



# The Historacle

The Official Newsletter of the  
Talent Historical Society

Volume 27 Issue 1

March 2021

## The Jackson County Animal Shelter Fire Evacuation

*At the first meeting after the Almeda Fire, the Board of the Talent Historical Society decided that they wanted to actively collect fire evacuation experiences. They called out to the community for self authored pieces, and have received many great stories. They have also offered to do interviews by our staff. The following is an interview of Kim Casey, the Program Manager of Jackson County Animal Services by Lunette Fleming and Myke Reeser. Thank you to Debra Moon for the transcription.*

A conscientious plan for evacuation was always in place at the shelter with drills and education for receiving animals. However, the threat of a fire within the facility, and the need for removal of animals in the shelter was not in place.

At about noon on September 8<sup>th</sup>, a call went out that the fire was approaching the facility. At 12:10 the electricity went out in the building, and Field Officer, Andy Swanson concluded that they in fact had to evacuate all animals to the Expo in Medford. With limited vehicles, volunteers were transporting crated dogs and cats in their own cars and trucks. There were 36 cats and 56 dogs in crates. Five or six animals in quarantine had to stay at the facility.

To add to this dilemma, Highway 99 heading north was heavily congested. There were several contributing factors:



Fire was engulfing Interstate 5 on both sides beginning at exit 19 (south of Talent); traffic was evacuating from Talent, causing



***Kim Casey inspects a much appreciated donation of a trailer to be used for a Spay and Neuter Clinic in the near future. It awaits renovation.***

great congestion. The wait to get away from the fire was intense.

The Animal Shelter is located on Hwy. 99, a mile north of Talent. A single line of fire advancing northward was the biggest threat to the shelter—it was heading toward, and possibly surrounding, the shelter area. The maintenance man, Tim, had thankfully turned off the gas at the shelter. Field Officer, Andy Swanson, actually stayed at the facility from 8 pm until about 3 am the next morning, using the hose at the building to keep the roof, trees and the building structure safe from the flames.

Tim, the maintenance man, took the five animals in quarantine and fostered them in his home. Many unnamed volunteers fostered run-away

animals too in order to keep them safe from the fire.

At the Expo, along with sheltering humans, the outdoor arena was used for animals. Kim Casey, the shelter's program manager, stayed at the Expo for nine days. In addition to the animals in the shelter, other pets and livestock were evacuated to the Expo. There were rabbits, birds, goats, chickens,

llamas, pigs, and cows.

There were also rodeo animals: bucking horses, 36 cutting horses, and 3 unidentified horses. Twenty-eight thousand pounds of animal food was consumed at the Expo from September 8<sup>th</sup> through the 21<sup>st</sup>.

The animal rescue was a remarkable event made successful by amazingly devoted people working together.



*At the Expo*

# Talent Historical Society

The Talent Historical Society researches and preserves the history of the Talent area in Southern Oregon. We offer a collection of historical archives to help local residents and visitors become better acquainted with our area's rich history.

We are members of the Jackson County Heritage Association; a group of heritage nonprofits dedicated to the collection, preservation, and interpretation of Southern Oregon's cultural history.

We operate a museum and meeting place located at:

105 North Market Street  
Talent, Oregon

The museum is open Saturday and Sunday from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

General Business/Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 582  
Talent, OR 97540

Phone Number: (541) 512-8838  
Email: [info@talenthistory.org](mailto:info@talenthistory.org)  
Web Page: [www.talenthistory.org](http://www.talenthistory.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/talenthistory/](http://www.facebook.com/talenthistory/)

*The Historacle* is published quarterly.

Editor: Myke Gelhaus

You may submit your written work about historical Talent to be considered for publication in the THS newsletter. Our research library is ready for you to get started on an interesting local article! We are especially looking for more tales from early to middle 20th Century,

## MUSEUM HOURS SATURDAY & SUNDAY Closed Until Further Notice

### Memberships Since Last Issue

#### **New Memberships:**

John Enders

Shirley Gleason

Steven & Ann Godwin

#### **Renewals:**

Christine Bate

George & Colleen Baylor

Mike & Tammy Dalton

Martha & Anthony Davis

Allison French & Emily Minah

Greg Goebelt

David & Alice Hodson

Dan & Linda Jackson

Robert Jacobs

Frank Jones

Barbara & Dick MacMillen

Nick Medinger & Jana Sweet

Ron & Stella Medinger

Page One – Debra Moon

Myke Ann Reeser

#### **Lifetime Memberships:**

Susan (Hartley) Andrews

Joan C. Barnhart

Poppie Beveridge

Jim Bradley & Patricia Remencuis

Marla Cates & Jan Ritter

John & Judy Casad

Joan Dean

Gladys Fortmiller

Margay Garrity

Bud & MaryLouise Gleim

Lunette Gleason-Fleming

Dale Greenley

Joe Hunkins

George Kramer

Jack Latvala

Matt & Antoinette Lichtenstein

John Wahl

Edwin McManus & Family

Michael Mills

Janice A. Napoleon

#### **Additional Donations:**

Richard & Donna Corrigan

Steven & Ann Godwin

David & Alice Hodson

Barbara & Dick MacMillen.

### **Honorary Lifetime Memberships**

Bob Casebeer   Jan Wright   Susan Moulder   Katherine Harris



### **Spring Will Be Here Soon!**

#### **Time to Order Your Talent Tomatoes**

**See Page 11 for the Order Form which must be received by May 3rd.**

**THS volunteers will deliver the plants to you on Friday May 7th or Saturday May 8th.**

“Common sense is genius dressed in its working clothes.”   Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Presidents' Message *by Ron Medinger*

Why should you start following the THS Facebook page? Because you don't want to miss Welborn's March 7<sup>th</sup> diary entry. If you need help, email us at [info@talenthistory.org](mailto:info@talenthistory.org)

**Feb 26th, Sunday** - Hattie & Wallace sit up with Ellen last night. Henry is down with the fever this morning and Charly and Nick quite sick. Dr Caldwell got here at half past nine and recommended that Ellen & Henry should be taken immediately to the Springs, so Andrew got Mitchels wagon and we put straw in the wagon and lifted Ellen bed and all in to the wagon, and Kate and Wellie. Wallace took Henry up in our wagon, they left Robert Charly Nickolsen, Emmet and me at home. Charly & Nick not very well, I have hired Chester to work another week He is here to night. Bob Robison called down. Wallace has Just got back he reports the safe arival of the ambulance train at the Soda Springs under charge of Dr M. C. Caldwell. Andrew is not coming till morning. I feel much better to night Emmet is sleeping quietly, Nicholas is safe in the Crib, not Coughing Much, and I am going to bed. *Tune in again Sunday, March 7th, for Welborn's next entry!*



**Ellen Beeson's Gravestone**

## Mid-Century "Our Day Off" Friendship Quilt on Loan to Talent Historical Museum

*By Jan Wright*

In 1937 a friendship quilt was made by some of the members of the O.D.O (Our Day Off) club in Talent, Oregon. The club with the emphatic name was for women who set aside one day a month to socialize and take a break from their housekeeping and work duties.

When each block on the quilt was finished and signed by individual club members it was assembled into a quilt top, backed with available fabric, lightly quilted, and bound. Bob Jacobs loaned the quilt to THS and helped identify the owner as his



**1937 O.D.O friendship quilt names each person who contributed**

grandmother, Myrtle Jacobs. Other names on the quilt include Lovella Long, Lydia Gardner, Eva Wedge, Edith Hayman, Emma Wolgamott and Edith Cochran. All these women are gone but one person who signed the quilt as "Pauline" was interviewed in 2011. Pauline Jacobs Allen,

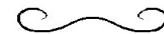
daughter of Myrtle Jacobs remembered nearly all the women and one man who contributed their blocks to the quilt. In May of this year, Jan Wright is scheduled to talk about this quilt to a Zoom audience for the Rogue Valley Genealogical Society. The keepsake quilt is a great example of the value of using friend groups as a source of research in finding traces of one's ancestors.

## You are Invited

The members of the Wagner Creek Cemetery Association invite the public to join us in our annual efforts to beautify Talent's historic Stearns Wagner Creek Cemetery in preparation for Memorial Day. Volunteers are encouraged to bring tools for weed abatement, refreshments, and wear sturdy footwear.

Work commences the weekend before Memorial Day at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday May 22, 2021.

If Covid restrictions allow, a potluck is scheduled for Noon at the picnic area. An Annual Membership Meeting follows the potluck. The cemetery is located on Anderson Creek Road just past Allen Lane. For more information call cemetery sexton, Lunette Fleming at 541-535-3902. By calling the sexton, volunteers can also participate in placing American flags on the graves of U.S. Veterans buried at the cemetery on the Friday before Memorial Day.



**Myrtle and Ed Jacobs with two of their children, Bill and Mary Jacobs**



## Stories of Evacuating the Almeda Fire *Continued* by Ron Medinger, THS Board President

***On September 8<sup>th</sup>, the life of Talent, and many Talentians, changed forever.***

I work for Harry & David and on that day, I was working from home because of the COVID-19 issues affecting our world this year. At about 11:00 a.m. I could see from my home office many vehicles zooming past our living room windows on the front of our home. This was certainly unusual because no one “zooms” in Mountain View Estates! The speed limit in the park is 15 mph.

I knew there was a fire in Ashland that morning, but even with the high winds I thought there was no way it would make it all the way to Talent. I have never been more wrong.

As I looked out our front windows, I saw strong winds with debris flying through the sky and a police cruiser parked around the corner with its lights flashing. I went out the front door and walked over to the cruiser. More cars rushed past as I crossed the street. It was an Ashland Police car and there was no one in the car. I looked down the street to see an officer walking down one driveway about a half-block away and then up the next driveway. It was obvious he was going door to door to alert people. I started walking quickly toward the house he was at.

As he exited that driveway and started towards the next, I called to him asking if we were being evacuated. He stopped, turned toward me and hollered, “YES, GET OUT.....NOW!!”

I asked, “Where should we go?” He answered, “DRIVE NORTH!” I asked, “To where?” His response, “JUST GET OUT AND DRIVE NORTH NOW!”

I did get out, but only after I spent about 10 minutes gathering as many things as I could think of that were precious or irreplaceable to us. More on that later.

When I did get out, I didn’t go far. I parked in the Talent Truck Stop parking lot across Valley View Road from Mountain View Estates. I felt fairly safe because I was surrounded by the huge concrete parking lot of the Cummins (the old Walmart) parking lot across the street and the similarly huge gravel parking lot of the truck stop. There were many others who chose to stop here as well.

From that vantage point, we could clearly see the overpass where Valley View Road crosses I-5. I was videoing all the activity going on in the area when the fire got to the overpass. It jumped Valley



***Watching the Almeda fire engulf our homes from Rapp Lane..***

View Road like it wasn’t even there. That’s when I realized how serious the situation was. This wasn’t a wildfire; it was more like an incinerator. Shortly after that we were all instructed to move out of the area to a safer location.

The “safer location” I chose was on the side of Rapp Road just where it crosses the railroad tracks. This was where I saw Jan Wright and her daughter and spoke with them for a couple of minutes. Jan was on her own evacuation route and would later join me as a fire victim who lost her home and all its contents.

After about 10 minutes there, I realized I could probably get a better view of the valley from Rapp Lane. I drove there and joined several Talentians that were watching the same horror I was. Again, I videoed, for as long as my phone battery lasted. I ended up spending probably an hour or so watching from that vantage point.

Finally, I decided to go down to the museum and charge my phone. Arriving at the museum, I found that the power had gone out. Once I realized it, I was not surprised, I had just not thought about that possibility. I returned to my car and idled for about 15 minutes charging my phone.

Then I walked to the corner of Highway 99 and Valley View Road. I stood with my back to Talent Market & Liquor’s concrete block building. That gave me what I knew was a false sense of security. The scenes I saw there were perhaps the most chaotic of a disastrous day.

There were two Oregon Department of Transportation workers who were “in

charge” of the intersection. They had been tasked with maintaining order in chaos and directing traffic. I’m sure it was not something they had signed up for.

There was steady general public traffic coming down Highway 99 from the north. This included everything from motorcycles to semi-trucks. There was traffic coming out of Talent on Valley View. There were police, sheriff and fire vehicles speeding back and forth occasionally stopping and giving ever changing directions to the two ODOT guardians of the intersection. It was hot, it was windy, it was smokey and it was overwhelming.

There were people who wanted to drive south on Highway 99 despite the danger. The guardians stopped them. There were people who wanted to drive Valley View to the Interstate despite the danger. The guardians stopped them. They were yelled at and no doubt cursed, but these two knew their jobs and did them admirably.

At some point, it was finally decided there was no choice but to open up Valley View to the freeway to alleviate some of the crush of traffic. Seeing this, I hoofed it back to the museum to get my car. Driving this route I could get within a half a block or so of my house and maybe I could see what was happening in my neighborhood.

I drove back to the intersection and was allowed through to connect to the freeway. Upon reaching the Cummins driveway, I pulled off the main road into the driveway. It was too hot and smokey to stay, but I got a quick look and from my parked car took a photo of what I believed was our house fully engulfed in flames. I stopped just long enough to take that photo and then rejoined the flood of vehicles headed for I-5.

It was about 4:30 and I finally decided to follow the officer’s orders and “drive north!” It didn’t take long to reach the south Medford exit, but from that point to my son’s house in west Medford, it took at least an hour to reach my destination.

I’ll share with you now my Facebook post from the next day to continue my story.

**09-09-2020** This has been a long and tiring day. After a late-night trip to Talent



last night to confirm that our house was indeed gone in the wildfire that swept up the Rogue Valley of southern Oregon, neither Stella nor I slept much. We were fortunate to have our son Nick and our wonderful daughter-in-law Jana to take us in last night, feed us, and give us a place to collapse.

The very first thing I did this morning was to file our insurance claim for the house and contents. I knew there would be a very long line, forming quickly, today and didn't want to get lost in it.

We started out pretty early this morning and made the first stops in our busy day to buy clothing. Again, dozens of families lost their homes and businesses yesterday and overnight so we figured we'd best buy some undies while there were still undies to buy!

We filled up the car with gas and then headed for Talent to see what we could see.

I've posted a video on my page showing what we found at Mountain View Estates, our home until yesterday. I have many more photos of our own personal devastation to help document our losses for the insurance company and may post a few of the more poignant ones on my Facebook feed in days to come.

We recognize that we are both in shock about what has happened. I expect it will take a while to sink in.

After our own home inspection, we drove around to see what we could see in Talent. Our sweet little town that we moved to in 1988 certainly took quite a blow over the last 24 hours. We lost several historic buildings (of course Ron would be looking at the historic buildings), many businesses and so, so many homes.

That's not to say there isn't a lot of Talent remaining, there is! Along with some of our most precious historic buildings. The firefighters drew a line along Talent Avenue and didn't lose anything behind that line. The fires were only a block away from one of the oldest church buildings in southern Oregon along with the star of our downtown, an 1899 Schoolhouse that has been everything from a schoolhouse to our City Hall, to our Library and our Community Center for over 120 years. (can you tell that I kind of like that particular building?)

Again, I will post more photos in the

days to come, today has been a little overwhelming.

Stella was already at work on Tuesday morning when this whole thing started, so it was up to me to be the one to bug out and decide what to take with me. Our whole neighborhood literally had minutes to make our decisions.

First in the car? The laptops! I had my personal laptop, one of Talent Historical Society's laptops and my Harry &



*Mountain View Estates, our home was the 5th one up the lane.*

David work laptop. (I was working from home when I noticed all the cars hurrying out of our park and went to see what was up.) I also grabbed Stella's personal laptop and her laptop from her church (she's the treasurer for her church). What I found out much too late was that she also had a work laptop at home. Oops! Didn't even realize that.

Next off the wall came the irreplaceable family photos which ranged in date from 1881 to 1957. They got stacked carefully in the car, so as not to break the domed glass in some of the frames. I stood in our bedroom looking at the upright jewelry box Stella got as a gift one year. How could I save that? I couldn't, so the drawers came out and the "family jewels" got tossed into the car.

Finally I looked at my shelves of books I'd purchased over the past 45 years, so that when I retired, I'd have all this collected knowledge to continue my family research into both sides of our family, to pass on to future generations. I couldn't take it all, so I grabbed about a half-dozen of my most cherished and irreplaceable books and finished the pile in the car.

That was it. No clothing, no prescriptions, no CPAP machine, nothing else.

All those things can be easily replaced.

Now since then, in perfect 20-20 hindsight, it might have been nice to grab our insurance files or our marriage license or our wedding album of some of the treasured genealogical memorabilia that I've thought of now but wasn't in plain view as the stuff I did grab.

I can't let those things bother me moving forward. I can certainly have my regrets, but what is done is done and here we go! Off into the future!

I spent most of the afternoon in and around Talent watching things unfold in front of me. I was stunned. By the time I did leave, I was able to drive close enough to our house to see, from about a block away, through the unbelievably thick smoke, what I was sure was our house fully engulfed.

By the time I made my way to Nick's house in Medford, Stella was already there waiting for me. I'd called ahead to tell her what I saw so she knew what was up when I walked through the door.

I'd been thinking about what could be the bright side of this so I could try to cheer her up.

The kitchen! She hated the kitchen in our house and was hoping someday to be able to redo it into the kitchen that my cooking genius wife deserved. That was it. That was my opening line!

When we embraced, I started to tell her what the one good thing out of this was going to be, but she interrupted me and said, "The one good thing about this is, I don't have to use that damned kitchen anymore!"

That's why I love her. That's why we can face this together and come out the other end just fine. We were made for each other.

Since that Facebook post on September 9th, much has happened in our lives. We were lucky enough to find a place to live through a friend of a friend. We moved in around the first of October. It's a nice temporary home. I retired from Harry & David on November 18<sup>th</sup> and we've ordered our new home that will be placed at Mountain View Estates sometime in late summer 2021. It will have a VERY nice kitchen.

We are really looking forward to being back home again.... in Talent.



## Almeda Fire Memoirs - by Cathy Kreisman

*Including the Adventures of Rocky the Great Pyrenees*

I live in South Talent Oregon on a small farm with sheep and chickens with my husband, Richard. On Sept 8 2020 I woke up in the middle of the night to high winds. We have a lot of walnut trees on our property and in this season walnuts are dropping from the trees when they are ripe. The high winds that night caused walnuts to pound down on our roof. There were so many and constant. It was way beyond anything I'd ever experienced before.

Late morning that same day the winds were still blowing very hard and I got a fire alert on my phone that was located in Ashland just south of here. Evacuations were being ordered there. My husband, Richard, and I had lunch and went to a neighbor's house that is up the hill from us and we could watch the fire advance. It was headed in our direction. I went home and started packing. Shortly after, I got a text message from Dana, my husband's cousin who also lives in Talent. He and his partner, Michele were evacuating. I was shocked!! I had heard NOTHING about the fire being in Talent. We live on the south end of town so I was very concerned.

I texted Richard and told him to come home immediately. Once he came home, we made the decision to leave. Richard went outside and turned on our water cannon so it was spraying

the roof of our house. We finished packing. We packed up the car with our things, our two small dogs and dog food. We got a call from a neighbor who was stuck in Ashland. Her mother was in their house alone and they asked us to get her and take her out. We said sure. As we were heading out, she called again and told us she had called the sheriff and they said they would get her. So we left. It was very clear right away that it was going to take a long time to get out of town. We were in a long line of cars trying to go the same way we were. About 10 minutes later that same neighbor called us to tell us that the sheriff hadn't picked up her mother yet.

Richard turned around to head back home, but the police stopped him. Richard said he needed to get to this elderly woman who hadn't gotten picked up yet. The police pointed out some police cars up the road and said they were on their way. So we turned back and started out again. We spent an hour going about 2 miles. Finally Richard turned off the highway on a back road and we headed to Medford where his brother Steve lives. We spent that afternoon and evening with Steve and Kate. We watched the news about the fire and they graciously served us dinner. About 8PM we heard that they were then at evacuation level 2. That means they should be packed and ready

to go. Level 3 means go. It became clear to us that we needed to leave. We decided to drive back home to see if it was still there. We didn't know where else we could go. We also knew that the leading edge of the fire was past us. In retrospect, I don't think I would do that again, but we wanted to see if we still had a house.

We drove the back roads through Medford and Phoenix towards Talent to avoid traffic and the fires on the main roads. When we approached Phoenix, we could see the flames in town. The sky was red. It was awful. Then we got to Talent and turned up the main road, Talent Avenue. The left side of Talent Ave for about 1/2 mile was in flames. It was a nightmare. We continued up the street and got to a place where there were no flames and finally reached home.

There was a car blocking our driveway. Someone had pulled off the road into our driveway crosswise. Then they left their car presumably to enter our property. Since looting is a common occurrence in these situations, I was scared. We drove on the grass around the car and entered our property. It was clear right away that we had no power. I went into the house, and Richard started walking around looking for the owner of the car. By the time I left the house with a flashlight, Richard had found the man who had expensive looking camera equipment around his neck. He was apparently using our property to get pictures of the fire. I was pretty shocked.

Before he left, he saw one of our big field dogs, Lilly walking around our yard. She and Rocky live outside in the field protecting our sheep from predators. The



**KRAMER & COMPANY**  
Historic Preservation Consultants  
George Kramer  
386 North Laurel  
Ashland, OR 97520  
541-482-9504  
www.talent.org/talentorg  
george@preserveoregon.com

Thanks to these  
businesses for  
supporting the Talent  
Historical Society at a  
Sponsorship level



**Sanctuary One at Double Oak Farm**  
13195 Upper Applegate Rd.  
Jacksonville, Oregon 97530  
541.899.8627  
[sanctuaryone.org](http://sanctuaryone.org)



*Renee's Countrywood Adult Foster Care*  
rctokar209@gmail.com  
Renee Tokar  
Owner  
541-826-2332  
541-778-0903



541.840.5966  
**GREG GOEBELT**  
Deluxe Home Team  
Specializing in Talent and Ashland  
GGoebelt@gmail.com | [www.GregGoebelt.com](http://www.GregGoebelt.com)



**Page One Press**  
Debra Moon  
Writing Services  
Books/Articles  
Grant Writing/Evaluation  
Group Instruction/Facilitation  
Presentations  
530-570-5113 debra.moon7@gmail.com  
[www.page1press.com](http://www.page1press.com)

breed is Great Pyrenees. They are very good at protecting our sheep and also escaping the field. Since we had no power, our invisible fence system was down and she "escaped". Little did we suspect at that point that she wasn't the only one. We put her in the barn until we could get some power to the fence system.

We went to bed with our cell phones close by. The next morning we still had no power. That meant we also had no water (we are on a well with a pump) and no internet. Our first priorities were our refrigerator and freezers. Richard went back to his brother's house in Medford and borrowed a generator. He started it up and ran extension cords into the house and barn to keep them going. Over the course of the next 5 days we learned how to take sponge baths with very little water, flush toilets with buckets of water from the irrigation canal and start up our stove with matches. We also adjusted our sleep habits to go to bed when it got dark and wake when it got light. Our nephew filled a large tank with clean water for us and the rest of the neighbors. Another neighbor helped us get more gas for the generator. It was so wonderful the way our community helped each other out.

It took us a day to notice that one of our field dogs was missing. Since our invisible fence was down (due to the power outage) we figured it was a strong possibility that Rocky had escaped. Both

our dogs are escape artists. They love to go wandering. They have no fear of climbing a fence if they are allowed to get close to it. I had long ago deleted the Facebook app from my phone, but I decided it was time to put it back on since I couldn't use my computer. I had to get onto one of the lost pet's pages and put in an ad to look for him. I started that process and found that it

basically went "viral" all across the state. Two of my nieces in the Portland area were cross posting my ad in other sites. I am so grateful for their help.



Shaved!

without it we might not have found him.

I got several pictures from folks but one caught my eye. A vet in Portland sent me a picture of a dog whose head was clearly Rocky's but he had been shaved. I was not clear it was Rocky so the vet also sent me a picture of his license tag. (yes, he had that and our phone number written on his collar.) The license number clearly matched our records. It was amazing to me that our dog was now 300 miles away with no hair. I couldn't comprehend that. I notified my nephew



Home Again,  
Hairy, and  
Happy

Travis that our dog was now in Portland. He said he was going to drive there to fetch him with his daughter.


Rocky lives outside. He has long thick hair which requires grooming several times a year. He is constantly dirty and full of mats. Frankly, he looks like a dog who is not cared for. Which is really incorrect but that's the way it is. Appearances can be deceiving. We didn't have the whole story on why he was brought up to Portland. I now knew that is the case though. He already escaped the original person and someone else found him and took him to a clinic in Portland where the pictures were taken.

Once Rocky left the clinic, the first rescuer saw the second rescuer and Rocky and claimed the dog belonged to him. Rocky was turned over to him at that point. My understanding is that the first rescuer took Rocky up to Portland to purchase a truck. After that was accomplished, he headed home to southern Oregon. Meanwhile Travis was still headed to Portland.

Further conversations with the vet put me in contact with the second rescuer. She felt bad about handing over Rocky, but I felt she really had no reason to doubt him. He apparently felt that Rocky had been abandoned in the fire and that he would now take him as his own. He had decided to shave Rocky to clean him up.

Travis reached Portland and was doing investigations of his own. He got

*Continued on Page 10*



**Rick Chester, Pharmacist**  
Naturopathic Physician  
& Acupuncturist

205 N Pacific Highway  
Talent, OR 97540  
Phone: 541.535.5843  
Fax: 541.535.6362

**STORE HOURS**  
Monday-Friday: 9:00AM-6:00PM  
Saturday: 9:00 AM - 1:30PM  
Free Local Delivery  
Drive-Thru Window  
Compounding



**CHRIS BROWNE**  
Assistant Vice President  
Store Manager  
NMLS #559124  
Tel 541-618-6779  
Fax 541-535-3336  
www.umpquabank.com  
chrisbrowne@umpquabank.com  
4000 South Pacific Highway  
Medford, OR 97501



**HarryandDavid.com**

f t p

Harry and David, LLC  
2300 South Pacific Highway Medford, Oregon 97501

**Talent Dental**  
General Dentistry  
**Mehdi L. Ghavam, D.M.D., LLC**  
P.O. Box 275  
106 North Market Street  
Talent, OR 97540  
Phone: 541-535-1597



Office Hours By Appointment



**Mountain View Estates**  
A MANUFACTURED HOME  
COMMUNITY FOR PERSONS  
55 AND OLDER  
(541) 535-3223  
mountainviewesta@qwestoffice.net  
333 Mountain View  
Talent, Oregon 97540  
Chris Hudson  
Manager/Owner



**STAR PROPERTIES**  
Call today at 541.535.9999  
Talent's Full Service Real Estate Office for 25 Years  
**JACK LATVALA BROKER/OWNER**  
P.O.Box 442 - 88 Lapree Street - TALENT, OR 97540 - 541.535.9999  
jacklatvala@gmail.com - www.starpropertiesrealestate.com



## My Mother's Daughter

### The Continuing Memoirs of Jewel Donaca Lockard

#### Part Four—Our Daily Lives

Now to get down to our everyday home life. Mom could never get off her schedule while living in the old house, not the new one either until years later. She just had too much work to do and not enough fun or anything to look forward to, only keeping us well and going. First there had to be three meals a day. In the morning, around seven o'clock, Dad got up first to get a fire going in both stoves during cold weather, otherwise just the cook stove. He would get the coffee pot going and stir up a bowl of pancake batter (from scratch), also a pot of mush. If Dad had happened to get a deer, we'd also have good ol' heart and liver. By now Mom would get up to dress, standing on the rough splinter floor with no slippers or robe. She'd hurry to get a pan of milk from the cupboard outside and skim the cream from the top of the milk so we could have it to go over our hotcakes or mush. It was also her job to get a bucket of water from the barrel in the yard and set it on the old black commode, and perhaps fill the tea kettle at the stove.

The pancake batter was made with flour, baking powder, milk, egg and for variety, he used cornmeal or buttermilk. I loved the buttermilk ones. They were best when soggy and covered with homemade syrup and cow's cream. They couldn't be beat. We'd have syrup most of the time, but when we ran out, Dad would make sugar and water syrup. Sometimes he'd brown the sugar first to give it a different taste. We had no fruit juices for breakfast, nor do I want any today. We had a small amount of jelly, but mostly syrup. Sometimes we had egg toast, more often after we got hens. Leland and I would get up and dress and then we would all sit down to breakfast. What's more we didn't fiddle at the table either, we'd eat.

Then Dad would go to do the chores, like feeding the chickens and milking the cow. If he was going to Steve Luniks, Mom would fix sort of a lunch and start cleaning up the table, getting the milk strained and set into the outside cupboard.

She had to heat water on the stove to do dishes. Dad would leave and we kids would play through the day, but when we were old enough for school we'd go with in the car and he'd take us part way to school.

Mom would be very busy all morning, churning, washing on the washboard, and scrubbing the old house, beds to make too. She washed on Tuesday, ironed on Thursday and cleaned house on Friday. She had to cook a dinner at noon if Dad was home and cook another meal at night – supper. After dinner she'd wash herself and rest a little then get the sewing or mending done or piece on a quilt. Then it was time to feed the chickens and start supper. Maybe have a few minutes for a short walk or look after her flowers. As I grew older, I fell to helping her and fell more or less into her pattern of lifestyle. If it were winter or just raining, she or I had to stand under the drops to fill the lamp or get the milk in from the milk cupboard. We had no porch. Then Dad would come, or we kids too, after school and she'd get supper. Dad got in the wood and Leland helped. I helped when I was old enough. After supper Mom did the clean-up.

The other two meals of the day were more or less the same as breakfast. We had no snack foods or lunch items. Mom baked bread two or three times a week (yeast bread often using potato water) and if we ran out before she managed to bake, she'd make soda or baking powder biscuits or just pan bread. She would bake 3 loaves and a small pan of scats as

we called them (rolls). Mostly we had venison, gravy, bread, boiled potatoes, fried potatoes, boiled venison bones or dry beans with bacon rinds. Once in a while we had a pig, butchered and Mom canned it. Also Dad smoked some of it. Mom also canned deer meat. Sometimes Mom cooked up an old hen and dropped dumplings in with her. No noodles. Rarely did we have fried chicken. Dad didn't like fried chicken. Dad couldn't have a meal without dessert so that meant having pie or cake on hand which meant Mom

had to bake at least every other day as desserts didn't last long. Sometimes we had pudding, especially chocolate. We also had little wild black berries (dewberries). We had little or no fruit as we had no fruit trees and we certainly couldn't buy any. Once in a while someone would

give us a little fruit and after I started to school I'd get an apple or two off trees along the road and put them in my lunch pail until I had gathered enough for Mom to bake a pie. We had lots of milk and cream, the latter poured lavishly over desserts. One thing I loved was hot rolls with thick cream and sugar. When

the cow was dry we used canned milk.

Mom had all the churning to do. It was stirred in the old brown bowl until we got rich enough for a churn. Most of the time we had more butter than we could use, and Mom would bury it without Dad knowing, not knowing what else to do with it. I never liked churning too well. At first when a cow would freshen the

cream churned fast, but after six months you'd have to churn longer and longer, sometimes maybe most of the day. Sometimes a person could churn all day and not get butter, so we'd dump the cream.

**Washday** – We'd get breakfast over with and what other necessary things as fast as we could, then Mom or I, when I was old enough, would carry water from the barrel and put it in the copper boiler on the stove, cut up Fels Naptha or White



Copper  
Boiler



King soap into the water and let the water come to a boil which would dissolve the soap. We also had to use water softener as the water was very hard. We'd get the wooden bench that was used as a seat at the table and set it along in front of the commode (which we used as a washstand) by the door, then the tub and dish pan that were hanging outside the house on a nail and set them on the bench, then the washboard behind the washstand, also a dishpan on the floor for the finished product. Then we would sort the clothes, put the hot water we needed in the tub (about 6 inches) with the white clothes first. Stick in the washboard, pour in enough cold water so you can get your hand in the tub, take a bar of soap and start rubbing each garment with it, ring out the garment, shake, put in rinse pan, rinse and then drop in the pan on the floor. When the rinse pan was full we would take clothes outside to hang on the clothesline, or rocks or nails on the side of the house. On stormy days, the clothes were hung around the heater in the house. When the white clothes were rubbed they went into the boiler to boil. That made the whites really white and so clean. Now they were ready to be taken out with a clothes stick, put into a pan and back in the wash tub to be wrung out, rinsed and wrung out again ready to hang outside. The colored clothes weren't boiled.

Sheets you started rubbing at one end and continued all the length of the sheet until you got to the other end. Shirts took extra rubbing, rub on soap, get the cuffs and the collar and go up and down and all around the garment. Before the colored clothes were rubbed, dinner had to be gotten if Dad was home or even us kids. That meant venison to fry, potatoes to boil, gravy to make and dessert. If it was just Mom maybe she'd cut a cold piece of venison, dip her bread in coffee and pour cream on the bread, get the 17 dishes done and go back to rubbing. She didn't wash Dad's pants or overalls very often and that was OK by him. They were too hard for her to rub and he didn't want to change anyway. She would finish rubbing, hang the clothes out, and clean up the mess. Then she'd clean herself up, put on a clean dress and rest a short while before starting the evening work. Oh, I forgot the starch for the dresses and slips.

She never sewed on wash day as her hands were water logged so she would read for an hour or two. A great deal of the time we had dry beans for supper on wash day.

Then on Thursday there was a huge ironing to do. The clothes were sprinkled the night before and rolled in a sheet so the dampness would get even for the next day's ironing. Mom would get morning work done then set 3 irons on the stove and cover with the skillet to heat faster.

At first she had no ironing board, so she used a folded sheet flat on the table. In time she got a 1 x 12 board, shaped it, padded it and laid it from the table to a box on a chair. This was used for years until we got into the new house and then

we got a regular folding one. Now I have one that folds down from the wall! It took probably two hours or more to do the Thursday ironing.

Friday was house cleaning day. It meant heating water in the dish pan and using a rag mop that you usually fastened a rag in, like a piece of men's worn long handles, until it wore out completely then rummage around for another rag. The floors were rough and splintery, but Mom kept them clean. I did to when I got older. When she did house cleaning, she'd sweep

the dust from the poles overhead. I knew at times she'd cry and cry over having to live in such a crude mess and with no hope for a better house. Mom was brought up that woman kept everything up and going. I must say we weren't dirty or slovenly. If Mom said anything to Dad it was the usual "We're jus' poor."

One thing in the summer was the maple bugs. It seemed like they were mostly around the little window that faced up the canyon. The window would be out or raised in the summer time. They'd crawl on the night stand, beds and so forth. Mom was in despair so she filled a pound coffee can half full of coal oil (kerosene) and every time she saw one, into the can it went, and it helped. It greatly reduced

their numbers. I always thought the baby maple bugs were so cute, little orange things. We also had bed bugs in the old wooden beds and really no way to get rid of them. I was bitten by them more than once. If you were fast enough maybe you'd catch one in the bed. They were fast little buggers. When sometimes they'd get too bad, Mom would take all the covers off the beds and pour coal oil in the seams and cracks of the bed and that seemed to help for awhile. No wonder Mom would think fondly of the little white house at Horton.



*Maple bugs are known as box elder bugs these days. They are harmless to humans and homes and are a boon to the environment as bird food.*



*Jewel and her family lived in this rustic home, sketched by her, and described here as "the old house" for 16 years. Jewel's story will continue in the next issue.*



## Tomato Fund!



Some time back, our Board decided it would be fun to collect some tomato themed pottery and serving pieces. This was inspired by some pieces that Board Vice-Chair Willow McCloud had found and donated to the Society. Since then I've been keeping my eyes open on my rounds of estate sales and antique shops. I didn't see any for a long time

until one weekend I ran into two sets! The four piece set was purchased at Main Street Antique Market in Medford. It includes a sugar, creamer, jelly pot and a cookie jar. The six piece set, including three soup bowls with lids, a soup tureen, a dinner plate and a platter, were found at an estate sale in Medford. These items will be on display at the museum as soon as the current COVID conditions allow us to open again.

- Ron Medinger



## The Adventures of Rocky the Great Pyrenees

By Cathy Kreisman - *Cont. from page 7*

the name of the man who originally found Rocky, and he also got the name of the person who sold him the truck. He called the man who rescued Rocky. Travis found him at work in Grants Pass. He also found out that he lives on the same road we do. The man promised Travis that he would return Rocky when he got home from work that evening. Richard and I went to his house at the time when he was expected home and waited and waited. Finally, we called Travis and found that his new truck had broken down on his way home from work. Travis said he would stop by later that evening to pick up Rocky.

The next morning, we found Rocky in the barn with Lilly. She had stopped crying. I've since purchased a jacket for Rocky to help keep him warm this winter. I hope he doesn't tear it up!! We are very happy to have Rocky home with us again.

The storm left a huge mess in our yard. We have many trees and they had shed many leaves, walnuts, and branches in our yard. The grass was totally covered in many places. Clean up was complicated by the incredibly bad air quality. I could not go outside without a mask as it hurt my throat. Our air quality was terrible from the California fires. It took about 2 weeks for that to clear up so we could go outside again. We still have a huge burn pile to take care of this spring.

It took 5 days to get our power back. We were afraid to leave home as the police weren't letting anyone back in. They are trying to reduce looting and reduce exposure to toxic materials from burning structures.

I am so grateful for our community and how we all helped each other out that week.

## Almeda Fire Memories

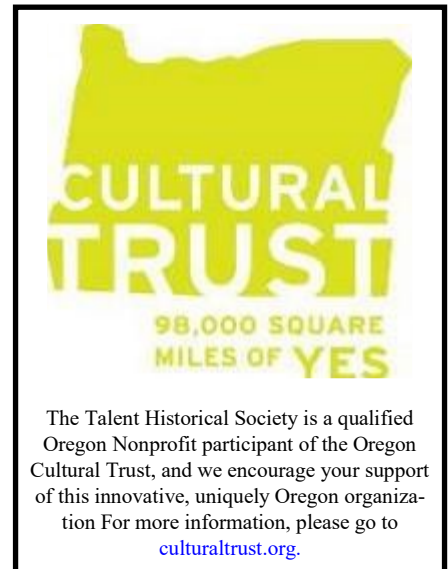
My name is Kevin Harrington. I am a resident of Patio Village. This is a brief account I wrote about the fire and the morning after.

I've never seen anything like it before, A firestorm from hell descended on Talent destroying hundreds of homes, stopping just short of my house. The cruel winds howled like a hurricane - an evil wind, a terrible windstorm right at the hottest, driest time of year. All the houses across the street from my house burned to the ground.

My brother called me to warn me about the fire as I was lying down to rest. He could see the smoke in Talent from his home in the hills two miles away. I grabbed my cat, my guitar and my cash and I evacuated. I immediately got stuck in a traffic jam as thousands of people were trying to get out of Talent. It took ten minutes to drive the first 100 yards. Black smoke filled the air and ashes started hitting my windshield. It was frightening. I finally made it to my brother's house.

We had a supreme view of the fire from his deck. Fast-moving, low-hanging, black clouds of smoke raced through the air as the fire followed the wind and traveled in northwest direction. As darkness fell the view became spectacular. Huge flames shot up into the sky, illuminating my brother's house at times from two miles away. Then the explosions started. Loud booms echoed across the valley because of exploding propane tanks as the fire raged through several trailer parks as well as residential neighborhoods. We heard hundreds of these explosions. It was like watching a war zone from a safe vantage point. I seriously wondered whether my home would still be there in the morning. The wind continued to rage. I lay down and went to sleep somehow to the sound of howling winds and exploding propane tanks.

The next morning the fire seemed to have died down. I drove back to my house to survey the damage. All the houses across the street from my house were burned to the ground. Patio Village was right where the fire stopped -- why I'll never know. This is the worst disaster ever to hit this area. Thousands are homeless.





# 2021 Talent Tomato Pre-Order Form

(When filling out this form, please print clearly)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_



How many Talent Tomato plants would you like to pre-order?

\_\_\_ plants in 4" pots at \$3.00 each

\_\_\_ plants in one gallon pots at \$7.50 each

Total due for plants ordered is: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this completed form, with payment, to:

Talent Historical Society

PO Box 582

Talent OR 97540

**Pre-order form and payment must be received by May 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

Plants will be delivered on Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, or Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, to any home or business in the Rogue Valley by volunteers from the Talent Historical Society. Arrangements will be made with the customer for a convenient delivery time.

I agree to the above terms: \_\_\_\_\_

*Customer Signature Required*

You can go to our website  
[www.talenthistory.org](http://www.talenthistory.org)  
and download and print this form to follow this same process.  
OR You can go to our online store at <https://store.talenthistory.org>  
and place your order there. At the store site we accept debit and credit cards.

**Do not write below this line. For Talent Historical Society use only.**

Date form received: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount received: \_\_\_\_\_ Form of payment: Cash \_\_\_\_ Check \_\_\_\_

## Talent Historical Society Board of Directors:

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Ron Medinger     | President - Membership Chair & Treasurer   |
| Willow McCloud   | Vice-President & Art/Design Chair          |
| Jan Wright       | Secretary & Historian                      |
| Emmalisa Whalley | Webmaster                                  |
| Debra Moon       | Grant Administrator & Outreach Coordinator |
| Cherie Brooks    | Board Member                               |
| Theodora Blom    | Board Member                               |
| Myke Reeser      | Board Member                               |
| Bob Casebeer     | Board Member - Emeritus                    |

The Talent Historical Society Board Meeting is held via Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM.  
All interested persons are invited to attend.  
Those who are interested in participating may email [debramoon7@gmail.com](mailto:debramoon7@gmail.com)



Talent Historical Society  
P.O Box 582  
Talent, OR 97540

## Walking Tour of Historic Talent

**Sleppy-Withrow House**  
**106 North Market**  
**Street**  
**ca. 1912**

20



This two-story house with its steeply pitched roof is among the taller houses in the area, and gains additional significance by being associated with both Lorenzo "Ren" Sleppy and the Withrow families, early residents of the Talent area. The house was built in 1912 and was then valued at \$400. When the house was built, housing was scarce and J.L. Sleppy had thirteen applications to rent the building the day he began the foundation. In 1920, the Sleppys sold the house to J.H. and Florence Withrow, who in turn sold to Glenn and Mary Withrow in 1926. Mary Withrow remained in the house until her death in 1981. The house retains much of its original character, materials, detailing and appearance. Sited on a large and prominent lot in the center of the city, and associated with two pioneer families, it effectively and accurately conveys the historic associations that make it significant.