai Indian Reservation. He also lived in Montana and had a relationship with the son of the famous Nez Perce Indian chief, Joseph.

I know from newspaper clippings that he was an outstanding basketball player. He and two of his brothers were starters on the same team for the University of Montana in Missoula.

Most of us ordinary people have no written history of our life, probably because no one is interested in reading it. For that one person out there that might be curious and for my two daughters I have written about a few segments of my life. I am not proud of all of the chapters of my life, but to the best of my knowledge, every word is true.

In my family I was always called Joe. I am told my mom wanted to name me Don. My dad said, "Alright, you can name him Don but I will call him Joe." Without exception all my family called me Joe. Except my dad, who often called me "Dammit Joe"

Damn Dannis

My grades in school were average at best. The only time I remember taking a book home from school was in the 6th grade. It was a math book. My dad tried to help me but soon lost patience and let me know how stupid I was. He apparently was right and I stayed as far away from anything involving math as possible there after.

However in grade 9, in an attempt to improve my grades, he tried to motivate me by offering me a shotgun if I made the honor roll. For some time I had coveted a Winchester 12 gauge pump model 25 which cost \$69 (which later became known as the bull motivator.)

All I had to do was get a B- average in the 1st quarter, and the gun was mine. By some miracle I got the B- and the gun was mine.

I was playing Freshman Football that fall and early in the season we were running a head on tackling drill and I had the misfortune of running head first into Danis Reaves who was much bigger and stronger than me. We collided and I knew I was hurt, but seemed to be the only one who cared. After three days when my dad got tired of me complaining that I couldn't milk cows with 1 hand, he told me, "Dammit Joe, go to the doctor during school lunchtime." I went without an appointment to see Doc Clark. He examined me and took x-rays. He determined that I had broken my collarbone and my upper right arm in 2 places. At that time the doctor's house was being repaired. In the yard outside was a large pile of cedar shakes. Dr. Clark retrieved one, split it in two pieces over his knee, taped the 2 pieces together, mixed up a generous amount of Plaster of Paris, dipped in gauze bandages, wound it around my chest, put one end of the shake in my belly and raised my broken arm high and taped the other end to my arm so it looked like I was saluting.

It was now immobile. He told me to leave the cast on for 6 weeks. Unfortunately, at the same time I received my new shotgun, and pheasant and duck season had arrived. But that's another story. It involves my first encounter with a game warden and temporary loss of my new shotgun.

Another Story

Wearing my plaster cast with my right arm pointing up in the air meant that whenever we were haying all the seeds and chaff drifted into my open armpit and I spent a lot of time probing inside the cast in an attempt to remove the itchy stuff. The cast made me top heavy and I stumbled around a lot. I was pretty awkward in P.E. classes, it made milking cows difficult and I didn't do well dancing with girls.

After wearing the cast for 3 ½ weeks, one of my schoolmates determined the

length of time that I would wear the cast, rather than Dr. Clark. Don Cramer locked horns with me one day at school and we were pushing each other like two buffalo, when he suddenly stepped to the side. I fell forward on the concrete crushing the cast, bringing my broken arm into my body, and causing an inordinate degree of pain. After school my dad told me to remove the remainder of the cast that was still wound around my chest.

I did so, but my arm was fixed at an angle and did not straighten. It was painful. My dad had a great practical idea. He said carrying milk into the milk house cooler in a 5 gal.bucket would soon straighten my arm. He was correct, but I could think of a great many other options. Because of the manner in which my cast came off and because it was a little more than 2 weeks premature, it did not heal properly. Consequently I was unable to throw a baseball well or without pain. I played 1st base in high school and college so I would not have to throw the baseball. My throwing arm was destined forever to be below average.

When I was able to shoot my new shotgun, hunting season was over. Leroy Frazier was living with my family because his parents had moved to California and left him. He liked to hunt and with his encouragement, we set out one day in April to hunt crows.

We traveled close to a mile from home near Salmon Creek and discovered a field full of waterfowl. I tried to tell Leroy that ducks are not crows.

Some ducks flew too close and at least one of us began shooting. Then we made a blind in the fence line and took the ducks we had shot, propped up their heads with forked sticks and used them as decoys.

We were enjoying our hunting when we noticed a man in a brown uniform walking across the field toward our hunting position. Without bothering to retrieve our decoys, we decided to forego the remainder of our crow hunting and call it a day. Both of us were wearing hip boots, which hampered our ability to run. We hurriedly left the field and dropped into a deep ravine with a creek running through it. As I stopped at the creek to pull up my hip boots, I looked around and Leroy had disappeared. The man in uniform cut across the field, correctly estimating our destination. I should say 'my destination' because Leroy, who 'could' be blamed for the entire situation, had stopped and hid halfway down the hill leaving me to cope with the man, who yelled at me. He said if I would stop that he would not prosecute. I asked him what that

meant. He said he wouldn't arrest me.

I stopped and he climbed down the hill to the creek and we talked. He first asked me what we were doing and I said, "Hunting crows." He asked, "How many crows did you get?" He further said he had been on Salmon Creek performing a waterfowl count and had been watching us for some time. He asked, "Where is the other guy?" Not wanting to accept all the blame, I called Leroy to come out of hiding. We discussed the situation and the game warden asked where we lived. I told him and he told us to go home and he would be there in an hour and talk to my dad.

There is nothing he could say that would frighten me more. I would rather just go to jail for a couple of years. Leroy and I made our way home and found my dad eating lunch in the kitchen. Neither Leroy nor I had the courage to explain to him about our escapades and we were a little hesitant to recite the whole story because of my fear of a whole bunch of "Dammit Joes" and besides there was a legitimate chance that the warden could go to the wrong house. Leroy and I looked at each other in silence, both hoping the second option was correct. Besides if I waited until the warden drove in the driveway there would be a greater degree of safety, at least it would give my dad a chance to cool down.

We heard the sound of car tires in the gravel driveway. When the car door slammed I said, "Dad, the game warden wants to talk to you." He just looked at me. The warden entered the house and explained the story to my dad. As a result, our shotguns were taken from us and our crow hunting was over. The warden, whose name I believe was Gary Soldalnick, was a really nice guy and I saw him other times in my hunting ventures and he always remembered me.

Blast It

The only name I ever knew him by was Fat Kenny. He lived across the road. He was a few years older than me and was extremely overweight and short on education. But he seemed happy to do anything I wanted to do. I would say he was probably about 17 and I was about 13 at the time of this story. I lived on an 80 acre farm near Battle Ground and about 150 yards from our house was a draw with a small spring. I always wanted a pond to plant fish in and had made a few futile attempts to dig with a shovel to make a hole but digging wet

mud is difficult. Fat Kenny suggested we use dynamite. His dad worked for Swift Company and had borrowed a few cases of dynamite, caps and electric wire and a plunger to activate the dynamite. Fat Kenny said we could borrow a case from his dad although neither of us had any experience with blasting dynamite.

Neither of our parents were home so we were free to experiment. We took the dynamite and explosives equipment to the draw. Without any idea how many sticks to use, the first charge I think we used 9 sticks and shoved the blasting caps in them and hooked the wire to the caps and ran the wire up over the edge of the draw, hooked up the plunger about 30 feet from the dynamite and pushed the plunger. All hell broke loose. The air was full of mud, roots and other debris. We both started running as the sky turned dark and we were pelted with muck.

We were both covered with mud and grass. The fences had debris hanging from the wires. We kept blasting all day having learned to lengthen the wire lead from the dynamite to the plunger but we still got covered with earth. Fat Kenny got the worst of it because he had a much wider base than me and could not dodge as well. However, the last bundle of dynamite did not explode. Then it was almost time for evening milking so I knew my dad would be home soon. We had blown a hole about 5 feet deep and it was filling with muddy water, not perfect but a good start.

What I also failed to realize was the extent of the area affected by our blasting. When I got near the house, I learned that my mother had hung clothes out on the line to dry. Every item was now army brown and dripping wet, including the roof of our house.

When my parents came home they just stopped and stared, completely mystified; even the ground was covered. My dad asked, "Dammit Joe, what happened?" I told him. He asked how the muck traveled so far. I explained that I didn't know how far it traveled until now. He asked how many sticks we used at a time. I told him and he asked how I could be so stupid. I wanted to say "genetics" but held off.

After he cooled down and we were milking the cows, I summoned up the courage to tell him that in our last attempt to blast, something went wrong and it didn't go off. The next day, he rewired the blasting cap and exploded it. Eventually we ended up with a nice pond.

Pets

Living on the farm allowed me exposure to all sorts of critters. Through the years I had pet fish that I would bring home and try to keep them alive. I would keep them in watering troughs and they would usually jump out.

I had a pet crow I named Jocko, who never cared for me. I would run down small rabbits when we cut the crops and put them in cages. I had a turtle that wandered on our land. His name was Sam. I caught some chipmunks and kept them until they chewed their way out. Of course I always had at least one dog. One day I rode my bike home and found a large skunk in our garden. Of course my first impulse was to capture it for a pet. In our basement was a remnant of World War II, a gas mask, which I assumed would reduce the nauseating odor of skunk spray. (I was incorrect.)

I obtained a cardboard box, ran out to the skunk and dropped the box on it. The skunk cut loose with the most hideous, obnoxious, foul, nauseating, putrid odor imaginable, so strong that I could not see and I removed the gas mask and became sick. The skunk and I were at a stalemate. I decided to stick it out until my parents came home, which occurred shortly.

My dad didn't have to ask what was in the box. I knew immediately that he felt I had made a poor decision. He suggested I release the skunk and burn my clothes. I put the skunk in a cage and the next day I found that the skunk was gone. The cage door was open. The mystery of the escape remains unsolved.

Shooting the Bull

When my dad bought the farm, he purchased about 35 used Guernsey cows and raised them on 40 acres. Early on, my parents purchased the 40 acres across the street, which had a house and barn on it. My parents rented the house and usually on one section, which was a wooded area, my father would raise a couple of beef cattle.

One white face bull in general was a real thorn in my side. He would not stay on our property and continually broke through the barbed wire fence. Our neighbor (Tony Nelson) would call and tell us the bull was out again. This happened repeatedly and I would be sent to chase him back and forth through

the trees until he would go back through the hole he'd created in the fence.

One day just as I was getting ready to go play in a baseball game, Tony called and said the bull was out again. This time I decided to teach the bull a lesson. I grabbed my 12-gauge shotgun with the intention of scaring him into changing his ways. I found the bull and ran him back and forth until he finally began crawling back between the wires. When he was most of the way through, I thought it would be appropriate to apply the motivation to encourage the bull to stay within our property.

I shot and the bull went down bawling and rolling back and forth on his back. Then he lay still. I had made my point. His tail end turned red from blood. I now had a new concern. I knew I was too close when I pulled the trigger. Did I kill or cripple the bull?

He began to show life by flipping his tail back and forth. He eventually stood up, took a few unsteady steps, turned and looked at me acknowledging my superiority. I was praying that my dad would not be aware of my motivational tactics and the bull would pull through. I don't believe he ever challenged me again.

This could be the end of the story but there is one more interesting bit. We eventually butchered the bull and one day we had company for dinner and the bull was the main item on the menu. My dad was the first to bite on a piece of lead. He rolled it around in his mouth, picked it out with his fingers and dropped it on the plate. Some of the others present also bit into the B.B.s. Before he could begin to draw a conclusion concerning the source of the buckshot, I suggested that we no longer allow pheasant hunters to shoot around the cattle.

We never talked about it again.

Moving the Electric Fence

Because cows eat a lot of grass in the summertime it is necessary to move them from one area after they have eaten it, to another. We don't turn them into a large area at one time because they will tramp it down and drop manure all over it. When they eat a lot of fresh alfalfa they really cover the ground with it and you need to watch where you step. About every two days the

electric fence needs to be moved to allow the cows into a part of the pasture that hasn't been eaten down. So, the electric fence is constantly being moved to a new place.

One evening after milking I was out in the pasture changing irrigation pipes to a new spot. As it got dark my good friend, Dale and Fat Kenny, joined me. As I write this, years later, I'm a little uncomfortable that he was called "Fat Kenny" but that is what he was called and he did weigh about 360 pounds. Sometimes Dale would eat candy and make a face like it tastes awful and tell Fat Kenny it was medicine he had to take.

But this night the three of us were heading back to the house when we were crossing one of these pastures that was so full of cow manure. And it was so dark that we could not tell when we were about to cross an electric wire. Dale would fool Fat Kenny by pretending that he could see the wire. Once he had allegedly identified the location of the fence, which would be about two feet off the ground, he would take a few steps and jump over the alleged fence with a scissors jump. Then he would coerce me into copying him. Then, of course, it would be Fat Kenny's turn. This posed several problems for him:

1. He couldn't see the fence
2. There wasn't any fence
3. Kenny couldn't jump 2 inches so the only way he could get past the alleged fence was to crawl under it.

Dale would make sure that plenty of fresh cow manure was present. So Ken would start crawling and Dale would coach him into crawling for 30 feet to be sure he got under the "fence."

Dale

Our 2nd grade teacher, Mrs. Bone would ask us to take a rest period after lunch. Finally I had found something I could do as well as the other students. We would lie on the floor with our coats or a pillow under our head. If I was resting comfortably or sleeping, Dale enjoyed hearing the sound of my head klunking on the floor as he pulled the pillow from under it. My brain has always functioned differently from others. Although I can't prove a cause. Day after day, think, think, think. Could there be a correlation with some of my problems?

In 4th grade Dale tripped me and I fell and broke a tooth.

In 8th grade we were standing on a bridge over Salmon Creek.

It was July 3rd, my birthday. Dale produced some fireworks. We fired some off and were enjoying ourselves when, without warning, Dale lit one and left it sitting in front of me on the edge of the bridge. I turned and it went off in front of my ear. I have had ringing in my ear ever since.

A high school friend of mine, Wayne Bennet, reminded me I wasn't Dale's only target. One time in high school, Wayne received a letter from a girl, asking him to go to the Sadie Hawkins Dance with her. He was flattered because this was a very popular girl. Little did he know, the letter was written by Dale.

Dale always was a hard worker. He had a paper route in his early teen years. His father died when Dale was in the 4th grade and Dale had to grow up in a hurry. He spent a lot of time at my house. He was bigger, stronger and smarter than me. He was from the city and I was always the simple, naïve farm boy who was influenced by him.

Dale had some difficulty in high school. I think he had some problems with authority. He was pretty much on his own and had to make a lot of his own decisions. Some of them may not have been in his best interest.

When I was a junior in high school I was the captain and started on the basketball team. One night before a game Dale convinced me to stay out late and somehow the coach found out. The game was at Cleveland High School in Portland. Pat Pettichord, the coach pulled me aside as we got off the bus. "Oh, Don, you're playing Junior Varsity tonight." I did. No one ever asked me why but I was duly humbled.

Dale may have influenced me in some negative ways but he has always been a loyal, honest friend. I have never lied or been dishonest in any way to Dale and I'm sure that he can say the same. How many friends can say that?

When he was in college he worked summers in the woods. Early in the morning while others were partying Dale was sleeping. He graduated from W.S.U. and was admitted to Dental School. But he had worked at Real Estate

in summer. He had a quick mind, worked hard and eventually made an excellent living, speculating in Real Estate. He never saw a need to go back to the dental school career path.

He still keeps a hand in Real Estate although he doesn't need to. He had always worked for his money and it paid off handsomely. He has a great wife and his life centers around his family. The kid who was kicked out of high school made good.

Gas What

In the summer between my Junior and Senior year I got a job at the Battle Ground Co-op in the service station working for Fred Brusseau. It was my first real job where I actually got paid.

Most of the time I was pumping gas, changing oil and doing simple tasks but one day someone was needed to drive the gas truck, which delivered bulk gasoline to farmers in the area who had storage tanks because they needed large volumes of fuel to run their equipment.

This day my assignment was to deliver to a Venersberg farmer who lived in an area not familiar to me.

They gave me the key to the gas truck and I took off to find the farmer and deliver his gas. As I was heading back to Battle Ground, having gone only a mile, the gas truck ran out of gas. It was a very warm day and I did not have my cell phone nor was a phone available to me, so I started walking. I was wearing my new white uniform and felt someone would probably give me a ride, but that did not happen.

I was within a half mile of Battle Ground and started down a steep hill when I noticed 3 bicycles on the roadside. At that time people were not concerned about thievery and normally they would be safe but I was desperate. It was hot, I was tired, and I was late. I rationalized that I could borrow one of the bikes and return it in 20 minutes.

I should have been more discriminate but I chose the bike that was in the worst shape. I jumped on the bike and headed down the steep hill. As I picked up speed the breeze felt good for a moment. Then it happened. The front

wheel was very unstable and wobbled back and forth and before I could even slow down it buckled and threw me over the handlebars.

The asphalt was hot and sticky. I skidded head first down the hill tearing out both elbows on the shirt and the knees on my pants. I was a mess. Blood was running from the top of my head, my nose was bleeding, my lips were cut and my elbows and knees were bleeding.

The front wheel had come off of the bike. I retrieved it and bent it back so it was functional but wobbly. I again started down the hill but much slower as the wheel wobbled against the frame.

As I wheeled through Battle Ground at about 4 m.p.h., friends would call out my name and sometimes just stare.

I got to the co-op, threw the bike in the back of a pickup and returned it. I had a strong desire to watch the boy who owned the bike ride it down the hill and see how he accomplished it.

Fred wanted me to seek medical attention but I was too embarrassed. I could have acted more responsibly and felt guilty about wrecking the bicycle.

I got a can of gas and went back to the gas truck and got it running again, ending another routine day.

Holy Cow

In 1955 when I was a senior in High School I was driving my 1951 Ford. It was a Saturday night and my date and I were in the front seat and Dale and his date "Willy" were in the back. We were on the Manor Highway heading to Vancouver. Travel was light but a few hundred yards ahead was another car. I stayed well back from it because it was a cool very foggy night and visibility was really limited. We were passing by a large dairy farm near 119th St. when the tail lights on the car we had been following disappeared. It took only a moment to realize why.

Crossing the road directly in front of our car was a herd of black and white Holstein milk cows. I was unable to avoid a collision. We braced ourselves for the inevitable contact. For a moment all we could see was black and white as one of the cows covered our windshield after coming over the top of the hood. The amount of damage to the cow and car was about equal, because neither one could run afterward. The cow had to be destroyed, but we were able to

save the car. The deputy sheriff was nice enough to take us all home. It was a pretty traumatic experience and since that night , I have avoided driving through herds of Holsteins.

College Buddies

Fortunately, I attended Linfield College in McMinnville, OR. And eventually graduated from there. My very first day there, while I was registering, I met three guys who went out of their way to be helpful. They helped me choose classes and made me feel welcome. I didn't know at the time that they would become lifelong friends.

We spent most of our spare time together. We also studied together (something that I was not that familiar with.) We actually had hard and fast rules about our study times. I don't remember exactly but I think for every hour we studied, we played cards for an hour. We all loved athletics so when we had any time we would play some game that we made up involving a ball.

I can't remember one occasion with these guys involving alcohol or drugs. Since then we have only missed one summer of getting together. We don't get to spend much time together because we don't live near each other. These guys were a great influence on my life and I owe them a great deal. Thanks Gene, Rick and Kenny and their great wives.

Black Tom

One year I lived in a dorm and I had a roommate who, for several days at a time, was gone on weekends. Since he lived in Milwaukie, OR I didn't think too much about it. It's not too unusual for students who live fairly close to want some home cooking.

But he often slept and missed classes. We called him Black Tom. I don't really know why. His name was Tom but he wasn't black. Maybe it was because he had a dark side.

One morning he came in about 4 a.m. and explained what he did on weekends.

He lived very near the Willamette River so he and a buddy would go to a

yacht club and scope out the boats. They would make a choice, cut it loose and one of the guys would float it in the current to the next boat launch where they had a vehicle and trailer waiting. They would then winch the boat onto the trailer, take it to a marina in Seattle and sell it. He said it was a form of financial aid.

Best Man

I had a very good friend who came from Gearhart. After college graduation he invited me to be Best Man at his wedding in Gearhart. I was happy to do so because they were a great couple and Neil and I were close.

The wedding was on a Sunday at 1 p.m. Neil and I played a lot of golf together and he invited me to come down on Saturday, play 18 and then do the wedding on Sunday. That sounded great to me. So Saturday we played 18 holes at Gearhart and then did the rehearsal that night. About 10 a.m. Sunday we decided to play nine holes. After we had played nine we decided to play more holes. We were on the 12th tee and having a good time and it was a beautiful day when we passed a group going the opposite way. They knew Neil and said hello.

Suddenly one of them said, "Hey Neil, I thought you were getting married today?"

I looked at my watch. It was 12:15 p.m. and the wedding was to be at 1:00. We both panicked. We didn't even finish the hole. The wedding went on but Karen has never forgiven me and I understand fully.

Otis

Many years ago Rich, his dad and I were salmon fishing on the Columbia River, near Kalama at Cottonwood Island. We pulled our small boat up on the sandy beach and cast our lines out in the water. After some time Otis excused himself and stepped into the brush behind us to relieve himself. Otis's rod was in a pole holder. While he was gone, Rich attached a line to the tip of Otis's rod, ran the line under a root and to himself. As his dad started back towards us, Rich began yanking on the line as though a fish was biting. Rich yelled to Otis that a fish was striking. Otis said, "Son, grab the pole before the fish gets

off.”

Rich said, “ No, you get it.”

Otis started to run, pulled a muscle in his hip, fell down and asked Rich again to set the hook. Rich refused so finally Otis stumbled and crawled to his rod. He set the hook and to our amazement, landed a 15lb. salmon. Otis continued to limp for some time.

Man-On

I’ve always loved fishing. My dad wasn’t much of a fisherman but Leroy and I used to roam up and down Salmon Creek fishing for anything that would bite.

To me fishing had an advantage over hunting in that I could turn a fish free after I caught it. Where as, I found it difficult to give freedom to a deer or a duck after I had shot it. I eventually had trouble justifying my actions and no longer shoot it if I don’t eat it.

One day Leonard Clark, Fat Kenny and I went on a fishing trip to a lake. I can’t remember which one. Leonard’s dad had been a fisherman years ago and Leonard was apparently free to use his equipment which was outmoded and unoled. Fat Kenny had no fishing gear and came along only as a diversion.

Leonard had a short stiff fishing rod and a level wind reel that would screech when he cast. We were just getting ready to start fishing. Fat Kenny was not acquainted with fishing technique and as Leonard made the first few casts he wound up with a big back cast to throw a lure with a triple hook on it and Fat Kenny wandered behind Leonard. I think you can guess the rest. As Leonard cast forward the triple hooks made entrance into the lower part of Fat Kenny’s back. This must have caused a great deal of pain as Kenny took off running. I yelled to Leonard to loosen the drag and give him more line as Kenny kept running. Leonard began running after Kenny. Eventually, as Kenny got tired, Leonard was able to reel him in. I cut the line near the hook, but two of the prongs were stuck in the fat of Kenny’s back. As Leonard and I tried to keep Kenny still by lying on top of him, Leonard got out a pair of pliers. I couldn’t watch as Leonard began his surgery. The hooks were not easily removed and Kenny was not the best patient, but eventually the deed was done.

I would like to say that Leonard went on to be a famous surgeon but that's not so.

Float the Boat

John Gibbons and I were fishing for steelhead on the North Fork of the Lewis River. When we were through fishing, we pulled the jet sled on the shore to clean the fish. John took 2 and I took a couple. John went upstream near the boat and I went about 75 feet downstream. As I was cleaning a fish I noticed our boat drifting freely in the current and rapidly going down stream. I yelled, "John isn't that my boat?"

We both looked at each other as the boat drifted away, now about 200ft. below us and drifting rapidly down river. We stripped off our clothes and plunged into the very cold river. We swam after the boat, catching up with it after a couple hundred yards but the water was deep and we couldn't climb in because the sides were too high and we were so cold. So we swam, pushing the boat to the side of the river, eventually climbing in. I got the boat started and headed back upriver to the fish cleaning area. Naturally another sled with 3 people, one a female, passed us with an odd stare.

Thanks Ray !

One evening I was with my friend Ray, at his house in Ridgefield. We were scheduled to attend some event in Vancouver and I still lived in Battle Ground. So we were both driving separately. As we left his house at about the same time, Ray made the remark that he would beat me to the junction. I had a new yellow 1961 Ford and these words stimulated my competitive spirit. Unfortunately the words did not stimulate my common sense. I jumped in my car and took off first on the short 4 mile drive.

I could see his lights behind me as he struggled to keep up. I gained on him steadily and was convinced that there would be no question about who won. I backed off the last ½ mile in preparation for stopping at the junction.

The road is quite hilly with continual hills and valleys so I frequently lost track of the lights behind me but as I slowed, much to my surprise, I heard a siren and saw the car behind me turn on its red lights. I pulled off to the side of the road at

the junction and a Clark County Sheriff's car pulled along side me, followed by Ray with a smile on his face.

The two deputies questioned me, eventually moving me into the back seat of their patrol car. One of the questions seemed important: Was I related to the Clark County Commissioner with my same last name?

"Yes," I said proudly, "He's my dad."

That seemed to soften their anger.

About this time Ray pulled along side, honked his horn impatiently, rolled down his window, and shouted to me through the open back window, "Hey, tell those *#%!* of *#%*# to either give you a ticket or let you go. We have to be in Vancouver in 15 minutes."

Anyone who knew Ray knew he had a real way with words.

I was very surprised when they let me go.

Wasn't Really Work

I started teaching in 1960 at the seventh grade level at Union Ridge Elementary in Ridgefield, WA. I really had no intention of becoming a schoolteacher, even though I had earned a degree in education and was certified to teach K-12; but I couldn't feature myself qualified to teach others. My major in college was P.E. and I did not feel qualified to teach anything else.

I was working at a golf course as an assistant pro and assumed I would continue in golf as my profession. I met the Superintendent of Ridgefield Schools at the golf course. His name was Lyndell Moore. He said they badly needed a seventh grade teacher. School was starting up in about a month. I just didn't believe I could do a good job of teaching 6 different subjects but Lyndell didn't give up. The next time he came to the course he brought a Science, Math, Social Studies, and English book at the seventh grade level. He left them with me and asked me to look through them. As I read through them I realized I wasn't smarter than a seventh grader.

Lyndell put the pressure on. He said school was starting in a couple of weeks and they had to have a teacher. It occurred to me that it might be

better to have me than no one at all. He said I could work at the golf course after school, weekends, and summers. The next time he brought a contract.

I was being wooed for a job for which I was not qualified. The contract was for \$3,650 plus \$50 each for coaching 2 sports, for a grand total of \$3,750.

I signed the contract and started studying the textbooks. My class was comprised of the 30 nicest kids you could possibly hope for. They were so nice to me and treated me with great respect. When it came time to teach difficult areas like English, I asked for the students help. The brighter kids taught various subjects and we all learned together about verbs, pronouns, and all the other parts of speech. I even learned how to diagram sentences.

I assisted Coach Les Greear in football for 4 years and learned a lot about coaching. After 2 years I was asked to teach in the high school. This meant I had to learn more stuff.

Sometimes I felt more like a class leader than a teacher, but the kids were great and again, were very respectful. In Basketball I coached the Jr. Varsity and assisted head coach, Ray Jacobus. I had some great kids and we were undefeated my last 2 years.

After 4 years, a small group of parents and board members visited me and asked if I was interested in moving to Woodland. I was very happy in Ridgefield and the people were great. The school did suffer from financial difficulties and had a very poor tax base. One evening the group from Woodland returned and asked me to get in the car with them. I did and we arrived at the Woodland School Board Meeting. They wanted me to be the head basketball coach and asked if I would start a golf program. I signed a contract for \$6,800 in 1965 and Woodland became the first "A" school to have a golf team.

In the first couple years we had a co-ed team and, in fact, built our own makeshift practice area and very rough Par 3 Golf Course in a cow pasture on Horseshoe Island. We were happy when the Stading family built a 9-hole golf course just up the Lewis River Valley from Woodland in 1969. They constructed the second 9 holes in 1972. The Lewis River Golf Course has hosted the boys and girls golf teams every year since then.

In the early years of golf at Woodland the team competed with schools like Battle Ground and R.A.Long because schools our size did not have golf teams. After teaching for two years at Woodland High School, superintendent of schools George Homberg came to me after school one day and asked if we could talk. He had a proposal for me. He wanted me to become the counselor in the high school. I told him I did not have the proper credentials. He said, "I know, but we are willing to send you to school to get your Masters Degree in Counseling." He said they wanted to make some changes.

After a combination of 2 summers and 2 years in night school I finally received my masters degree and was selected as the president of S.W. Washington School Counselors Association. One of my jobs was to travel from school to school evaluating counselors, helping them to become certified. We interviewed students, faculty, and administrators in all the schools regarding the status of their counselors and suggested improvements when appropriate.

Meanwhile in the basketball arena, things did not come easy. The year before I came to Woodland, the team did not win any games, so there was not much of a program. I was very eager to get started building one at WHS, and was able to get two Ridgefield boys that I had coached to come to Woodland and set up and run a summer program. Denny Sevier and Bruce Wiseman did a great job. The first year I coached (1965) we had no seniors on the team and we won only 6 league games. By 1967 we placed seventh in the state and were off to a running start. I was lucky enough to have some players who were willing to work hard. They became great role models for the younger players and we had some very productive years there after. I really enjoyed those years coaching basketball and felt so lucky to have such great athletes and great parent and community support.

1980 was my last year of coaching basketball. I continued to coach golf and to be a counselor for ten more years. In 1990 I decided to retire. I had done my 30 years and felt it was time to let someone else take over.

An interesting evolution had taken place in my counseling duties. In the beginning there was not much personal counseling. Most of my time was spent helping students to schedule classes, administering national tests and

college counseling. People didn't talk about personal things. As years went on, my time became more involved with such things as eating disorders, drug and alcohol abuse, and resolving family difficulties such as abusive situations. Student needs had necessitated a change in my duties. Fortunately there were always counseling workshops available to keep us updated on the current demands.

I found counseling a very rewarding and interesting profession. I really felt I had helped.

I loved my teaching, counseling and coaching career at both Ridgefield and Woodland. I consider myself very lucky to have fallen into a career that I truly enjoyed, and I have to thank the students and their parents for their support.

Damn Cops

Driving the speed limit has always been a challenge for me. The road leading to our house is straight and the maximum speed was 35m.p.h. Then as more houses were built the limit was changed to 25m.p.h. It became a challenge for me to stay within the 25m.p.h. limit.

During the course of one year, I was stopped by the city police in the same area of Insel road 5 times, mostly by the same officer. Two or three times he gave me a verbal warning. He constantly would cause the violation by parking behind the Mormon Church and I would not see him until I had passed him. Eventually when I saw him, I would just pull over to the side of the road and wait for him. By then we had become rather close and I know he didn't want to give me another ticket. He finally asked, in apparent exasperation, "Don, what do I have to do to keep from arresting you?"

I said, "Stop hiding behind the Mormon Church."

He did, the speeding problem was over and life went on.

Abby and Goldie

Abby was a Springer spaniel who was very special to us because she was a great dog and Ruth had given her to me as a Christmas present, when Abby was just about 2 months old.

Ruth had some crazy ideas about dogs because she never had one when she was growing up. She thought Abby was going to sleep in the laundry room. When she found me sleeping with Abby, she realized Abby would be treated as part of our family.

Abby endeared herself to us in many ways. As a pup she loved to steal anything that seemed important to us. She grabbed the kitchen towels and ran off. Any towel seemed to be fun; or our clothes as we got dressed. As a pup everything was a game.

As she grew and matured, we were always amazed by her vocabulary. She watched us intently and didn't miss a thing. We resorted to spelling words we didn't want her to react to.

Sometimes she even seemed to understand those.

But she was supposed to be a hunting dog and everyone knows hunting is serious business so I set about teaching her to hunt.

The first time I tried to teach her about guns, I took her a couple blocks away from home to a nearby field. At the first shot of a starting pistol, Abby turned and ran for home. My heart sank. So I rethought the lesson and next time I took cheese, Abby's favorite snack. The shot still sent her running but she made a big circle and came back to keep her eye on that cheese. I rewarded her return. The next shot, the circle became smaller and before long she didn't run at all. She'd just wait for the treat she knew was coming. Although retrieving came natural, I trained her with a reward when she did it right.

As it turned out, she became a wonderful hunter with a nose that rivaled all the other dogs. She could find and flush birds where other dogs failed. She would never give up on a bird and often came home with scratches all over her belly from trying to get a bird hunkered down in the berry bushes. Once she knew what was happening, she couldn't be bothered with cheese. She seemed to know that this was what she was made for.

Abby loved hunting so much, I learned not to get out my hunting gear too soon before going because she would insure her chance of going by lying on top of my stuff. She wouldn't even get up to eat, on the off chance I might try to sneak away without her.

Abby was very accident-prone and saw Mike Cook, our veterinarian many times:

She cracked a tooth and had a root canal.

She swallowed a steelhead bait, complete with hook. I cut off the line and Mike fed her some stuff that formed around the dangerous hook allowing it to pass without hurting her.

She hit an electric fence while running through Bob Nevil's creek. She was hit hard by that and took about a week to recuperate.

She found a box of bone meal used as garden fertilizer in our neighbors open garage and consumed the whole thing. We watched her closely but it didn't make her sick.

When we built our house, she was with Ruth every day going to get supplies or just getting into everything. The concrete finisher wasn't amused but she saw him on his knees and that always meant playtime with me. As she did her "Springer" thing across his work he yelled and scared her enough that there was no more going to workers on their knees.

When Ruth locked her keys in the pickup one day with Abby inside, we found out that unlocking the door was not one of her tricks.

One day we were hunting birds near a railroad bridge over the Lewis River. We could hear a train coming. In our scrambling to get off the train tracks, somehow without my being aware, Abby ended up on the bridge. She was hit by the train, knocking her off the bridge and down into the river. From my position, I saw her fly through the air and splash into the river. She seemed to float, motionless and then started swimming to me with her front legs as I ran down the shore. I picked her up, carried her to the pickup and drove to the Vet.

Mike Cook had always cared for our dogs with love. He examined her saying that there was severe bruising in a hindquarter, that with time she should recover. He was correct, but eventually the leg developed cancer and it became obvious she was quickly losing her quality of life. It was a very, very sad day for me when I carried her into Mike's office and handed her to him.

He walked down the hall with her and Abby turned and looked at me as though I had betrayed her. Mike put her to sleep and Ruth and I had a miserable holiday season. Friends advised us to get another dog to help us forget, but neither of us felt right about it.

All that changed a few weeks later when John Erion drove in our driveway. Out of his pickup jumped a beautiful golden retriever. John had found her lost and confused while he was shopping at Clackamas Town Center Mall. In John's mind, we needed a replacement dog. John had even brought along a duck he had shot so he could show us how well she retrieved as he threw it in the yard.

He asked us to just keep the dog overnight as a trial period. "Goldie" and I spent most of the night together on the living room rug getting to know each other. Ruth also fell in love with her and another great relationship and period of our lives was filled with a great gift.

What a great dog she was. Less than 1 year old and already trained, she gave us so much love and companionship.

There are many stories about Goldie. One is particularly compelling to me. We were hunting geese and Martin's Island below Woodland. I shot a goose, wounding it and it sailed out into the Columbia River and disappeared into a dense fog. Goldie and I stood on the riverbank. She wanted to go after it. The river was high, the current strong and we could hear many large oceangoing freighters, sounding their foghorns to make their presence known. The fog parted slightly and we could see the goose swimming out into the middle of the Columbia. She saw it too. I asked her if she wanted to try to retrieve it. That was enough encouragement for her. She jumped in and started swimming. The fog moved in again. I could see nothing and all I could hear was the ships.

The fog cleared after about ten minutes and far out into the river I could see Goldie swimming away towards Oregon. Then the fog moved in again. Suddenly I was overcome with guilt and a sense of stupidity. Why would I allow a dog who would do anything for me, to swim what had to be 300 to 400 yards out into a strong current to try to capture a goose that could swim faster than her? And what if she did find and catch it? She could get run over by a ship. She could get lost. She could end up in Oregon. We were on an island in the Columbia River. How would she possibly know how to return to

this spot with the current carrying her downstream past the island we were on? She could not see us in the fog. How could she even catch our scent?

I felt terrible. One of my hunting partners, Jay Donaldson found me praying on the beach. Jay knew how I felt and he tried to console me. Then we stood in silence and hoped for the fog to clear. A half hour passed. Finally from downriver came Goldie half carrying, half dragging the goose in the sand.

She dropped it at my feet, shook herself and ran circles around us. She picked up the goose in her mouth again and dropped it at my feet again, sat up and looked up at me and her eyes said, "don't ever doubt me again." She was almost as proud of her performance as I was. I owed her a huge apology but being a dog, she just wanted my approval. She got it.

I've been lucky enough in my life to have some great dogs, but I have to say Goldie was my favorite. We got her as a lost dog when she was around a year old. Someone had loved her and taught her manners. She knew all the basic commands but needed some help on bird hunting techniques. She loved learning and was bright and would do anything to please. She loved bird hunting and wouldn't allow a bird to escape.

On her first chukar trip to 6 Prong Creek, we were on a very steep hillside. About 100 yards above us I could hear some chukars chirping. I called her to me and told her to listen. I asked her to climb the hill and find those birds. I didn't see what happened but a few minutes later, a chukar sailed over my head which I shot. It landed down the hill. Goldie arrived and wanted to know what happened. I sent her down the hill and shortly she arrived with the chukar. On her first hunt how did she even know this was the species we were hunting? I thanked her for retrieving the bird, gave her a hug and asked her if she would do that again. She took off up the hill again and this time 2 chukars sailed overhead and with three shots I was able to down one, which again fell far down the hill. Goldie arrived and I sent her down the hill again. Shortly she returned with the bird. She was proud and I was prouder.

We had a friend who trained dogs who suggested we enter Goldie in a field trial event. Goldie had never had formal training or experience in competition. I was reluctant for her to be compared to trained, experienced dogs. We knew she wouldn't do well but decided it might be fun, and she was all for it.

In the first event she was supposed to sit on the edge of a blind along the

Columbia River and retrieve birds shot by “hunters.” We were standing about 100 yards away hoping to catch some of the action. Goldie failed the 1st competition because she retrieved all the birds that were shot but brought them to us instead of the strangers shooting the birds.

In the second competition she was supposed to criss-cross back and forth across a field that had been planted with birds. She was supposed to find the birds, flush them and retrieve them after they were shot. She obviously misunderstood because she almost immediately veered out of the field into a wooded area where all the other birds for the next event were kept in a cage. She didn’t know the rules but she knew how to find the most birds. Her field trial score was very low but everybody loved Goldie.

We hit a lot of golf balls at our place in Woodland. In the beginning when we hit a ball a short distance, Goldie would retrieve each one. As we began to hit the ball longer distances, she was unable to bring a ball back to us before we hit another.

She soon developed a different strategy. She would pick up each ball but would drop them in a central area. When we picked up balls they would be in a small group. She loved to do it and it was very helpful.

The Last Chapter

Goldie gave us so much joy and happiness and enriched our lives in so many ways that it was difficult for us to face the fact that she could not live forever.

When she had problems jumping in and out of the pickup, when her run turned into a fast walk, we began to realize that time was taking its toll. When she began to spend hours lying by herself away from the house and would not eat, it became obvious the end was near. She was about 10 years old.

I took her to Mike Cook who had cared for her for so many years. He examined her carefully and told me she had a cancerous growth inside her hind leg. He indicated that it would probably take her life shortly.

There it was. For weeks I had put off this moment. Each day I would lie to myself that I wouldn’t have to take her to the vet. “today”; that I could do it tomorrow and maybe she would show improvement. But I was scheduled to be gone for a week and could no longer put it off.

When Mike told me, I cried uncontrollably. I couldn't even talk. It was too much for me. It was awkward for me because I have learned from an early age to control my emotions. I could tell Mike was having a hard time, too. I realized we were both having problems accepting reality. Mike told me of a vet in Portland who specialized in cancer cases.

Mike helped me carry her out to the car. I sobbed all the way to Portland and tried to compose myself so I could talk intelligently with the vet. He examined Goldie carefully and suggested that we could prolong her life by removing her leg and the tumor. Since this was only a temporary fix I said thanks and loaded her back into the car. I knew what had to be done. Back to Woodland and Mike and the end of Goldie. It was one of the most painful times of my life. I handed her to Mike but was unable to say the words so I grabbed a piece of paper on his desk and wrote, "Please take care of her."

I couldn't handle any more so I went home and told Ruth and we shared our sadness.

A day or two later I left on my trip which I believe was to Orlando, Florida to the P.G.A. Show.

When I returned home, Ruth said, "I want to tell you something." She hesitated and spoke softly, "I saw Goldie." Thinking she was going to tell me about a dream, I questioned her: "You saw her body?"

"No", she said, "Goldie is alive and we can pick her up at the vet's."

It was near Christmas and Mike had given us a present. He and another vet had operated on Goldie, removing the cancerous growth from her leg. Mike's assistant told me they had done the operation at night. Mike said there was a good chance that the cancer would reappear, but Goldie should be fine until it does. Mike refused to accept payment for prolonging her life. What a nice gesture. Many people say, "Merry Christmas." But he made it a truly Merry Christmas.

Rosie

When Goldie eventually died, we loved her so much another golden retriever seemed almost mandatory.

Rosie was the pup in the litter that was the most aggressive. At six weeks she was the one who would come to strangers without fear. Friends Blaine and Jackie Petty whom we had known since 1965 had the female golden retriever and their son Jay and family had the male right next door that were Rosie's parents. The litter of about 8 was cute, cuddly and "friendlier than a can of worms" as my friend Jake would say. Rosie grew rapidly and enjoyed our training sessions immensely as long as she didn't have to run too fast. She grew to about 95lbs and was a little clumsy. She would do anything we asked as long as she could do it at her speed.

Montana was one of our favorite places to hunt. We hunted on property farmed by Larry Barbie. Larry owned 30,000 acres and leased 20,000 acres including 320 acres that has been in Ruth's family for years. The wheat ranch is near a little town called Inverness. All the surface water in the area was under control of Larry Barbie. He freely allowed us to hunt on any of the 50,000 acres and at times would join us.

Larry also has 3 lakes, one of which he planted with Rainbow trout in about 1998. By 2010 the trout were 16 inches and very plentiful. We fly fished with great success. Larry says the trout are 21 inches now. Because so little water is available in the surrounding area, the Inverness area attracts many varieties of critters such as antelope, mule deer, whitetail deer, badgers, ducks, pheasants, sharptail, quail, and Hungarian partridge. One is likely to see all these animals in the same day. The people population is so small that we have never seen another hunter near where we hunt. We could hunt whatever, whenever we wished. About 15 miles from Inverness is Chester, which has a bar/restaurant and a motel where 2 people and 2 dogs can spend the night for \$35.

The ground is flat, easy to walk, with lots of cover. The birds stay put in the cover until they are flushed.

We always get a mixture of birds generally made up of pheasants, sharptails and huns. It's the ideal place to hunt. It does take us 22 hours of non-stop driving to get there. There are a number of abandoned farms in the area which we can also hunt.

One day Rosie and I were finishing up a hunt. My gun was still loaded, but I was casually carrying it over my shoulder. Rosie stopped and either heard or smelled a bird in a hedgerow. A pheasant rooster flew out. I turned and shot and could tell that the bird had been hit but it kept flying until it had covered

about 400 yards up a hill.

Then I began to wonder if the pheasant had been hit but Rosie was giving chase so I didn't stop her. We were at the vehicle so I grabbed my binoculars and focused them on the hill. I could see Rosie sitting, facing in our direction. I knew what had happened. It was a hot day, she was tired but she had things under control. She was just resting. Shortly we could see her making her way back to us with the bird in her mouth.

The population of Chester is in serious decline. Most of the farms in the area grow wheat and most of them need to be a minimum of 1000 acres in size to be self sustaining. Consequently many of them have joined together or sold out to larger farms in order to be profitable. There is also a federal program called CRP (Crop Reduction Program) into which farmers can place about 90% of their property. The program pays the farmer not to grow crops but they must restore the land to its original condition by replanting the native vegetation. This is popular program with small farmers (those under 5'6"). The result seems to be that many landowners not actively involved in farming are leaving the area.

As a result, the area which once supported about 5 restaurants, only has one tavern/restaurant left town. Ruth and I were eating dinner there one evening after hunting. A man came over to me and commented on the hunting knife that I was wearing in a sheath on my belt. He told me it was made in Montana in a small town just east of Missoula named Bonner.

He mentioned that he was surprised that I was wearing the knife. I thought anything was O.K. in the state of Montana. He explained it was worth too much to risk damaging or even losing it. I had to confess my ignorance. All I knew about the knife was that my Uncle Julius gave it to me in the 1940s.

So on the way west through Montana we stopped in Bonner and talked with Mike Hanguis, one of the owners. He told me the knife was one of the original knives made in 1938 by his grandfather, Rudy Ruana, who passed away in 1986. He was inducted into the American Bladesmith Hall of Fame in 1997. Mike told me the company would buy the knife from me for around \$2500 but said I could probably get more if we put it online.

He said, "Don't use the knife anymore." I haven't.

“Is Warrantee”

As a life long lover of the outdoors I jumped at the opportunity to fish what might be the best fly fishing river in the world. I owe it all to Ruth and her Argentine exchange student/friend, Graciela. Gracie, as we called her, married an extremely avid fly fisherman named Humberto.

When they traveled to the U.S. Humberto and I would go fishing. He spoke almost no English and I spoke no Spanish. So the communication between us on a day at the river was minimal. His attempts to facilitate our conversation were sometimes humorous. He would often bring a 6-pack of beer and would point out letters on the bottles. When we got home from fishing we would both ply Gracie for information about what the other was saying.

Gracie had lived with Ruth and her parents as an exchange student. She was fairly fluent in English. In Argentina, in fact, she worked as a public translator.

Humberto didn't think much about the quality of our fishing and more importantly, in his world there was only one suitable, acceptable method of fishing and this was with the *mosca* or “fly”. This however was not my area of expertise. So, when we were invited to Argentina for the first time I did have some questions about my qualifications and equipment.

Fortunately for me, at this time I was working for G.Loomis, which was respected world wide for their fishing rod quality. Humberto belonged to a group of fly fisherman who at that time had difficulty obtaining fly equipment because no one in Argentina produced rods and reels. When Humberto had been in Woodland he bought G.Loomis rods to take home so he and all his friends were enamored with G.Loomis products. When I told Gary that I was headed for South America he supplied me with lots of rods and reels.

At the same time I became acquainted with Dick Posey who was C.E.O. of Lamiglas also located in Woodland. Lamiglas was also well known for their fishing rods. Dick told me to take a couple of Lamiglas rods.

I got a lot of help from people who taught me the basics of fly fishing. I would practice the different kinds of casts daily in our yard diligently because I wanted to impress Humberto and friends. When it was time for us to leave

for South America my shoulder was so sore it impaired my casting.

Humberto had a list of his *amigos* that wanted equipment from the U.S.; most of them were interested in fly rods. The only rod they specifically wanted was made by G.Loomis. As far as they were concerned it was the only rod. They weren't interested in an alternate company's products.

I ended up taking about a dozen G.Loomis rods and about 2 or 3 rods given to me by Dick Posey of Lamiglas. When we arrived in Argentina, Humberto and friends were very interested in all the fishing gear but especially the rods. When Humberto saw Lamiglas rods he had real questions about their quality. Somewhere he had gotten the information that they break easily. I explained to him that all rods can break and if one did break they were warranted. Humberto did not want any rods but G.Loomis and told me to set up a Lamiglas rod for myself and a backup Lamiglas rod when we traveled. I had no problem with that but as far as he was concerned, if I was dumb enough to bring a Lamiglas rod, I could use it.

Humberto and Gracie lived in a city called Rio Cuarto, which means 4th River in Spanish. Humberto was an attorney and Gracie taught English and was an interpreter. In addition to their house in Rio Cuarto they own a ranch about 100 miles east. They had a maid who lived with them who was 15 years old and her salary for the month was \$13 plus room and board.

In our 1st trip to South America we flew from Miami in a 14hr. flight to Buenos Aires(Spanish for "Good Air") on the east coast in 1990. Gracie and Humberto picked us up at the airport and drove about 7 hours through potholed roads to their home in Rio Cuarto. Ruth was a big help in communications because she had 2 years of high school Spanish and another 2 years in college. Much of my time was spent asking Gracie to explain something in English. On succeeding trips to see them we found it easier for them if we flew into Santiago, Chile. Then they drove us east across the Andes Mountains to the Province of Cordoba, through wine country to Rio Cuarto.

Argentina's size is about equal to the United States from the Mississippi River to the east coast. 3 million people live in Buenos Aires. Most of the country is sparsely populated. The average per capita income is \$17,000 with polarization of income. 2 % of the population receives 98% of the income. Obviously there are a huge number of poor people.

Humberto is not one of them. Their ranch is difficult to reach when the weather is bad because much of the road is dirt and it is necessary to ford rivers.

Their Estancia is a cattle ranch located in an area called the Pampas, which means, "grass lands." The cattle ranch is 30,000 acres with another 20,000 acres leased contiguous with it. Their ranch is at the end of a gravel road so if they wish to visit a neighbor, they have two options: a 4wheel Jeep or horseback. The whole area is beautiful.

One day we went on a fishing trip. The men and kids traveled by jeep. We went 11 miles towards the foothills of the Andes in a straight line and never got off Humberto's property. The ladies (Gracie and Ruth) wanted to join the trip but they had to go by horseback although one of the gauchos guided them. Humberto told him to stop on the way and buy a goat from a neighbor for our supper. The river was beautiful and rainbow trout were plentiful but the largest was about 3 pounds.

We had to cut our trip short because the oncoming rains meant rivers would be too high to ford on the return trip. Ruth and Gracie were so sore from their 11-mile horseback ride, they got the kids to ride the horses home and they rode the jeep home. We did stay overnight in a stone building, which the Jesuits abandoned years before.

What a treat to have your own stream on your own *estancia*.

The beef cattle are a combination of Aberdeen Angus and Brahma, called "Brangas." There are two other homes on their property, which house the gauchos and their families. There are several houses in a nearby area that house other workers. The houses are very modest without electricity or running water and have dirt floors.

The gauchos are Indians with very dark skin and are highly skilled horsemen. They keep 2 horses every night in an enclosure. These horses are used to round up the others for each workday. They rotate horses each day to rest them. The men seemed to have specific duties such as watching for rustlers, keeping watch over the cattle which were spread out over the area, and at roundup time they separate the young calves in a huge rock corral. The fences were basically made of piles of rocks about 7 ft. high with the rocks gathered

nearby.

Near the house is a creek and a windmill which brought water to a vertical tank which gravity flowed to the house.

On a trip to the Traful River, we traveled south for 13 hours, to a remote area of Argentina known as Patagonia. I drove part of the time because laws and regulations are basically made by local people.

We ate lunch at a very small restaurant on the Colorado River (which literally was colored red) in a small town named Veinte cinco de Mayo (In English, the twenty fifth of May).

Humberto was pushing hard to make it to the Traful River in time to get in a little fishing that evening. We arrived in time, as I remember, catching the first fish at 10:30 p.m., as it did not get dark until about 11. The area was absolutely overwhelmingly beautiful. The Traful River is 11 miles long with a lake at each end. The lakes are clear and beautiful and free of population. In the foothills of the Andes Mountains, they were fed by glaciers from the mountains but absolutely clear.

The area was remote enough so two brothers owned the entire river. There was a cabin on the northernmost lake. It was built to extend out over the lake. It was owned by one of the brothers named Mauricio. There were no other fishermen in the area so we had this beautiful river all to ourselves. Ruth handled the video duties and captured us fishing this pristine river.

On what would have been Thanksgiving morning in the U.S., Humberto and I took the short walk to the river into the bright sunshine. He had his G.Loomis rod and I followed with my Lamiglas rod.

We both had waders on and he plunged into the river about 100 yards below me. I was excited and felt as though I was in Paradise. I felt truly honored to be part of something so beautiful. I fished perhaps 2 minutes when, as I hauled the heavy fly line from the water and I took an aggressive back cast when, to my great surprise the rod snapped right at the cork. Not knowing what to do I hurried downriver and caught up with Humberto who was busy landing a fish in midstream.

I tapped him on the shoulder and showed him my rod in 2 pieces and as he continued to cast, turned and said to me over his shoulder in his best English,

“ No problem. Is warrantee.”

I got the point. To be fair to Lamiglas, the rod was probably weakened during the extensive travel.

This river was full of brown and rainbow trout and fortunately for me there was a spare Lamiglas rod in the car. It served me well that day and many, many others.

The size record on the Traful River for trout is 31 pounds. Taken on a fly, of course. We didn't approach that size but most of the fish were 3 to 6 lbs. And the trip was certainly a highlight of my life.

As per Argentine custom we did not kill one fish. They are great conservationists. For decades, Humberto and his friends and the fathers have fished this great river. I was proud to be part of it.

I would love to leave this story on a positive note but I must tell it all.

Ten years later we again took the 13-hour drive from Rio Quarto to the beautiful pristine Traful River. There was a high fence around the river with a no fishing sign posted on it.

Ted Turner of the U.S.A had purchased the property.

The river no longer belonged to the Argentines.

Some Thoughts about Argentina

I have some random observations about South America from our trips to visit Gracie and Humberto:

*In most places there is an afternoon siesta, or nap that lasts from noon to 4pm. This custom can be inconvenient if you want to go to the bank, shop or buy gas, etc. One time we were crossing the border in the Patagonia region from Argentina to Chile at siesta time. The soldiers on duty were on siesta and refused to allow us to enter Chile until 4pm.

* Because Argentina has such a long history of aggression and abuse from their leadership, they feel very strongly and are very involved in politics.

Every vacant wall is filled with political slogans.

*Women are generally seen as second-class citizens.

*Most of the people who are in a position to have power, education or money seem to have family that emigrated from Europe. The native people have less.

*Their country is about 50 years behind the U.S. The vast majority of people are very poor. Many of the roads have potholes so large and deep that cars regularly drive off the road parallel through the fields.

*Drivers do not stop at stop signs; they just honk.

*You may pay more for things if they know you are from the U.S.A. Sometimes Humberto would tell us to speak only Spanish around vendors.

*English is emphasized in school. Most of the young kids can speak English.

*Once we stayed at a small village in the Andes in Southern Chile. These people are all very small with dark skin. There was one store. There were no cars, bicycles or telephones. They had wooden carts with wooden wheels pulled by oxen. They had a sawmill where the logs were sawed by hand. Everyone raised their own sheep, chickens, and other animals. We were told that the people have no mail service or police and pay no taxes.

*Because of relatively sparse population in remote areas, when we traveled with Humberto and Gracie, it would be normal to stay at one of their friends' ranches. One evening as we were driving on a country road, we saw a cougar with a lamb in its mouth standing along the road.

*Regardless of your location, at night when you're falling asleep you'll be treated to the beautiful sounds of the pigeons, doves and parrots talking to each other.

South Africa

Probably our most amazing travel experience occurred in South Africa. I don't want to make it seem like we are world travelers because if Delta Airlines had not donated passes and if Bob and Jane Ehrlich (longtime friends of ours from

Longview) had not furnished all the internal travel we would never have had the opportunity to travel to Africa. Without the aid of our friends, our longest travel would have been to Brush Prairie.

We flew into Johannesburg and traveled North by car, stopping each day to hunt birds. Like everyone who visits Africa, we were amazed at the beautiful birds, animals and scenery. We traveled by bus and boat from Zimbabwe to Zambia and the Zambezi River and flew out by seaplane. We were given the opportunity to live in a tree House (Like Tarzan and Jane.) This Eucalyptus tree was only a few feet from the Zambezi River that was full of hippos, snakes and crocodiles.

The tree must have been 20 feet in diameter and actually had a stairway that wound around and up to the top. About 30 ft. off the ground was the bedroom. We had a great view of all the animals below.

When we were told that a rogue elephant had been tearing up the thatched roofs on the cabins, the tree house option sounded great. I would tell the story about Jane jumping over the puff adder and running down the hill hysterically but I think it might embarrass her.

Crossing the Border

Several times I traveled to Hermosillo, Mexico to hunt doves with friends from this area. Guns often malfunction and heat up quickly from the rapid firing, when we use guns that the guide provides, they tend to jam when we are out in the field because they have been heavily used and the shotshells are a cheaper Mexican variety in which the powder plugs the automatic mechanism.

So we decided to bring our own shotguns because they would be more reliable. However the guns must be inspected at all airports and it can be very time consuming.

One particular time, Mexican customs would not allow me into the country because of a mixup on the registration number of my shotgun. One particular customs agent was adamant that I could not enter Mexico. Finally the guide arrived to pick us up and was told the facts. He put his arm around the reluctant agent and they walked down the hall together. When they returned,

the agent approached me and said, "No problem. You can enter."

One of the days I hunted in a field that featured bales of hay that I could stack to make a very nice comfortable blind. There were two riding horses that wandered around the field grazing on the leftover grass. I remember thinking that I needed to be careful where I shot because the horses were so accustomed to the noise, they did not shy away from it.

A couple days later we went to the same general area but I was assigned to an area outside the field. My old haybale blind was given to Larry. At the end of the day's hunt, we all converged at the vans. As I neared the staging area, I was intercepted by Larry. He was upset and he told me he had accidentally shot one of the horses. He pointed to it laying flat on its side with obvious wounds around the head and neck area and a plethora of blood.

He told me he swung the gun around at a bird and the horse was standing in the way. He could not hold up on the shot. There was a myriad of confusion with a cacophony of English and Spanish flying around. (I've always wanted to use the words myriad and cacophony.) He asked me not to tell Erasmo, the guide.

I said, "You have to tell him! Besides, when we leave, the dirt road goes right by where the horse is lying." We were interrupted by a bird boy who said Erasmo already knew about it and was very upset. When we got to the van, Erasmo asked me, "Who shot the horse?" I didn't know what to say but I wanted Larry to come clean and accept responsibility for his actions. Erasmo said, "The farmer is going to be mad."

I started to realize that the joke was on me as everyone started to laugh. They had all cooked up this scheme prior to my return to the van after the hunt. They were just messing with me. What made it work was the horse, pretending to be dead. The horse had entangled in some barbed wire which had caused the blood, wounds and lethargy.

Up the Creek

It was a cold winter day, with snow on the ground. Somehow three of us made the decision to go goose hunting on the Columbia River on the outer edge of Bachelor's Island.

I had never been hunting with Ray Jacobus (Jake), but he had a water ski boat and wanted to join us. Ray was a teacher and coach at Ridgefield High School. He was a very interesting and entertaining and a truly unique character. He was fun to be around and kept us laughing.

The third member of our group was Leroy Frazier who met Ray for the 1st time that day.

We backed the boat into the river at Ridgefield and began to load it with sacks of decoys, guns and other hunting gear. The boat had no life jackets but did include a water ski.

We got in the boat, went down Lake River until we hit the Columbia River and went up the Columbia to the outer edge of Bachelor's Island. As our boat approached the shallow beach the propeller hit bottom and sheared off the pin that held the propeller in place. We had no way to get home except to row and the only oar was a water ski.

Not allowing small details to deter us we set out our decoys and began to hunt. We had good luck hunting. It started snowing lightly and as another large flock of geese descended on us, we knocked down several and Leroy jumped up to finish off a cripple that was swimming away into the Columbia. As he fired his gun the barrel peeled back like a trombone and a piece of the barrel went through the top two joints on his right thumb, grazing his face and going through his right ear.

He put his right hand to his right ear and blood spurted out. I thought blood was coming out his ear but it actually was flowing out of his thumb. Apparently as he stepped forward towards the goose, he must have scooped snow into the barrel of his shotgun. Even though the hunt was not over, Leroy wanted to go home.

We had hoped another boat might come along, but no such luck.

We picked up the decoys, put them in sacks with the geese and piled into the boat with only a water ski for an oar. I was nominated to row. It was less than ideal, as the boat would not go straight and kept spinning around in circles. I probably didn't go 100 feet before realizing the futility of my efforts.

Ray's next suggestion was for me to walk close to shore pulling the boat with

the ¼ inch nylon ski rope. As I pulled the boat and it's contents with the ski rope, it had a tendency to follow me into shallow water.

Ray suggested I walk in deeper water so the boat could follow a straight line. I was wearing hip boots so this method worked better except when a deep hole would appear. Our progress was slow and even though it was cold, sweat was running down my face. But Ray was right when he said, "Somebody has the do it."

Eventually we traveled about a mile and reached the point where Lake River joined the Columbia. But now we encountered some new obstacles; Log rafts tied to the shore. Now I had to climb on to the logs, walk to the log closest to the water, walk down the slippery snow covered log, pulling the boat beside me until I reached another raft and repeat the procedure.

Meanwhile Leroy had been patiently sitting in the boat, holding our handkerchiefs to his hand and head. He was not a pretty sight. His thumb was swollen and bleeding profusely, his ear was not bleeding but it had swelled to about three times normal size and it was thick and discolored and it had a hole in it about the size of a dime from the piece of barrel peeling back and penetrating it.

It was hard to see his wounds clearly as it was beginning to get dark. We started to wonder where we could spend the night. We had no flashlight. We were all greatly relieved when we finally reached the marina at Ridgefield before dark. I was exhausted. As I write I am reminded of how much I miss 'Jake'. He was a real character.

Bad Timing

As I was washing my boat when we lived on Washington St. one Sunday afternoon, Dave stopped by to talk. He asked me why I never took him fishing. The answer is complicated.

At that time I was a rabid steelhead fisherman. If I had a spare hour, I would head for the river. The year was around 1980 and most people I fished with knew each other and would not advertise it if we were catching a lot of fish. We especially would not share information with strangers. Some of the 'locals' had stronger feelings than others. Accidents would sometimes happen

to the outsider's vehicles and trailers with Oregon license plates. It probably wasn't so much about outsiders catching fish but that it would bring more people and would disrupt the peace and quiet of a beautiful river.

The first time I saw an Oregon trailer backed into the water with the sled loaded on the trailer, with the pickup unable to pull it from the water because there was no air in the rear tires, I wondered how both tires got flattened. The day that I saw two trailers detached from the pickups and shoved over the edge into the river I realized that the Oregon guys were having more than a streak of bad luck.

At times we would like to bring a friend along to share the experience but many of the locals were reluctant to bring anyone new to the river because of the extra competition he could bring and criticism by friends.

There's an old saying, "Give a man a fish and he can feed his family but show him how to fish and he'll be in your spot the next morning." We all knew the favorite holes that held fish and we not only kept it quiet but if a boat came along when we were fighting a fish, we would sometimes stick the tip of the rod in the river and pretend we were hung up or just not fishing.

Sometimes that commitment to secrecy got pretty elaborate.

One day it snowed hard enough so that school was cancelled. Whenever this "act of God" occurred, my good friend Ron and I took advantage of the day off and headed for the river. At that time there was a spot below the golf course that could be fished from shore and held lots of fish. We caught several fish and made sure that we washed all the blood back into the river in case someone came along and asked how we were doing. And we always kept this information confidential. As luck would have it I had hooked a good sized fish and had been playing it for some time when a lone fisherman in a drift boat came floating down river smoking a pipe. Ron and I decided to risk losing the fish over losing the secrecy of our spot, so I laid the rod down and pretended to busy myself with other things. The fisherman waved at us and began to row over to us. He wanted to talk. He was an acquaintance of ours who was always curious about our fishing success. As he rowed into shore my fish began to get very active and jumped out of the water. John, the fisherman yelled, "You've got a fish on."

"By God, I do!" I answered, set the hook and proceeded to land the fish. He

looked at me in disbelief.

So, the tendency among local fishermen was to keep the secrets of the river secret. But I had known Dave for some time and was happy to share an evening on the river with him.

We launched our jet sled, a boat that does not have a propeller. It has a flat bottom and is powered by pumping water through the motor. It can run in about 2 inches of water if moving quickly and can go almost anywhere on the river.

Dave and I fished for about 20 minutes when I hooked and landed a steelhead. It was still in the net, lying on the bottom of the boat when another sled approached us from down river. I asked Dave to drop his line over the side and pretend we were fishing and I did the same. I just didn't want the guy to know we had caught a fish. The guy stopped about 50 ft. from us and asked how the fishing was. I came back with my usual, "Well, it's good to be on the river on a day like this."

It became obvious he was a game warden. He moved closer and looking into the bottom of the boat he observed the steelhead lying in the net. "Oh", he said, " You have a fish."

He sensed something was fishy and pulled us to shore. He asked why we didn't punch the fish on our punch card. I told him we just caught it and didn't have time to punch the card. He asked why we were fishing again and I had to tell him I had a very low I.Q. and just out smarted myself. As he examined my license I became aware that his wife had applied for a position at Woodland Schools. He mentioned that his wife would fit in well at Woodland and told me to punch the fish and went on up river. I pushed our boat back out to the edge of the current, made one cast and hooked and landed another steelhead. I won't blame anyone who doesn't believe the rest of this story but we now had another steelhead lying on the bottom of the boat and another sled came drifting around a bend from upriver.

This time I knew the occupant, a well-known local personality who was accompanied by another guy with camera equipment. He asked if we had any fish. I assume he needed fish to illustrate an article because the man with him was a writer for a fishing magazine who had come some distance to write a story about the well-known personality in our area who normally catches lots

of fish but on this day had no luck, so far. So, again I was making statements that were a little misleading like, "We just got started but it's a great day on the river." I did not say we had no fish but they could assume that.

Our 2 boats were just quietly drifting in very slow water about 40ft. apart. As we were talking, Dave got bored and started casting into the slow, deep water, which normally does not hold fish.

Guess what happened next.

He set the hook and we had another steelhead on. I was uneasy because I had not taken the time to punch the second fish yet before my celebrated friend arrived and I had inferred that we had no fish for the magazine layout. I was not interested in an article publicizing how great the fishing was on "our" river.

As Dave landed the fish, that brought the other boat over and now the 3 fish lying on the bottom of the boat became visible for all to see. I felt bad for withholding information from my friend in the other boat and his writer. If my memory is correct, the 3 steelhead were photographed and presumably became part of the magazine story.

Ray

Ruth's father, Ray was a great guy and very interested in the famous basketball coach, John Wooden, from UCLA who had just completed the goal of winning 10 straight National Championships. Ray had just finished reading Wooden's book "They call me Coach" and was very impressed by it. He talked to me about it several times.

Coincidentally, I was being honored for some basketball coaching achievement and John Wooden was the guest speaker. How this was accomplished was a real mystery because John and I were not often paired together. He and I were seated together as guests of honor. Lines began to form in front of John comprised of people who wanted his autograph. As time for the formal dinner drew closer, the lines grew longer. Finally people were asked to sit so the program could begin and John could speak. (Oddly, I don't remember anyone asking for my autograph.)

Back to Ray. When he heard that I would be on the program with John, he wished out loud that he could have been able to meet the great man. The importance of his wish was made more touching because Ray was in a battle with cancer and was struggling for survival at the time. Ray had been a very active guy enjoying all sports but the cancer had slowly become more widespread and he was no longer able to walk.

Meanwhile, at the program, John finally became free as dinner was being served. I took advantage of this time to tell John about Ray's admiration and situation. He responded by taking the 1975 program which had a well-drawn portrait of his face on the front, with his record 10 National Titles. He sat over the program for perhaps 30 seconds. At first I worried my boldness had angered him but he was apparently pondering what to write. I expected him to sign his name in the corner but instead he began writing a very thoughtful letter covering the whole front of the program. He made it very personal, showing empathy for Ray's condition and was very encouraging.

Unfortunately, the following day, cancer had played the cruelest of tricks by moving into Ray's brain. When we took the prized possession to Ray he was unable to comprehend the magnitude of John's gesture because of his deteriorating mental condition. I know Ray would have been overwhelmed by John's generosity and thoughtfulness. (We still have the program with John's kind words.)

Sam

I've always been crazy about golf; as a player, as a coach, and later in the business end.

At one time I was involved in the development, research and testing of an experimental prototype golf shaft developed by a design engineer named Al Jackson. The shaft was unique in that its static weight was only 55 grams, which was lighter than any existing shaft. It was engineered for woods only and had a very strong torque value that prevented the head from twisting on impact.

In order to make the shafts legal to use, they had to be examined by the United States Golf Association (U.S.G.A.) in Orlando, Fla.

They wanted a group of 12 assembled drivers, all uniform, same length, same exact head weight, grip weight, etc. They were identical.

In Orlando Al and I attended the Annual P.G.A. show and there were plenty of celebrities present. So I wasn't too surprised when we were invited to sit and have a lemonade with Sam Snead and Mickey Wright. I set the 12 clubs against the wall and sat with Sam and Mickey who both represented Wilson at that time. We chatted for awhile and then Sam asked if he could look at the clubs. He proceeded to waggle each club carefully. I told him they were all identical but he continued to carefully examine each one. When he was through, he sat down, asked me a few questions about the shafts, then told me he wanted one. I was a little intimidated. Since he represented Wilson, he could possibly take the club to be researched. I asked why he wanted it. He said, "I want to play it." Sam, who is known to be very frugal, peeled out a roll of bills, selected a \$100 bill, handed it to me and said, "Is this O.K.?"

I accepted the bill. He walked over to the 12 clubs, and said, "This is the one I want." I said, "Sam, they are all the same." He said, "This is the one I want." We sat down and finished the lemonade to tell some stories and I still don't know what Sam was up to. I did later make a driver for Arnold Palmer with that shaft. The next day the USGA accepted the remaining 11 clubs and certified them as meeting but not exceeding their standards. The shafts were not returned to us but I still have the last 50 shafts that were made, in my shop. In fact, one is in my driver but it doesn't hit the ball nearly as far as the ones made for the "Big Boys."

AJT

I found myself working behind the counter for Al Jackson. The event was the another P.G.A. show, this time in Los Vegas, Nevada, which happens to be the largest convention center in the world. Al's prototype candy apple shafts for woods were a big hit with the senior players on the champion's tour. The A.J.T. shafts were popular particularly with the seniors because they were looking for extra yardage. Several of the pros were hanging around the booth, checking out the new shafts, most of them wanting free samples. Two of them that I remember were Lee Elder and Lee Travino.

The talk turned to where we were going to eat lunch. I automatically reached for my wallet and it was gone. It contained my credit cards, driver's license, \$500 cash and other personal items. Feeling sorry for me, Lee Elder handed me a \$100 bill.

I still panicked. Security arrived and told me that they felt that the wallet was

in the convention center. In other words they felt it was not stolen. I still panicked. I wanted to get into my hotel room and cancel my credit cards. Problem: my room card is gone so I can't get in the room.

I stopped by the hotel desk and got in line. I explained my problem and asked for another key card. They asked me for my name and told me that no one by that name is registered here. Then I remember that my room has been compted by A.J.T. The desk person denied me a room key.

I got in another line and hoped for a different clerk. This one gave me a new room key because I am now A.J.

I went up to the room and got on the phone to call my credit cards. This is no easy task because someone from India is asking for my credit card numbers, my mother's maiden name and date of birth. Finally after hours on the phone my credit cards are canceled.

The phone rings and my wife, Ruth, tells me she has been trying to call to tell me that someone from the Taylor Made booth has found my wallet. Then I found out what it is like to uncancel credit cards and my belief in the basic goodness of man is restored.

The Extra Mile

Jesse Nichols rode my school bus. One day he made the mistake of telling me about a small lake on his uncle's farm near Meadow Glade. He told me it had huge large mouth bass. I think I was in the 7th grade.

The farmhouse was near the road on the north end and the pond was at least ½ mile away on the south end of it.

Leroy and I decided that we needed to check it out, so one warm day we rode our bikes from my house about 3 miles to the south end of Nichol's property. We had our fishing gear and entered the area of the lake from the backside, and neglected to ask permission to fish.

I don't remember the details but Mr. Nichols was near the lake and was plowing the area between the lake and his house. He apparently had been plowing several days because almost all the farm had been done. He stopped the tractor and yelled at me. I walked to him over the roughly plowed ground. He asked if we had permission to be there. He was nice enough, but insisted that no one could fish without permission. I asked how to get permission and he pointed toward a house ½ mile away across the plowed field to the north.

I looked around for Leroy and he was not to be seen. Wearing hip boots and

carrying my fishing gear, I headed for the house of permission across the plowed furrows in the heat.

I made my way to the house, knocked on the door, and a very nice lady answered. I asked if we could have permission to fish in the lake. She asked, "Didn't you just walk across the field from the lake?"

I said, "Yes, but the guy on the tractor told me to ask your permission."

She said, "He owns this farm and I am his wife. You need to ask him."

I walked back to the man on the tractor and asked him if we could fish and he said, "Sure."

I have to thank him for making an effort to teach the proper way to get permission.

We fished that lake many times in the next few years and I'm so glad I went the extra mile. We got tons of pleasure from being allowed to share their property through the years. Many times I would put the bass we caught in a bucket and transplant them into a small pond I had built on our farm.

A Fisherman's Dream

It was exactly one week before Mt. St. Helens erupted on May 18, 1980. The residents around the mountain had all been asked to evacuate. Most of the roads leading to it had locked gates to prevent residents and sightseers from getting too close. The mountain was expected to blow at anytime. Only a few diehards refused to leave their homes.

Several eruptions had spewed ash over a very large area with winds carrying it as far as Spokane. As a result, none of the usual fishing in the popular area had occurred and there was no way to check fishermen on what was being caught. Consequently the Department of Fisheries had been unable to assess the degree of success of their previous planting program.

Suzy Graves worked for the State of Washington Department of Fisheries. She and I had met a number of times on the river. She was interested in doing a sample fishing of Swift Creek and she asked if I would help.

She was going to take a boat with 2 other guys and she wanted me to take my boat and fish all day in the Swift Creek Reservoir. This sounded like a way for me to my civic duty. Les Greear and Terry Gatz (two long-time friends and colleagues from Woodland Schools) agreed to accompany me.

When Suzy finally arrived, we followed her up Lewis River Road, which winds up the valley along the North Fork of the Lewis as she unlocked gates and we relocked them.

It was a beautiful day but as we got closer to the lake the scenery became a little spooky. The ash was much deeper and it covered the trees and roads. It was very quiet. Of course there were no vehicle tracks on the roads, but there were lots of elk and deer tracks in the ash, which was about 1 inch deep. Apparently we were the only people to visit the area for some time.

As we launched the fisheries boat and my 16 ft. jet sled, Suzy gave us specific instructions on where we were to fish. She wanted us to troll the length of the reservoir to the dam and return on the opposite side back to the boat launch.

We were to keep all fish and mark the location of where they were caught.

It didn't take long for us to realize that this was not practical. We tried to keep them separate but we caught so many fish that the ones we piled on one side of the boat soon joined the fish stashed on the other side of the boat, covering the bottom and as the day wore on we had a plethora of fish with no way to keep them separate.

Eventually one of my friends began slipping fish that he caught back into the water. I think we had hundreds of trout and we found it impossible to keep the fish separated as Suzy had requested.

We stopped fishing and headed back to the launch. Before long we ran into the fisheries boat, which was disabled after running over a submerged stump barely under the surface of the water. So along with the heavy load in our boats, we attached a line to their boat and towed the fisheries boat back in the dark going only a few miles per hour.

We loaded the boats on the trailers and began the long ride home, stopping at each locked gate.

But Suzy had another surprise for us. We stopped at the Fish Hatchery on the North Fork. Little did we know that she wanted us to take every fish into the hatchery, cut it open and examine it. I do not remember the data she wanted but it seemed to take forever.

We had no way of knowing that our wives were frantically calling each other. I'm sure my wife was frantic because there is no way she could live happily without me.

Suzy gave us some trout to take home and we finally finished about 11:00p.m. We had done our bit for humanity.

Of course when the mountain blew one week later, Swift Reservoir was filled with trees and other debris.

It's a Shark

My wife Ruth lived most of her childhood on the inside edge of Horseshoe Lake, in Woodland. Her family had a small dock. In her younger years she used to water ski from it.

Now it was seldom used except when we wanted to fish. The lake holds many kinds of fish such as Bass, Carp, Trout and Catfish. We had friends visiting from the south and they were hungry for a "mess" of catfish.

We had best luck for catfish by fishing from dusk until dark. We usually would catch a variety of fish using worms for bait and they were attractive to many kinds of fish.

I felt the tip of my rod go down and set the hook in a fish. I could tell it was a large fish immediately because it turned and headed for the boat launch across the lake. Then it turned toward the freeway. I could not control the fish. It was getting dark, but I knew the fish had not surfaced. Generally if we hook a big bass or brood trout it will jump into the air. I remember saying aloud, "I just want to see it." I wanted to know what I had hooked. I had so little control over it I might have to wait until it died of natural causes.

I played the fish patiently not wanting to break it off by applying too much

pressure. Finally I began to gain line on this fish as it slowly tired. I should say as “we” slowly tired. I was using a small trout rod and a small spinning reel.

But I began gaining line and filling the spool on the reel as the fish allowed his nearly dead weight to be towed to the dock. As it got below us it turned upside down. Ruth looked down and yelled, “It’s a shark!” It wasn’t a shark but in the gathering darkness, upside down it looked like a shark.

We pulled the fish close enough to grab it and pulled out a 35 ½ inch Sturgeon that we measured and returned to the lake. That was 36 years ago and chances are, the lunker is still lingering, waiting for some unsuspecting cat fisherman.

Someone like you.

If the Shoe Fits

Eight of us adults from Woodland decided to do a golfing weekend at Seaside, OR. On Saturday we played two foursomes. Al Schurman had been complaining about a sharp pain in one of his feet. When we completed the first nine holes, Al decided that his foot was bothering him enough so that he wasn’t going to be able to continue to play, even though he wanted to play the second nine. He opened the trunk of his car and sat down on the back bumper. He removed the shoe from the painful foot and out fell a shoehorn. With that impairment removed, he played the second nine without pain, except for a few double bogies.

Hole in One

This is a story which dates back to approximately 1987. It’s a story of 3 Woodland High School students who drove their tiny car onto the Lewis River Golf Course one night. Their car tracks indicate that they took their time driving around the back nine, doing considerable damage to the course. One site of major damage was created when their tiny car was going fast enough so when they drove rapidly over the #1 tee, the car became airborne and dove head first into a deep bunker on the south side of #9 green. The three boys somehow managed to remove their car, ending the spree.

The next morning the damage was discovered.

Johnny Youngman, who was Ralph's father-in-law, lived in a home, which overlooks the 7th hole. John liked golf and frequently would help out on whatever needed to be done on the golf course.

As I drove into the course, I could see John busily trying to make the trap and green playable by building up the edges of the trap and redistributing sand. As I walked over to survey the damage, John explained to me what had occurred the previous night. No one knew the identity of the culprits, although there was lots of speculation.

While Johnny was giving me the story, his shovel struck a foreign object. John reached out and picked up the front license plate of the car; not exactly photo I.D. but close enough. The plates were exposed as well as three Woodland students.

Rats

In early days on the farm there was a fairly large chicken coop, which had maybe 100 chickens. The building was quite long, with boxes on the wall in which the chickens laid their eggs and long poles running the length of the building about 8 feet high on which the chickens would roost at night. The building had no electricity so when we went in at night we had to be careful not to disrupt the chickens because they were easily spooked. Each time I entered the building at night I would find rats feeding on the spilled chicken feed. Rats have never been my favorite animals, so I decided to eliminate them.

I set a trap and the next day found a chicken had stepped in it. I had to chase the chicken around until I finally caught it. While I tried to pry the trap open to release her, she beat me with her wings. I felt alternative methods were needed.

I didn't want a repeat performance but I felt it was time to teach the rats a lesson.

I taped a flashlight to the barrel of my shotgun. I was fairly sure my dad would approve of my new method, but to make sure it wouldn't bother him, I

chose a night when I was home alone. I was 14 years old and obviously old enough to make mature decisions.

I loaded the 12 gauge with 5 shells, waited for night and slowly opened the door to the chicken coop. I turned on the flashlight and sighted in on the first rat. I shot the rat and a hundred chickens tried to fly off the roost simultaneously, flying into each other and the wall with feathers flying everywhere. As chaos reigned, I couldn't see and I couldn't breathe, so I left and let things settle down. I went back in and retrieved what was left of the rat. The next day I patched the hole in the floor.

Actually, when my dad questioned me about the patched up hole in the floor, I explained it to him and he was O.K. with it. Honesty pays. Later, he actually held the light for me while I shot the rats. By then we had quite a lot fewer chickens but the chaos was the same as the chickens never seemed to appreciate what we were doing for them.

Damn Dan

Dave Wheatley asked me if I would be interested in helping out a television production called, "Unsolved Mysteries." The narrator of the weekly series was Robert Stack known for his portrayal of Elliot Ness in the "Untouchables."

The idea was to portray the different scenarios, which conceivably could have occurred with D.B. Cooper the night he jumped.

Most of us are familiar with the still unidentified man who hijacked a Boeing 727 somewhere between Portland and Seattle on November 24, 1971. He extorted \$200,000 in ransom and parachuted to an uncertain fate. The case remains the only unsolved air piracy case in American aviation history. The FBI surmised that he bailed out somewhere in the Lewis River area. Those of us who live nearby remember the attention brought to our area with 300 National Guard troops, 36 consecutive days of helicopters and planes cruising the area looking for clues.

Dan Cooper (the name under which he purchased his airline ticket) has become an American folk hero and annual celebrations of his feat are held at the Ariel Tavern.

The T.V. production site was at a place on the North Fork of the Lewis about ½ mile above the hatchery just above Colvin Creek in a very deep part of the river.

On the first day, of the 'filming' I launched my boat at the hatchery and ran upstream to where the action was occurring. My part in the production did not take place for a number of hours, so I wandered around the sets, talking with the actors and stuntmen and watching the make-up people. All were from Hollywood.

My wife, Ruth, had given me a Polaroid Instamatic camera with instructions to take some pictures of the Hollywood actors.

When I arrived, their agenda was to film stuntmen hanging in their parachutes from trees. They were dressed as Dan Cooper was and had various degrees of fake blood flowing from their heads.

I struck up a conversation with one of the stuntmen while he was hanging from a tree in his chute. His name was Jan and I asked him lots of questions about his profession. I was standing next to the control van and could hear the director giving directions.

There were probably 50 production members around the filming with me being the sole neophyte. As they started filming Jan, they took about ½ hour setting up three cameras and getting the lighting to their specifications. Finally the director yelled "Action!" and I remembered that I needed to take some pictures. So I stepped around the corner of the van and as Jan was descending from his chute, I took my shot.

The director yelled, "Cut! Who in the hell has the flash camera?" I dropped it to my chest as I had a strap around my neck and tried to look innocent as he came around the corner to catch the offender. As he and his assistants were walking by, the film began to unroll from the camera with a grating sound that goes with it. Before they could say anything, I confessed and promised to shoot no more.

They moved on to doing a story of D.B. Cooper drinking from the creek and a scene featuring Dan Wheatley as a hunter who discovered Cooper. Then it was my turn.

On the edge of the river in the deepest part was a crane which was to raise the stuntmen dressed as Dan Cooper with the overcoat, dress shoes and the rest of Cooper's apparel while hooked up to the parachute.

They wanted to film Cooper "parachuting" into the water. My job was to have the boat standing by to pick up the "parachuters" only if they were in danger.

They decided to put the sound boom guy and a camera in my boat, not realizing that when the guys rush over to one side of the boat, it takes away my maneuverability.

Also, their 'Coopers' were from L.A. and had no concept of how very cold river water would affect their ability to swim.

They were to drop into the water, fully clothed with the parachute and swim to the far side. The cold water was taking their breath away.

Several times I panicked when the guys did not surface for several seconds and started the boat to pick them up. Usually they were happy to grab onto the boat, but the director wasn't happy. On his bullhorn he would yell at me to "stay out of the frame." After numerous attempts, none of the "Coopers" were able to swim to the other side of the river as the current would grab the parachute and pull them down.

The director was forced to modify the plan for the scenes.

A lot of time went into this production and we watched the final program on T.V. Most of the shots were cut. That was the end of my movie career and my amateur standing.

Damn Roy

In my first year of teaching 7th grade at Union Ridge Grade School, I had a great group of kids. In the back of the room was a sizable cloakroom. One day one of the kids exasperated me to the point where I told him to go sit in the cloakroom.

This was about 10:15 a.m. We went to lunch and then P.E. when one of the kids who sat near the cloakroom came to my desk about 1:30 p.m. and said

“Roy wants to know when he can come out.” I had forgotten all about him.

Small Towns

People in small towns tend to be more trusting of each other. Of course through the years there is less closeness and trust at all levels.

When I was in Jr. High and High School at Battle Ground, I turned out for three sports annually. There was no activity bus to take student athletes home from practice so I hitch hiked home from each practice. I lived only 2 ½ miles from school. I cannot remember a time when I was not given a ride.

Years later, In 1965, I moved to Woodland. Around 1968 our T.V. quit working.

In those days if your car had to stay overnight to be repaired, you were given a “loaner” to drive until your car was fixed; without charge for the loaner. I took my T.V. to the local electronics repairman (lets call him Walt) Of course there were no computers and it was more difficult to keep accurate records.

Walt took my T.V. to be repaired and gave me a loaner to use until ours was fixed.

About three years later the “loaner” T.V. quit so I took it back to “Walt” hoping to get my original set back.

We searched his shop thoroughly but could not find the original set. He ended up giving me a new set to replace his loaner.

Almost Punked

In 1979 I was the basketball coach at Woodland High School. I had coached for 24 years and decided it would be the next to last year. In all my previous seasons our school was known for producing competitive basketball teams but who were short in stature. Most of our teams had no one over 6ft. 1in. So the guys knew to be successful they had to do the other things well. It may have worked to our advantage because people saw us as underdogs.

But this year was different. We had inherited Shannon Smith who had transferred in his sophomore year. He was raw and inexperienced as a sophomore and played Junior Varsity. In this, his junior year, he improved greatly. He was not our only good player, but he was the only good player who was 6ft.8.

I had never coached anyone over 6’ 4 and I have to admit that I did a very poor job of utilizing his size but we did build a lot of plays around him. We funneled our defense into him because he had a real knack for blocking shots.

He was in the gym working on his own or with teammates constantly in and out of season.

Just before Christmas, Shannon went down with a severe ankle injury. We had a non-league game with Battle Ground and their coach; Bill Hill had agreed to play us, which I felt was kind of a favor to us. They were strong and without Shannon they handled us. In fact about everyone handled us while we were short handed.

When Shannon returned we won some games but finished the league season in a tie for 4th place. Only 4 teams went to district. We were tied with Washougal but beat them in a play off at Ridgefield on Thursday. But the team we had to play on Friday, the first district game, was Rochester who had two 6'6 guys and was ranked 2nd in State. They had scouted us in our gym. The district games were held in Chehalis. We played the second game of the night on Friday.

We walked into the gym during the 2nd quarter of the first game and my eye caught a detail that became the reason for this story. I turned to my good friend and assistant coach Gerald P. Deans and said, "Jerry I think we have a problem. Why is the team in the same bracket as Woodland wearing colors?" After all we had brought only our whites.

We asked our players to drop off their gear and watch the remainder of the first game until time to dress.

I went to talk to the gym manager and asked if there was anything we could do, because we obviously had brought the whites instead of greens.

He said he would ask the Rochester coach if he could send someone back to Rochester, a short 11 miles away, to get their colored jerseys. We still had plenty of time to do that, at that point. The coach, 'Punky' Omeg refused, so I went to Punky personally and told him his team would be better off to play the game. "Your team is going to be really let down if they know they don't get to play because of you. And the public is going to be very critical if it looks like you are afraid to compete."

I told him, "Rochester has a great team, is undefeated, and ranked 2nd in the State and Woodland finished tied for fourth in our league. It's only a formality. Just get it over with. What if the WIAA invalidates this forfeit and

we have to play anyway?”

My pleas fell on deaf ears.

I went back to Jones, the gym manger and asked him if he had any ideas. He told me that Rochester had gone back home to get their colored uniforms and they were in their dressing room, but were choosing not to use them. My players would have a hard time accepting that we could have made this mistake and have no chance to compete. If Rochester had uniforms, why not wear them? This was a mind game.

There were several people standing around listening to my sad appeals. One of them introduced himself as the basketball coach at nearby Green Hill, (a school for bad boys.) He said, “ I can get uniforms from Green Hill, (which was located only a short distance away).”

I thought, “Green Hill. Great. Woodland’s colors are green and white.” I asked, “Can we get them by game time?”

He answered, “about 20 minutes.” By now our players were in the dressing room getting taped and dressing for the game. The prior game was in the closing minutes.

I said, “Please, go get the Green Hill uniforms.” He said it was a done deal. So time became the big issue.

The players wore only their warm-ups. When the first game ended and it was time for us to take the floor, I had no choice but to talk to the players. I apologized because they were being seriously affected by something not under their control. I told them, “ If we do get Green Hill uniforms, just do the best you can. It’s not your fault. Uniforms are coach’s responsibility, so there is no pressure on the team.”

As we were talking, the Green Hill uniforms arrived, and there was a resounding cheer. I knew, if we could get out there in time, this dog would hunt. Every player seemed to be enjoying the costume change.

The uniforms were PURPLE.

The officials began to pressure us to get the numbers in the scorebook and list

the starters. That had to be done 10 minutes prior to the game. Everyone pitched in to help and the warm-up was very disorganized. But it was way better than a forfeit.

I told them to burn into their brain that we are purple. We cannot hesitate on even one pass. The purple people are us. But we didn't have time to fit everyone properly so while we were warming up, we called the starting line-up in one at a time to the dressing room to give them a jersey. They went to the scorer's table and put their name in the book.

I called the team together one more time and they were grinning and making fun of themselves and just having fun with the muscle cut of the jerseys.


In the game, we got off to a good start and never looked back. I think we won by 18. Thank you, Green Hill.

Jim Brandt had transferred to Woodland from LaCenter because he wanted to play for Woodland and that was really LaCenter's loss. He led by example and did it well. After high school at Green River Community College, he set a new scoring record and he played both ends of the court well. Brian Tsugawa had really matured and become a solid player. Reliable Andy Anderson and Craig Eggleston were also starters with a good bench backing them up.

The team, of course, wanted to wear purple in the next game. We were still playing well and eventually won the district. We lost our first game at State, then won the next 3 to finish 5th in league, 5th in State.

And we were so thankful that our error with the uniforms seemed to have no negative effect on the team. In fact it has given us all something to talk and laugh about since except for possibly "Punky".

Within the last year of this writing, a sports writer was talking to Ruth and I. He asked for details about the above story. The bottom line was he refused to believe that the story was true. He said, "Everyone knew", that we had used the "uniform snafu" to our advantage. That is probably so but not by our planning. I'm a little flattered that "they" may think I was smart enough to pull it off, but a little disappointed that "they" would think I would do that.

 Not true, Kenny.

It wasn't a Wendt mind game. It was a Wendt screw up.

Dig Feet Dig-Fish Lake

Cliff Massie and I were approached by Les Greer to go fishing in a lake that Les had discovered while working in the woods in the summer. It was called Fish lake. We were all teachers at Ridgefield High School and were ready for an outdoor adventure.

When the fishing season opened in April the 3 of us headed up into the mountains where only Les and Big Foot had been. But I had complete trust in Les. He had been my 'John Wayne'. He was a good teacher, a good coach and a solid person. He and his wife, Pauline had often invited me to dinner and took good care of me in spite of the fact that they had their own children to care for.

Cliff and I had gone to High School together and I really felt he was a great guy. Later in life he moved to Alaska and was a very successful basketball coach. He became a guide and had a fishing camp in Kenai. Then when it became too crowded on the Kenai, he moved his camp to a very isolated native village named Dillingham. He later invited another friend and I to spend a few weeks as his guests in Alaska and we had a great adventure.

But let's get back to the local fishing endeavor.

Les had been to Fossil Lake in the summer but we found ourselves facing different conditions. There was about a foot of snow and it was a very steep mountain that we were climbing.

Les could not remember exactly where the lake was located and the lake was very small. We climbed for perhaps an hour and fog surrounded us. The three of us had become separated by a hundred yards or so but we knew where we were in relationship to each other.

As I was catching my breath, I looked down and as the fog blew to the side, it revealed a small lake below. Somehow we had climbed past the lake without noticing.

I hollered to the others that the lake was below us about 50 yards or so.

Just as I did so, my feet went out from under me and I began to slide down the steep hill toward Fish Lake. My two friends agree that as I slid faster down the hill toward the lake, I yelled, "Dig, feet, dig!" and kept repeating it as I picked up speed.

It becomes important at this point to visualize the lake. The middle was open water but around the sides of the lake was ice for about 10 feet and the ice was about 4 inches thick.

I had picked up enough speed so when I shot into the lake, I lit far enough into the middle that I easily missed the circle of ice and landed in about 4 feet of water.

After climbing for an hour, I was sweating profusely and when I hit that water, I couldn't get my breath. I still had my fishing rod in my hand and was standing chest deep in the water gasping for air.

I had found the lake.

Les and Cliff found it humorous but they did crawl out on the ice and helped me onto shore. I was cold. In spite of the snow, we managed to start a fire and the more clothes I removed, the colder I got. Not to sound like a sore loser, but I didn't do much fishing. I don't know if my fishing partners caught any fish that day but I was never tempted to return to Fish Lake.

Ivy

Don Iverson and I have known each other since 1956. We competed against each other in college golf and in many other golf competitions.

When he was about 20 yrs. old, he developed a prototype putter. He placed the ball between his feet and faced the hole. It was originally called "croquet style." A professional golfer in Portland was watching Don putting on the practice green and talked to Don about the putter.

Don had made the putter to his specifications and it was one of a kind. Bob Duden, the pro, was so impressed that he copied the putter style and it became known as "The Dude" because Duden putted very well with it. In fact he was so successful that others joined him and were also successful. The USGA

outlawed the putter and made it illegal to put the ball between your feet.

When his putter was no longer legal, Don experimented with lengthening the putter and moving it to his right side while facing the hole. He anchored it to his chest with his left hand and swing it back and forth with his right.

Then the USGA determined that this gave an unfair advantage. They ruled that there must be a minimum of 11 degrees of angle from the shaft to the putter head and the shaft could not bend within 6 inches of the head, which meant that the putter was further to the side and further from our line of sight. In spite of all the legal rulings, Don persisted with the sidesaddle style and really excelled at it.

In 1996, the first and only “World Putting Championship” was held by Dave Pelz (the Guru of the shortgame) in Orlando at Disney World.

There were to be 50 amateurs, one from each state. Don entered the competition and through a series of sectional matches, he became the winning representative from the state of Washington.

That was the easy part.

The Orlando competition was comprised of the following who qualified to represent their respective organizations.

- 25 Pros from the PGA
- 25 Pros from the LPGA
- 25 from the Champions Tour (Seniors)
- 25 Celebrity Tour players

The event was 36 holes of putting per day for 2 days and the lowest scores qualified for the third and final day.

There were 3 large greens close together, #9, #18 and a practice green. The green speed was 11 ½ on the Stintmeter.

After Don qualified as a State Champ he asked me if I would go with him to Florida and be his caddy. It sounds a little odd, but most of the Pros had their caddy to help them read greens and get from one place to another on time (and, of course, carry their club.)

We enjoyed Disney World, played some golf, relaxed for a few days and walked over the greens. One day they opened the putting course to practicing. Don asked me to take lots of pictures and Don would usually stand near some well-known Pro. When we were near Tom Kite, he finally walked over, put his arm around Don and said, "Shoot." Johnny Bench and John Unitus were happy to pose with Don. We ate meals in a tent with other players and had some very interesting conversations with the Pros.

During the competition each round was played with a different Professional Player. Most were friendly. Brad Faxon was the leading putter in the PGA the previous year. Don beat him head to head.

I remember we played with some LPGA girls including Jan Stephenson, who was also known for being the first leading tour player to pose for Playboy. That must have been a few years ago.

I don't remember Don's actual order of finish but he made it into the final day and putted really well. On one hole, Don got a 4 because he misunderstood me and putted completely off the green. That hurt. His brain was probably just overloaded by then. But we were both proud of him and it was a great experience.

Ivy and I played a lot of golf together through the years. After college, our first golfing partners were Skeet O'Connell and Ralph Fisher. Skeet was my baseball and basketball coach at Clark College.

Skeet is a man who inspired me to become a coach, someone whom I really respect as a person. I actually first met him one night at East Moreland in Portland where I was playing semi-pro baseball after graduating from high school. He called me over to the stands, introduced himself and offered me a scholarship.

Ralph Fisher was the sports department of the Columbian. Ralph had watched me in athletics at Battle Ground High School. He had also hired me to help him work local elections because, in addition to sports, he also covered local politics. He also did the entertainment section and would write about acts appearing at the Frontier Room in Vancouver. Many of them played golf and we would end up golfing together. I remember Ralph grumbling about the Editor now wanting him to cover bowling.

Don was a basketball and golf coach at the high school level. He also coached

4 years of golf at Portland State University.

Ridgefield High School needed a girl's golf coach and Don told me he would take the job if I would help him. We did that for 4 years. Then Woodland High School needed a girl's golf coach, and I was asked to step in temporarily. Ivy became one of my assistants. He loved coaching those girls and they appreciated his manner and expertise. I relied on him to teach putting.

Ivy had been involved for many years as a volunteer for the Oregon Golf Association. He got me involved and we had a lot of great experiences. It forced me to do my homework on the rules of golf.

Don succumbed to cancer in 2010 and life has not been the same since.

Good Ol' Boy

If you don't find fishing stories interesting you might want to skip this chapter.

One day after fishing, I looked out the window and saw a guy cleaning fish. Our yards joined and out of curiosity, I walked over to check it out. I recognized the guy because I had seen him on the river in a canoe. I didn't know he ever caught fish. I thought he just paddled his little canoe around the river. He really surprised me with the number of fish he had caught. I had just returned from fishing myself without much success. I had tried talking with him but it sounded like he was from another country. He said he was from "Narlins" and was "Fixin' to go fishin Tamarra."

I learned later he was from New Orleans and had done a lot of fishing in the south.

He was a good old boy. We fished a lot together and he might have smoked and drank a little too much but if he was fixin' to do something, he did it. We fished a lot together and became good friends.

Gary Loomis sponsored a regional fishing contest. It was promoted as the World's Light Line Steelhead Championship. Contestants had to register and use line that had been officially calibrated as either 2 lb. and 6 lb. strength. Most lines sold are actually stronger than advertised.

Contestants needed to be with a witness and could not be assisted by another person.

We used 11 foot long “noodle rods” which were made and probably conceived by Gary Loomis. Contestants could fish the Cowlitz, North Fork, East fork and probably the Washougal Rivers.

We decided to try the 2 lb. division. That was a real challenge. The line was so light you could snap it easily between your hands and it was difficult to tie because it was like plucking out one of your hairs. With the wind blowing, you couldn't get it to pass through a swivel or make a knot. We soon found that when a fish took the bait we could not set the hook as we normally would or the line would snap. If the fish made a quick power run, the line could break from the friction. We learned that after we hooked the fish, we just had to let it run and jump or do whatever it wished. We couldn't pull it against the current so we basically just let it swim around until it died of old age.

After a day of frustration, we decided to go with the 6 pound line. We caught some small steelhead and were anchored in a drift about 6 to 8 ft. deep. It was cold and it was raining. I had loaned my friend Al a hat which I kept for emergencies because it had begun to rain hard.

A fish struck and Al set the hook only to have the rod fly out of his grip. We could see the rod slowly floating down stream with the cork butt bobbing.

Al said, “ That fish ain't gonna get my rod.” He stood up on the side of the boat and dove into the water with hip boots on. For a very brief moment all I could see was the hat and the rod. But soon he surfaced, swam after the rod, grabbed the butt, swam and waded over to the boat. Immediately the effect of the icy water was obvious. He was speechless but thrust the rod up to me to take, but several times I said, “Al if I take the rod, the fish won't qualify for the contest.”

Al said, and I paraphrase here, “ I'm really not concerned about that at this moment. Please take the rod, now, Don.”

I took the rod and assisted Al into the boat. He was so cold he wouldn't take the rod back so I landed the fish, about an 8 lb. female. The only thing on Al's mind was, “Take me home.”

The 2 mile jet sled ride back to the launch was cold even for me. Al took a hot shower, called me up and said, "Let's get back out there." We did but we set no records that day.

Hudd

Ron Huddleston was a good friend and a good fisherman. We shared a love of the outdoors and spent a lot of time together.

In the beginning, we fished places like Cedar Creek for harvest trout and steelhead, fished other rivers from shore until I got a jet sled, which enabled us to cover much more area.

Most of the time we would drop the boat in the water in the North Fork of the Lewis River at the Little Kalama river boat launch, about one mile below the Lewis River Golf Course.

Often we would fish around Eagle Island, but we would sometimes run up to the dam or down to Woodland.

We worked together so anytime we had an opportunity we would head for the river.

We would fish in any kind of weather. There were times when we would be dipping our line in the water to keep it from freezing and icing up in the guides. At times the water was so cold that the fish became so lethargic that they either wouldn't bite or we couldn't feel them pick up the bait.

One evening we hooked into a fairly large steelhead. We were playing it and it was kind of playing us. The hole was long and narrow and the boat was free floating while we played the fish. What made the hole distinctive was at the top of the hole was a large pile of logs which were criss-crossed over each other in one huge pile. In the commotion of trying to land the fish we had the net ready to land the fish and we had the motor idling and the boat free drifting slow moving water.

One of us lunged at the fish at the stern of the boat with the net, which had an extension handle which somehow had become jammed against the accelerator.

The boat took off at full speed toward the logjam with the sudden acceleration jamming us against the stern keeping us from controlling the boat until we had bumped and bounced our way on top of the pile, stranding us completely on the logs. None of the boat or motor was in the water. It was high and dry. We climbed out and started working at freeing the boat. It took us awhile because there was no way to float the boat. We were stranded.

My main objective was to get the boat off the logjam before any friends came by and asked us how it happened. We got out of the boat and rocked it back and forth and eventually slid it into the water. Yes, we did catch the fish.

Hooked on HotShots

One day Johnny and I went steelhead fishing on the Northfork of the Lewis. When Johnny fished or hunted he did it with real intensity. He is a very skilled fisherman and well known in the Woodland area. We were in my boat drifting through an area known as Finn Hall. There are piling which reach out into the river that the old paddle wheelers used to tie to when delivering supplies to the people in that area. As we drifted by one of these piling we noticed a Hot Shot lure snagged on the piling. We decided to retrieve it. I started the boat up and John stood up in the bow to reach for it. As I approached it the boat got in water where there was less current because of the piling and I was unable to stop the boat before it coasted into the piling, throwing John off balance as he reached. The meat of his palm jammed into the treble hooks of the lure. Now the hooks were stuck to the piling and the hooks were stuck to John. His hand was holding the boat in place below the piling.

John was unhappy and displayed plenty of pain. I stood up, grabbed the pliers went to the problem area with every step rocking the boat back and forth and increasing the problem. After much hustle and lots of advise from John, I was able to cut the hooks from the piling.

John had mentioned several times that the sight of blood would make him pass out. There was a generous supply now coming from where the hooks were still deeply imbedded in his palm. He appeared to be unhappy. His mood did not improve when I told him the hooks needed to be surgically removed. He was against the idea but eventually agreed to allow me to take him to the hospital. I took him home at his request and told him, "My wife and I will be picking you up in 1 hour."

When Ruth and I arrived at his home, we found he had self medicated to the max. John was feeling no pain. The hooks were still in his hand but he did not want them removed.

When the medical staff at the emergency room was ready to work on him, he was very uncooperative.

When they asked him when he had his last tetanus shot he replied, “By God, I just had one this morning.”

The hook was removed.

Lakeriver Cats

Rich Brookshire, Cliff Massie and myself went fishing one great day on Lakeriver. One of my objectives was to catch catfish to replentish one of the ponds on our farm. I'm sure that we had fishing licenses, but like most teenage boys we did not discuss the limit or the number of fish we would keep. That detail would soon be tested as we were in a small boat and the fish we caught were all deposited into a large burlap bag, or as they were called at the time, 'gunny sacks.'

A small boat came along occupied by one gentleman in a green uniform who introduced himself as a game warden. He checked our licenses and made “small talk” with us and asked about the number of fish we had caught.

We replied that they were all in the burlap bag. He said he needed to count them. One of said, “Go ahead.”

We continued to fish but now, as we would bring in a fish one of us had the foresight to release it. And we all seemed to like the idea and followed suit.

The warden continued to count and when he approached the legal number, there were quite a few fish left to count. It became obvious that he would find more than the 75 catfish we were allowed, but he also appeared to be losing his incentive to handle the squirmey, spiney, slimey, slippery fish as he said, “Well, that's close enough. Do you know what I mean?”

We knew exactly what he meant. We had caught enough fish for the day and

would be leaving. We thanked him and pulled the anchor, once again learning yet another valuable lesson about life.

Oooops

I have a tendency to be accident prone.

When I was 5, I fell out of the car on a gravel road. (But I haven't done it since.)

When I was 8 yrs. old I was riding my horse, Gypsy. She ran under the clothesline and left me hanging out to dry.

In playing football in high school we were in the unusual situation for us and unfortunate enough to be well ahead so the coach decided to put in the subs. Dale and I were relegated to the bench for the night. As our team was punting and players were running in and out, Dale said, "Let's run in now and we might get one or two plays before the coach knows we are in the game." It was a cold night and we had been sitting on the bench for a while. We both jumped up to go in and I tore something in my back, went down and have suffered from it since.

I've already told about the 9th grade when I ran into Danis Reaves in football practice and broke my arm and collarbone.

One of my most painful accidents happened at my present home in Woodland. We live in a rural area with lots of trees nearby. One of these trees was a big maple hanging over our house and its trunk was actually about 20ft. from the house on the edge of a steep canyon.

One cold, rainy day I decided the tree had intruded enough. It was important to fall it in the canyon away from the house. It fell exactly where it should, but hung up in some trees in the canyon so it was actually lying/hanging horizontally.

I determined that while waiting, it would be a good time to cut the limbs, so I climbed on the fallen tree with the chain saw. (Don't try this at home.) I began to cut limbs as I walked out on the trunk, hanging over the canyon. I could feel the top begin break out of the trees that held it up. I felt it was time to

vacate the tree. With the chain saw I jumped uphill from the slowly falling tree. The steep hillside was soft and wet. As I landed, the tree kept falling and I began sliding down the steep, muddy hill. The tree and I reached the same spot simultaneously. The tree was about 2 feet thick where we met and it fell across the back of my lower legs, burying them in the soft hillside. I could not move and did it hurt! I was stuck on that hillside in the rain and I was alone. My left leg was sending me bad vibes. I freed myself by digging with my hands.

The next day I went to Dr. Ellis Johnson and he told me I had almost severed my Achilles tendon. He suggested if I was lucky and rested, it might heal.

About 4 days later, I was using the chain saw and a ladder to cut limbs about 15 to 20 feet high out of a fir tree when I fell off the ladder. I lit on my feet and completely severed that same Achilles tendon.

By this time you may be asking, "How's that working for you?"

Answer: Not so much.

El Coyote

Ruth and I have lived on Bozarth Heights Road in Woodland for 30 some years, not far from the hills on a private road. We have been fortunate to see large numbers of elk, deer, raccoons, porcupines, and various kinds of wildlife. In 1990, I was working around our acreage, not far from our recently built house. Abby, our springer spaniel, was with me as I was butning a pile of brush, about 40 feet from the house.

Suddenly I heard barking and growling and about 30 feet from me I saw Abby and a coyote aggressively going at each other. Within seconds they were joined by 4 more coyotes that encircled the combatants and seemed to be urging them on. I had a shovel in my hands and headed to the two fighters and succeeded in breaking up the fight. The other 4 coyotes stood their ground as I swung the shovel back and forth in an attempt to intimidate them. They stood defiantly until, one at a time, they trotted down the driveway and across the road, leaving Abby and I to tend the fire.

Ruth recently lost her cat, Luna, to the coyotes and nearly all our neighbors have lost cats and dogs to them as well.

On another occasion, Goldie, our golden retriever and I were outside our house cutting wood when she was approached by a coyote. The snow was

about 4 inches deep and the coyote appeared to be attempting to lure Goldie to chase her across an open field. I called Goldie and asked her to stay with me. We both watched the coyote cross the field and disappear down a steep draw. Goldie and I were both curious about the coyote, so we tracked it a couple hundred yards across the field. When we got to the brushy draw, we saw 4 coyotes lying just over the edge, waiting, it can be assumed, to ambush our dog.

Pick up the Rope

One winter day my friend John asked if I would take him and friend steelhead fishing. I believe his friend may have been a relative. He was not an experienced fisherman nor would I put him in the “quick thinking” category. We were to launch my boat at the Little Kalama boat launch on the North Fork.

I don't remember where John was but I backed the boat and trailer down to the water, unhooked the boat from the trailer and handed John's friend the yellow plastic rope with instructions to stand near the edge of the water holding the rope and when I pull the trailer out from under the boat, continuing holding onto the rope and pull the boat to shore.

As I pulled the trailer up the ramp and parked it, I looked down at the boat and it was slowly floating away. I yelled at him to pick up the rope, which was still at his feet. I thought the instructions had been quite simple. He said, “I dropped it.” I said, “Pick it up.”

This is where I feel the “quick thinking” part began to become more apparent.

As he stood and watched, the boat slowly began to float downriver.

“Pick up the rope. Pick up the rope. Pick up the rope,” I yelled. All this information just seemed to overload him. I ran down the ramp past him but I was too late. The boat was now on its way to Woodland and we weren't. I ran back up the ramp, got into the pickup and drove down the road stopping occasionally to view the progress of the boat. Several times I climbed down the bank to try to retrieve the boat but most of the time I just watched it float down the river. I was frustrated because I saw no way to retrieve it. It looked pretty hopeless. The boat was only on half of the river volume because it was going around Eagle Island. The further it went, the larger the river became and less the chance I had of keeping it in sight.

At this point the boat had gone a little less than a mile in an area called the old Finn Hall hole. It was a large deep hole with an eddy, which, if it caught the boat just right, might swing closest to my side of the river.

In the upper end of the hole was a big brush pile, which jutted out into the current and causes a small eddy. If the boat happened to catch sufficient dead water and could swing into that eddy, we would have a shot at it.

I drove into Mike Francis' house and walked out onto the pile of brush. The boat swung slowly into the eddy and came within about twenty feet of my position. I picked up a long limb, broke the small branches off, reached out to the boat and had just enough length with about a foot left over to carefully pull the boat to me.

I was happy.

I climbed in the boat and ran it back to the boat launch. We fished and as I recall, we caught one steelhead.

John never asked to take his friend again.

Lucky Joe

As I review the chapters of my younger years it becomes obvious that I didn't have a lot of guidance. I made a lot of my own decisions and many were pretty stupid. Fortunately my actions did not hurt a lot of other people, but I feel lucky my life went as well as it has. I got a lot of good breaks in my life and got to do a lot of fun and rewarding things.

I was fortunate to grow up in a great era, where people were respected and trusting. Neighbors knew each other. (They called when they wanted to shoot the bull.) Legal issues and disagreements were more apt to be settled out of court, and gas was cheaper.

I wish that today's young people had an opportunity to grow up in a less complicated and aggressive atmosphere.

Unfortunately they will probably say the same thing when they are my age.

On a lighter note, here are some statements other coaches around the area and I have heard from the girls through the years:

About teaching the golf swing:

- “ It’s not comfortable that way.”
- “ I already tried it that way.”
- “ I do better when I’m not helped.”
- “ I swing better when I’m talking.”

Other:

- “ If she’s not going, I’m not going.”
- “ We weren’t holding them up that much.”
- “ I have to leave early.”
- “ I will be late tomorrow.”
- “ I can’t play in the match today.”
- “ My friend is in the play so I don’t think I’ll be able to turn out anymore.”
- “ I’m riding with her.”
- “ Do we have to be there?”
- “ What day is State?” “Why do they have it then?”
- “ I don’t think I can go.”
- “ My soccer coach says I have to be at his practice.”
- “ Did someone put my clubs in the van?”

Fortunately I don’t hear these comments too often.

So here it is, the spring of 2013, I am coaching Woodland High School Girls Golf Team. I’m thinking it might be my last year. My health is declining and I’m having a difficult time keeping up physically. Fortunately I have 2 assistants who are doing a fantastic job of co-coaching with me. Sam Jouwsma is my number one assistant. He had played golf for me when he was in high school and has played the role of assistant for the last 4 years. Bob Hasbrouck, my other assistant, helped immensely even though it was first year of co-coaching. They both are very loyal and supportive to myself and the girls.

These girls are the coolest, most reliable, hard working, talented loyal and supportive group. Their parents are equally supportive and host dinners for

everyone following every home match. The girls had a pretty good year. They won their first non-league match with Kelso, won their second league non-match with Columbia River, won every league match, won the district and were state champions.

I will miss coaching and the players but have decided to leave after this great season. I think it is a good time. I only hope the girls won't think I'm deserting them.

Hope springs eternal.

I feel lucky.