



The Historacle

The Official Newsletter of the
Talent Historical Society

Volume 28 Issue 1

March 2022

Willow McCloud – New Talent Historical Society Board President

by Debra Moon

Willow McCloud has served on the Talent Historical Society Board since 2015. This year, 2022, she was elected the new Board President. Willow is a lovely, artistic person with a deep love of all things historical. Actually, she says she loves “old things”: old cars, dishes, bottles, signs, rust, and she has a very impressive bone collection. And she loves the stories behind all the old things, which is history, really. To help get to know her a little better, she has shared some of her favorites with us: her favorite activity – photography; her favorite colors – black and turquoise; her favorite book – *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain; favorite poetry – Sufi poetry; favorite music – Motown, Indie, and all 70’s and 80s; her favorite movie – *The Peanut Butter Falcon*; her favorite food – pizza, hands down! (a side note – Willow hates horror movies but will always watch a heartwarming story!)



Little Willow with her Gram Elsie and her Mom Ruth Garrett.

she was adopted as an infant to the McCloud family in Ashland, Oregon. Willow’s adoptive mom was from Talent, but she had moved to Ashland when she married because there were more job opportunities there. Her mom had many relatives and friends in Talent, and Willow spent much of her growing up years there. She also had uncles, cousins, and friends in the Rogue Valley. She has many memories as a child of Harvest Festivals and other

community events. Her adoptive parents had been on a list to adopt for ten years. She was an only child. She spent many hours playing with all her cousins and naturally became very close to them.

Willow’s mother, Ruth Garrett, grew up on the Garrett Dairy Farm on Rapp Road in Talent. Ruth’s parents were Otis Garrett and Elsie Standly. Both of their families were from Illinois, but her grandpa’s family had settled in Jacksonville and her grandma’s family had settled in Gold Hill. Willow says, “Jacksonville met Gold Hill. They married and their baby was Talent!” Actually,

Otis Garrett was friends with Elsie’s parents. He was at their home the day Elsie was born. He was 19 years old. He said on that day, that he would be back



in 18 years to marry that baby, and guess what?? He did come back 18 years later and marry her. Otis was handsome and hard working. There were many young ladies in the valley wanting to “court” him. But he held fast to his promise, and Elsie said, “We always knew we’d be together”. So, Willow’s grandpa was quite a bit older than her grandmother, and he did pass away when Ruth was young. She and her brothers helped her mother run the dairy farm after her father’s death. Ruth, worked for and retired from the U.S. Forest Service as an adult.

Willow’s father also died young when Willow was only two. So, she grew up in a home of three generations of women: Her grandmother, born in 1908 in Gold Hill; her mother born in 1933 in Talent; and herself, born in 1973. The three were close, but of course, because of the range in their ages, had different perspectives on life. Her mother’s brothers, her uncles, had big families. They were a close-knit family and did many things together: Sunday dinners, Sunday drives, camping,

Willow’s History

Willow was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. She didn’t stay there long because

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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
Web Page: www.talenthistory.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/talenthistory/

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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

The Museum is closed to the Public until Further Notice.

1:00 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Memberships Since Last Issue

New Members:

Biscuits and Vinyl, LLC
David Oman

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Gayle F. Stubbs
Ross Sutherland

Renewals:

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Bruce D. Snook

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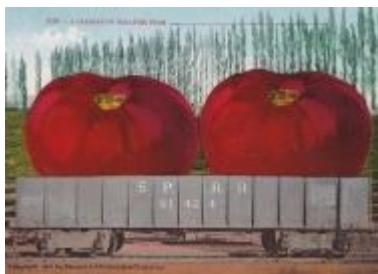
Claire Barr-Wilson
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Allen Hallmark
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George Kramer

Jack Latvala
Barbara & Dick MacMillen
Bruce D. Snook
Gayle F. Stubbs
Ross Sutherland

Honorary Lifetime Memberships

Jan Wright Susan Moulder Katherine Harris

Spring Will Be Here Soon!



Time to Order Your
Talent Tomato Plants

See Page 11 for the
Order Form which must be
received by May 9th.

THS volunteers will deliver the
plants to you on Friday
May 13th or Saturday May 14th.

Presidents' Messages

I would like to thank everyone who supported me in my 6 ½ years as Board President at THS! I am happy and proud to turn over the position to Willow McCloud who has been serving as Vice-President since 2016. Any of you who know Willow know she is an amazing person and will represent THS well. I am not going anywhere. I will still serve as Treasurer and Membership Chair for the Society, so you'll hear from me frequently.

Ron Medinger
Treasurer/Membership Chair
Talent Historical Society

Cheers!



Thank you to the THS Board Members and Talent community who have shown faith in me to represent the Talent Historical Society. This was not a task that I was expecting or that I take lightly. As I adjust to this new role please have patience and feel free to reach out and say hello, make suggestions or express any concerns.

Willow McCloud
Newly Elected President
Talent Historical Society

Willow McCloud

Continued from Page One

reunions, and community events. The big table filled with family was a Sunday tradition, and over the years everyone had their traditional spot to sit. All Willow's cousins were there each week, and they came to feel like brothers and sisters to her

Willow also played in the Rogue Valley Youth Symphony. She was an original member when it first started up. She says her mother forced her to play violin starting in first grade, and she played all twelve years of school. She often had grueling 2-hour-a-day practices. But by the time she was invited to audition and made it into the symphony, she loved it. She played for them for four years. Willow attended both Saint Mary's High School and Ashland High School. She graduated from Ashland High School.

Digging Deeper

Many of the older generation in her family died around the same time and Willow found herself struggling to adjust to the loss of so many family members. Willow's mother had tried, during Willow's growing up years, to find Willow's birth family. She tried to get files opened in Utah to no avail, and she volunteered at the Genealogical Library hoping for insight and help to find the birth family. After her adoptive mother's death, Willow took up a plea on Facebook. She took a photo of herself holding a sign that said, "Looking for My Birth Parents" and posted it. Within three months she had thousands of re-

sponses, and one was from her birth parents! She read all the responses and finally came in contact with the birth family. This happened eight years ago. She found out that she was Lakota and Irish. She has since gotten to know her birth family. She got close to her birth mother before she passed away. Willow is also close to the brother she discovered at that time too.



Looking for Her Birth Parents

Around this time, Willow saw an ad on Facebook recruiting board members for the Talent Historical Society (THS). She responded, and Willow says, "The moment I walked into the Talent Museum, I felt it was where I belonged." She attended a board meeting and was asked to join the THS Board. She asked what it entailed and was told, "Just an hour each month." Of course, this did not prove to be true, but Willow says that being involved with Talent history "filled a big part of my need for family". She explained that it felt very cool to be part of everything that was going on,

especially renovating the building that the Museum is in now. They gutted the building. The old carpet was gross, so they put in new flooring, painted, and put in shelves. She feels even more attached to the museum now.

Historically Speaking

Willow grew up during an era when the Jacksonville Museum was a destination and the Jacksonville Children's Museum was just next door to the museum. The Jacksonville Museum packed the old Justice Building in downtown Jacksonville with information and artifacts relating to the history of the whole Rogue Valley. Field trips and family visits to both the museum and the Children's Museum stayed in Willow's memory forever. The Oregon State Measure 50 was passed in 1997, which changed the way that the revenue-sharing tax funds from the state were used. In Jackson County, that meant that the small museums would no longer receive any of these funds. With the loss of funding, the Jacksonville Museum, and other small museums, were lost, or partially closed. Willow believes that the impact of that loss has never really been acknowledged. "We have to care for and protect our historical sites, historical societies and our museums. We can't afford to lose any more. We have to protect what we have," Willow admonishes.

Willow's mother loved history too, told her many stories and saved historically relevant items like post cards, newspapers, clothing, old bottles, etc. After Ruth died, Willow discovered all these treasures. She donated many items to the Talent Museum because most were about,

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Our Almeda Fire Experience

By Judie Bunch and Keri Doucette

When we first moved to the Rogue Valley in 1969, we made our home in Ashland for 20 years, and we thought we knew the town pretty well. But no one in our family seemed to know where the fire was coming from when it first started. Almeda was a location that was bandied about but where was it? I'd never heard of Almeda. I thought it must be the name of a town in southern California or New Mexico, and wondered how those fires could reach as far as the Rogue Valley.

The wind had blown all night and was unusually strong the morning of September eighth. From the windows, I watched our cedar and fir trees merrily dancing and thought, boy, Jerry's going to have a lot of branches to rake when he comes home from shopping in Medford, I distinctly remember there were no warnings of fires that morning; at least not on our stretch of the South Pacific Highway (also referred as Highway 99).

My husband and I live near the Ashland Exit 19, within a couple of miles from the Talent fire station on property next to Bear Creek and the greenway bike path.

Yes, I saw trucks and rescue rigs rushing toward Ashland, and heard a few beeps that seemed to say, "we're coming, we're coming." But it's normal for them to pass our home several times a week, anyway. So, I stopped painting a welcome sign for our son-in-law Jason's mom who was coming from Boston, to offer up a prayer like I always do. In case they were responding to an accident on the freeway at Exit 19, I wanted angels to watch over them.

It was about noon when suddenly the radio went out with a screech. Power outage, I thought. Brown out. Weird day. I wiped my paint brush, and put the lid onto the can. Just then the landline rang. "Mom," our son said, "You've got to get out, now!" Steve was delivering spices to the Rogue Valley Manor on the hill. He looked out over the valley and saw the fire coming our way from Ashland. I will always believe that God put Steve in the right place at the right time. Otherwise, we might not be here now to tell our story.

My mind raced. We've lived on these five acres for about thirty years,

sheltered by one of the largest catalpa trees in the valley and an abundance of fir, cedar trees and cottonwoods scattered throughout the yards and bordering along the bike path, A pond, our and our daughter's homes, and a small rental home filled with lifetimes of memories, a big workshop, dog grooming shop and playhouse/studio, two rescue donkeys, pigs, goats, and four old-lady chickens in the field represented a lot of hard work and completed the rest of the prop-



Judie Bunch at right with her daughter Keri and granddaughter Bella.

erty. Nothing was elaborate but seemed to spell comfort and peace.

Was this really happening? Would we come back home in the afternoon? I grabbed my containers of pills, my handbag and ID. By this time William the cat knew something was wrong. He cowered under the bed, but my stiff eighty-one-year-old knees wouldn't let me crouch down to get him. I had to get my granddaughter next door. As I went out the door; I left William food and water, and called out a heartfelt I love you; took fond note of our books, photo albums, thick binders of family history, stories I had written over the years, and made peace with what might happen to it all. It was out of my hands. Well, now I wouldn't have to decide who would inherit our treasures and ran next door.

It was much too warm for September, and so awfully windy.

I expected that eleven-year-old Bella

was home by herself: her mom, Keri, was probably working at SNYP in Talent. Bella's dad, Jason, was at his handyman job in Ashland. My insides were quaking, but it wasn't going to help Bella if her grandmother was ready to fall apart. I tried not to panic, banged on the door and told her to come out right now. Bella picked up her little dog, Rosie, as I pointed to the huge white plume of smoke above the workshop.

Even today, I'm not sure what our next move would have been: I don't drive. Would we have run up the driveway to hitch a ride? Right then Bella said, "We should tell Mom!" Keri wasn't at SNYP,

after all. I hadn't noticed her Subaru in their driveway, so we ran to the shop, less than fifteen steps away. Sure enough, Keri was there, listening to music on her earphones, and grooming two white standard poodles.

"Keri," I said, "There's a fire coming our way! we need to go!" Whether she didn't hear me, or realize what I was saying, I don't know, but she looked irritated and answered, "It's nowhere around here; we'll be fine. Just let me finish these dogs so they can go home." At that point, she saw the thick smoke out her back window: turned off her electric razor and yelled to Bella to get their cat Mike from the house. Seeing five other dogs wandering around the room, I said, "Leash them up. We have to get out of here."

Worry all over her face, Keri asked if it was silly to grab her banjo. In the next few seconds it was crammed into the car alongside Bella, eight dogs, the cat in a cage, Keri, and me. At the last second, she ran to the pasture gate and opened it. Would we ever see those precious animals again? Having done her best, she jumped into the car, and we sped for the safety of our son's home in East Medford.

As we left the driveway, in the back seat Bella and her girlfriends were texting. "They're crying, Mom," she said. "They want me to be safe." I reached for my granddaughter's hand and held it tightly. "Bella," I said, "I know this is scary but God is taking care of us right now. we're going to be okay." And we were.

Being stuck in traffic was almost unbearable. There was a surreal mix of people along the South Pacific Highway as we crept toward Talent; some in full panic and some just going about their day

as normal. Except for policemen directing traffic, there was no sign of fire yet and many businesses along the highway seemed unaware that they were in danger. As we stalled in traffic, Keri called her dog owners to reassure them their pets were safe.

From what we heard later Jerry, Steve, and Jason pulled into our driveway soon after we left with a policeman right behind them saying they'd have to leave within five minutes. Jerry, a retired fire insurance adjuster, immediately went to the workshop to get our insurance records from the filing cabinet. Jason gathered up the rest of Keri's string instruments and Bella's guitar. At our house Steve filled a spice box with family photos, several ceramic Hummels that he'd admired since childhood, and the computer hard drive.

The three men followed each other off the property within the limited time. What with the slow, heavy traffic, the usual 20-minute drive to Steve and Anna's took all of us several hours with the congestion and the detours. To say the least, the scene was fraught with emotion as we arrived, frazzled but safe. That is, everybody arrived but Jason. We weren't to learn where he was until much later.

After an hour at our son's home, the threat of fire once again seemed imminent when Anna saw dark smoke coming over the hills toward Medford. We decided to evacuate. Steve, Anna, daughter Nichole, and their four dogs in their car; Keri, Bella, Rosie, Mike the cat, the customer dogs in the Subaru; Jerry and I in our car drove down the street not knowing which way to turn. Glancing behind us, it was amazing to see a parade of Steve's classic cars also being driven to safety by some faithful buddies. We all decided to part ways at the end of their street. Steve's group would go to a place where he could store his classic cars and stay for the night. Keri and Bella would go to Ashland, leave off the dogs, then stay with friends. Jerry and I would look for a motel for the night. Everyone would call each other at an appointed time.

As it turned out, all but Jason fled for Steve's. Although he left our property with them, he decided to turn back and save what he could. But, by the time he returned, the five outbuildings including the renter's small home, the dog grooming, workshop, and playhouse/studio were consumed by fire.

Fighting the thick smoke and burning embers, he stayed on guard through the coming days and sleepless nights.

Since the electricity for the well pump was out, and the irrigation pipes had melted, there was no way to get water. Instead, Jason put out spot fires with a shovel, carried hot tub and pond water to the animals, gave them sponge baths to protect their skin; worked on the well pump so it would work as a siphon to water the animals, checked on our lonely cat, and chased looters away. Thankfully, he was able to save their home, ours and the pump house next to the highway. Without him, our two homes might have been burned, too.

Although the renter's house was a total loss, Jason was able to move his car away from the flames. Later, Bev, the renter said, "I took the bus to work that day and left my car at home. If it hadn't been for Jason pulling it out of the way I would have lost my car too."

The cost of Jason's heroism was high. Doing all the work by himself, he became overwhelmed by loneliness, depression, and grief. His own losses were great. The workshop had contained 30 years' worth of his and Jerry's carpentry tools and equipment. Next to the shop had sat his cargo trailer, and a brand new family RV. Everything was gone.

Keri and Bella continued to drive until nine at night after they left Medford. Anxious to get the dogs back to their owners in Ashland, she saw an opportunity to take I-5 south from Medford, driving first to Phoenix, pop. 4,608, and Talent, pop. 6,541. Later she said that taking the exit to I-5 was the scariest part of the whole day. Driving straight into thick black smoke and fire on both sides of the freeway, Keri said her heart sank in fear that she had made a deadly mistake. She had trusted that since the freeway exit was open it must be safe, but it definitely wasn't.

With Bella in the passenger seat crying, they made it past Phoenix. The town was clearly on fire, a most horrific scene. They then passed Talent. Already burned and smoldering, the sounds of sirens and explosions continued. At last they arrived in Ashland. After meeting the relieved dog owners, they spent the next few nights at the welcoming home of their friends, the Luffys.

We soon discovered that motels in Medford were completely filled during our search for a room. Motel keepers warned that we probably wouldn't find anything until we got to Roseburg, but we kept looking until we got to Grants Pass. There, we found what might have been the last available room in the Rogue

Valley. It was clean and quiet. For future nights, our Rogue Valley Harmonizer friends took good care of us.

The South Pacific Highway was closed for two weeks following the fire, and our property was considered a "crime zone" for some still unknown reason. Although bikers could ride past our property, we were not allowed to check our land for what seemed forever.

Determined to help Jason with the animals, our fearless, wily daughter aptly evaded the police and National Guard barriers by going early in the mornings. Eventually, she found a route that took about an hour around the backside of Talent, compared to the five minutes from where we stayed in Ashland. During this time, Keri also found a temporary, loving cat rescue home in Medford for our cat, William. It was five weeks before Jerry and I had access to the land and could take him home, again.

One evening when Jason came to the house in Ashland, he shared the following story: Worn-out and sleep deprived, his face smudged with black soot, he stood looking at the melted rubble of the workshop and Keri's shop when he felt a hand on his shoulder. Lost in sadness, he hadn't seen the truck in the driveway.

"I just stopped to see how you're doing," the man told him. Jason said he couldn't believe what he was hearing. Who was this guy? He actually cared? Up until that time he had been completely alone except for some encounters with looters, and an occasional policeman complaining that he shouldn't be there.

"I was here the day the building was burning. No one was around right then and I wanted to help," the man continued. "I have my own water rig so I tried to save it, but it was too far gone."

While Jason told me his story, tears rolled down his face. How long had he been on the property since the fire? A week? A lifetime? Jason took the fellow's hand and shook it.

"Thanks friend," he said. "What's your name?"

"Darin Welburn."

I could tell that Jason wasn't familiar with his name so I said, "Oh Jason, he's such a nice guy - he was Talent's fire chief until not long ago." Now, it was my turn for tears. Jason had been wrong, I thought. He hadn't been by himself, really. In the wings had been an angel named Darin Welburn.

Cont. on Page 10

Talent Volunteer Fire Department Engine Returns Home to Talent

By Ron Medinger

On July 18, 2021, I was hurrying to get everything ready for the big road trip I was starting the next day and had to drop off some things at our temporary storage unit in the "Storage at Exit 24" facility. Driving south, down North Phoenix Road, I came up behind a group of vehicles moving slowly ahead of me. There was a large four-wheel drive pick-up towing a very large truck behind it with a small car following with its flashers on. I recognized the large truck being towed immediately. It was an old fire engine from the former Talent Volunteer Fire Department!

On March 14, 2021, I had purchased, on eBay, a program from a 1965 fundraising event held by the Talent Rural Volunteer Fireman's Association of Jackson County. In that 28-page booklet was a photo of a "1,000-gallon tanker-pumper". I believed I was following that truck down North Phoenix Road. When the fire truck entourage turned left onto Fern Valley Road, I continued to my storage unit and unloaded my things as quickly as possible. Returning to Fern Valley Road, I followed the route they would take if they were heading toward Talent and caught up with them as they crossed the I-5 overpass at Suncrest Road.

Continuing through Talent, they turned onto Rapp Road. The small car with the emergency flashers following

the fire truck turned around and headed off, the driver waving farewell to the driver of the pick-up truck and the man steering the fire truck. Further up Rapp, they turned into a private driveway. Not wanting to lose my story, I followed.

The trucks came to a stop in the yard of Michael Lipp and Chrissy Aus-

tin-Lipp, they had actually purchased it for fire protection on their property. With all the fires we have experienced recently in the region, they felt it was only prudent to provide as much personal protection as possible. The truck still worked, and they had driven it most of the way from White City until it gave out shortly before I caught up to them on North Phoenix

Road. The odometer reading on the old fire engine was 7,437.1 miles.

Michael and Chrissy allowed me to take pictures of them and their new treasure and in talking with them, I found out that Chrissy is a partner in One Together For Kids, a non-profit located here in Talent whose mission is "Empowering parents and kids with tools and strategies for emotional and social success" www.onetogetherforkids.org They are a thoroughly pleasant couple to talk with however I had to leave Michael and Chrissy to continue on.

After returning from my 7,000-mile, 24 day road trip, I found the fundraiser program in the THS archives and compared the photos I had taken of Michael and Chrissy's truck to the truck pictured in the program. While they were both early 1960's Ford fire trucks, I now realize that they are not the same truck. There are subtle but important differences in the two trucks. In my mind however this does not diminish the coolness of the Lipp's fire engine returning home to Talent.

More Pictures on Page 10



Michael Lipp and Chrissy Austin-Lipp

tin-Lipp. Turns out the drivers of the trucks were Michael and a friend of his. I introduced myself and apologized for entering uninvited. After telling them why I found the truck irresistible, I was welcomed to their home. Michael and Chrissy seemed overjoyed about having the fire truck and I asked if they collected fire-fighting equipment or why they had purchased the truck. They told me, while it was very cool to own an old

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My Fire Story by Rachel O'Neal

On 9/8/20 at 1:30 pm we had a knock on our door in the Anjou apartments in Talent and were told to LEAVE NOW! We knew there was a fire in Ashland but did not know it was coming our way RAPIDLY! We grabbed a few things (for some reason both my sister and I grabbed an extra pair of shoes, but not much else) and left with the clothes on our backs. We were caught in intense traffic, taking quite some time to get to Medford. We went to the library to use the computers so we could let friends and family know what was happening.

Not realizing the seriousness of what was happening, we decided to treat ourselves to dinner at Porters before finding a room for the night. We still didn't clue in when our waitress had to leave to go rescue her kitty in Phoenix, as she was under an evacuation order. As we were leaving, we realized Porters was closing so staff could go home. Still, we nonchalantly headed to Central Point where we knew there was a Holiday Express. However, they were full and we were told there was nothing available until Roseburg. It began to register with us that things were very serious.

We had heard people were being told to go to Expo and that was close, so we headed there. Expo was being set up as a shelter. After parking, we wandered around. There was food and water available. We "slept" (not much) in our car that night but found out the

next day we could get cots. They had breakfast and lunch for us. We secured a couple cots (blankets provided), but a fire was now threatening the Expo and we were advised to leave. Life had become downright scary now.

We headed north with a herd. I had heard there was a shelter being set up at the fairgrounds in Grants Pass, so we went there. When we got there, they sent us to Parkway Christian church. They were setting up a shelter in their parking lot with cots. We slept that first night on cots outside with bedding provided, but it was pretty chilly. They moved us inside to a gym the next day because the smoky air was becoming hazardous. These folks were amazing! They provided three meals a day to everybody (including some homeless who wandered in) and bedding, toiletries, showers, and vouchers for clothes at Goodwill.

We now realized that our home may have burned. The reports about Talent and Phoenix were horrifying. A friend of mine in Ashland got in touch and offered us a place to stay, but she couldn't provide for us until Sunday. Parkway was closing the shelter as they found spots for everyone, so the Pastor and his wife took us to their home for Saturday night and fed us!

Meanwhile, our brother (who lives in North Carolina) had managed to find out that Anjou had been saved and we got in contact with management there. We couldn't go home yet, but HOME

EXISTED! We went to my friend's on Sunday and were able to stay there until we could get back to our place the following Friday. After five days in shelters and 5 days at my friend's, we drove to Talent to find Anjou standing with devastation all around.


Every time I pick something up in our apartment, I can't help thinking how close it came to being burnt. This feels like not only a major lesson in IMPERMANENCE, but also a huge reminder of the kindness of strangers, the caring of family and friends, and how we need to help each other and take care of our planet.

Whenever we go anywhere now, we witness the devastation others are facing. At least WE have a place to live, but the loss all around us remains stark and

GOOD NEWS!!!

The Talent Historical Society received a new grant from Pacific Power and Electric in January 2022. The award was for \$2500, the purpose is to make the stories and images of the Alameda fire available to the public through a blog and, eventually, a book. We have been collecting fire stories, photos, and videos since a few months after the fire. We have stories from Talent Elementary and Talent Middle School children and from many adults. The blog is just being created now, and more information on how to access it will be in the next issue of the Historacle.

We are in the process of organizing all the information we've gotten from Talent residents and encourage those of you who haven't documented your story yet to contact us and share



Rick Chester, Pharmacist
Naturopathic Physician
& Acupuncturist

205 N Pacific Highway
Talent, OR 97540
Phone: 541.535.5843
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My Mother's Daughter

The Continuing Memoirs of Jewel Donaca Lockard

Chapter 8—The Blue Sink

When I was 11 years old, the Greens, the old folks in the next house down from us, moved away. The son said we could move over there to have a better house to live in, so we did. I remember the house well. From the road a person went into a back porch with a woodshed on the upper end and then entered the kitchen. It had a big kitchen with cabinets and a blue sink (!), cold water, big windows looking to the road and out back. Also facing the road was a built-on pantry where mom kept the milk and cream, potatoes and so forth. The front door also faced the road with a trellis and Virginia Creeper growing on it. Down the canyon end of the house were two bedrooms, one large, and a cubby hole which was mine.

There was a small yard around the

house, rabbit hutches, a hen house, and a toilet, then above, a larger woodshed. Down by the property line was a barn and above that a pig pen. Both the barn and the house were made from rough 1 x 12's, probably cut from the mill over on the hill. A root cellar was made in the hill across the road from the kitchen.

While we lived there. Dad traded cars. The new car was an open Model T with no side flaps, but we had outgrown the old coupe. Mom didn't like when she saw it was too cold to ride in in the winter.

Always inquisitive, I once tried an experiment with a small barrel that set out in the yard. I wiggled my butt down into the top as far as I could get my behind to go and then I was stuck in the barrel. Mom had to come to the rescue. What a job! She liked to never get me out. Another thing I did that I deserved a paddling for was I liked to go into the chicken house and climb up on the roosts to sit quietly until the hens all got settled

in, then let out a bit screech and jump up. It would scare the poor old things half to death and they'd fly, squawking in all directions, lots of fun.

Mom was terribly sick while we lived at the Greens. She said later in life that she was just made sick from poverty. The doctor thought she had T.B. but was never tested. She was supposed to stay in bed for a month, but how could she? There was bread to bake, weekly washing and the resulting ironing with a sad little iron to do, and a husband and kids to cook and care for. A trip to the South Sea Islands would have been good.

Dad scraped up enough money to take Leland and me to the Barnum and Bailey Circus. It was OK, but I had no desire to go again.

While we lived at Green's the son Ralph lived down below. He sold both places together to Ralph Dorr, so he said we could stay where we were, but he started tearing the buildings down in sections, moving down to the lower place, so we moved back home.

Dad offered to trade his flashlight that you fit on your head to spot deer with which Old Doff wanted so Dad got the cabinet and the blue sink out of house we just vacated and put it in our lean-to in the kitchen in the back. This made Mom happy.

We never had any shampoo, just used bar soap, Fels Naptha and soda to soften the water, and rinsed our hair with vinegar in water. I use vinegar water yet today. In the old days women washed their hair only once a week, some not that. My hair was oily and an embarrassment to me after a day or two, so oily, but we believed it was not good for your health to wash it more often.

When Leland and I were getting to the ages of 13-15 Mom started reading novels to us in the evening, books by the good old authors like James Oliver Curwood, Harold Bell Wright, westerns by B.M. Bower and Zane Grey and many others. Books like *When a Man is a Man*, *The Mine with the Front Door*, *Shepard of the Hills*, and others by Wright. There were Alaskan and northern Canadian stories by James Curwood. Many of these we read again and again every year and I still do.

The Donaca Family's Favorite Authors

Many of these author's books are still widely available at used book venues

James Oliver Curwood - (June 12, 1878 – August 13, 1927) was an American action-adventure writer and conservationist. His books were often based on adventures set in the Hudson Bay area, the Yukon or Alaska and ranked among the top-ten best sellers in the United States in the early and mid 1920s, according to Publishers Weekly. At least one hundred and eighty motion pictures have been based on or directly inspired by his novels and short stories. While on a fishing trip in Florida, Curwood was bitten or stung through hip waders by something, source unknown. Health problems related to the bite escalated over the next few months as an infection developed. He died too young at the age of 49



Harold Bell Wright - (May 4, 1872 – May 24, 1944) was a best-selling American writer of fiction, essays, and nonfiction. Although mostly forgotten or ignored after the middle of the 20th century, he had a very successful career; he is said to have been the first American writer to sell a million copies of a novel and the first to make \$1 million from writing fiction. Between 1902 and 1942 Wright wrote 19 books, several stage plays, and many magazine articles. More than 15 movies were made or claimed to be made from Wright's stories, including Gary Cooper's first major movie, *The Winning of Barbara Worth* (1926), and the John Wayne film *The Shepherd of the Hills* (1941).



B.M. Bower - Bertha Muzzy Sinclair or Sinclair-Cowan, née Muzzy (November 15, 1871 – July 23, 1940) was an American author who wrote novels, fictional short stories, and screenplays about the American Old West. Her works, featuring cowboys and cows of the Flying U Ranch in Montana, reflected an interest in ranch life, the use of working cowboys as main characters (even in romantic plots), the occasional appearance of eastern types for the sake of contrast, a sense of western geography as simultaneously harsh and grand, and a good deal of factual attention to such matters as cattle branding and bronc busting. Bower's novels have been praised for their accurate portrayal of the cowboy life of that era which she experienced herself in her home state of Montana.



Information sourced from Wikipedia

Jewel's story will continue in the next issue.

Willow McCloud ~ by Debra Moon

Continued from Page 3

or from, Talent. There is a display case that she created in the Talent Museum that is all about her family.

Over the years Willow has contributed more than this family case and the building renovation to the Talent Historical Society. She has been the Vice President on the THS Board for over four years. She and another board member, Emmalisa Whalley, volunteer to run concessions at the Poker Tours that the museum offers several times a year in its off hours. Willow has also designed all the T-shirts that the Talent Historical Society has made and sold. She helped with yard sales when THS did yard sale fundraisers, and always was part of the Talent Tomato sale, which during COVID times has become Talent Tomato home deliveries. She always takes part in the Harvest Festival, whether it is decorating her little car for the parade or making a float.

Willow has photographed hundreds of historical sites in the area. She gave a TEAM meeting night presentation highlighting many of her discoveries of little-known historic sites and treasures. She is a very good photographer and has some of her special photographs for sale at the museum. In January of 2020, right before COVID struck, Willow organized and gave a tour of Tunnel 13 to about fourteen community members. Willow enthusiastically finds and photographs the many sites we've featured in the "Where's Willow" column of the Talent News and Review for the past two years. She also helps research some of the sites.

It is obvious that Willow loves the history of this area. She is passionate and active in retrieving it and sharing it. She wishes that more people would become as enthusiastic as she is. She ex-

plained, "History is so important to a community. Knowing our history helps us have community pride and ownership and makes us far better citizens. I am passionate about preserving our history and passing it on to younger generations. I have a goal to make the Talent Museum more attractive and interesting to children." In 2020, the Talent Historical Society did produce a local history curriculum for Talent Elementary teachers, and work with Talent Middle School to collect stories and images from the Almeda fire. They also produced a coloring book about Talent history which is available free at the museum. Right now, the museum is not open regular hours due to COVID but it can be visited by appointment, call 541-512-8838.

Willow Today

Willow is now a house cleaner, works part-time in retail and is a photographer in any spare time she has. Her son is 17 years old and has inherited her love of history. He has volunteered at the Talent Museum, special booths, and events all through his growing up years.

Willow lived in Talent on Wagner Creek Road for 15 years of her adult life. Two years ago, she had to sell her home and move to Phoenix for financial reasons. "My heart is still in Talent. My roots are there. I hope to someday move back to Talent. I am devoted to the Talent Historical Society and am committed to it. I miss

trucking around Talent, going to the coffee shop and other places, seeing all my friends. I am still very much connected to old families of Talent who were friends of my mother's. I love it when people I meet realize that I am Willow from "Where's Willow." They are so appreciative of the column and excited about learning the history. That makes me happy." She also says, "My favorite thing to

do is to meet people." She often finds connections with new people she meets through their history and their families.

When asked if she had another message to give in this article, Willow replied, "I feel a need to bring back a group that could serve as a Historic District Board. I fear that if we are not proactive, a lot of important historic buildings could disappear."

Willow would also like to extend an

invitation to members and non-members of the Talent Historical Society to come to the museum and look in the Families of Talent files we have there. She says, "You might find your own family in the files. You can learn about them and keep contributing to the file. If you are new to Talent, start your own file now. You are part of the Families of Talent and should be documented in our history."

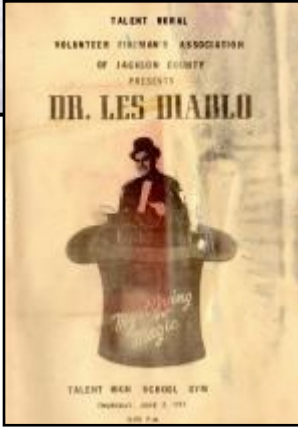
She is also extending an invitation much like the one she responded to eight years ago. Willow is inviting members of the community to attend the Talent Historical Society's Board meetings and seriously think about becoming a Board Member. If you love history and want to work with Willow to preserve and share our community's history; if you have experience or skills that would enhance this work, then come to a board meeting. Willow believes, "You will find that THS is a great family to join. It will give you a rewarding purpose and you will be helping to keep the history of Talent alive." Meetings are normally held the second Tuesday of each month in the Museum at 6:30 pm.



The display case in the museum that Willow built about her family



Ron and Willow working in the THS library.



From page 6— Early 60's 1000 gallon tanker/pumper

Fundraiser Program



GivingTuesday Fundraiser was a Success!

By Ron Medinger

Every year on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, GivingTuesday is celebrated on Facebook. GivingTuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. This past year GivingTuesday fell on November 30th.

On November 28th 2021 I initiated a GivingTuesday Fundraiser on Facebook to benefit the Talent Historical Society by making a donation myself. I set a goal of \$500 for the fundraiser. Over the course of the next few days, ten generous people answered the call and supported THS with their donations.

We would like to thank Cherie Brooks, Donnea Sims, Former Talent Mayor Don Steyskal, Current Talent Mayor Darby Ayers-Flood, Belinda Klimek-Vos, Renee Reedy, Patricia Haugaard (all the way from Decatur, Georgia!), Gerlinde Smith, Ruby Whalley and Andrea Matthews for their generosity.

All monies donated through this fundraiser were received by THS for the benefit of our Society with no fees charged by Facebook or The Network For Good, the organization that manages this fundraiser for Facebook. All told, THS received \$395, which, while not meeting our goal, will help towards our operations costs for 2022.

If you would like to help us reach our goal, you can either donate through our website (www.talenthistory.org) by clicking the "Donate" button on the lower left column of our homepage or by mailing us a check to PO Box 582, Talent OR 97540. Make sure to note "For GivingTuesday" on your check.



Our Almeda Fire Experience

Continued from Page 5

Update, September 5, 2021

Eventually, we learned that Almeda is a street at the Quiet Village neighborhood in Ashland. Coincidentally, it is located near the house where we lived for five weeks.

During those weeks, my husband spent most of his waking hours contacting insurance agents and adjusters, and recording countless page-long columns of contents burned, and making trips to numerous stores to check replacement costs. (Even now, I wake up occasionally, recalling some item I'd forgotten and lost.) Our family greatly appreciates Jerry for his knowledge, patience, years of experience, and good nature.

Because of the Almeda fire, there were so many broken hearts and lives throughout Ashland, Talent, and Phoenix. Talent alone lost 700 homes, 60 businesses and many displaced families. Blocks and blocks of devastation remain along the South Pacific Highway. Over the year we continue to travel Highway 99 almost daily, and our emotions continue to be all over the place. While it is exciting to watch the cleanup and the rebuilding, the numerous for sale signs on abandoned properties are shocking and so sad. Will the rock or gem shops, Sammy's Bistro, and Good Night Inn be replaced? Only time can tell.

Despite the many cottonwoods that burned along our property and Bear Creek (a blessing in disguise - 2021 has been almost cotton free!), most of our fir and cedar trees survived, and the catalpa tree continues to stand tall and beautiful, ready to share its generous leaves, blossoms, and shade. Next to us, the bike path has been cleared of numerous charred trees and thickets of out-of-control blackberry bushes, and seems to have more riders and walkers than ever before. Almost a year later, like many others, we still have decisions to make and rebuilding to do. But most importantly, we've come to know so many good people who have done their best to help us, we still have each other to hug, the rescue animals to love, and our five acres remain our place of comfort and peace.

2022 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 \$4.00 each

_____ plants in one gallon pots at \$9 each

Total due for plants ordered is: _____

Please mail this completed form, with payment, to: Talent Historical Society

PO Box 582

Talent OR 97540



A Carload of Tomatoes

Pre-order form and payment must be received by May 9th

Plants will be delivered on Friday, May 13th, or Saturday, May 14th 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

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

Willow McCloud	President & Art/Design Chair
Lunette Gleason-Fleming	Vice President
David Oman	Secretary
Ron Medinger	Treasurer & Membership Chair
Emmalisa Whalley	Webmaster
Debra Moon	Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator
Myke Reeser	Board Member
Jeffery Gardener	Board Member

The Talent Historical Society Board Meeting is held monthly on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Museum Building at 105 North Market St. in Talent. The meetings are also still being held on Zoom. If you wish to participate on Zoom, please contact debramoon7@gmail.com and she will email you an invitation to join.





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

BIRDS ON THE GREENWAY by Debra Moon

The Bear Creek Community Bird Survey is a collaboration between the Rogue Valley Audubon Society, Klamath Bird Observatory, Rogue River Watershed Council, and the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. The survey is depending heavily on local birders for their observations and wants to generate data to track the changes in bird populations along Bear Creek over time as the riparian habitat recovers from the 2020 fires. Our local birder and Talent Historical Society Board Member, Emmalisa's, latest update covered late fall and the beginning of the winter season. Emmalisa latest walk was December 20th in Lynn Newbry Park in 35-degree weather. The team saw a Turkey Vulture, not normally present this time of year. In discussion with her survey partners, Emmalisa found that some Turkey Vultures are not migrating south in the winter anymore, presumably because of climate change.

Crows, Ravens, two kinds of Woodpeckers, Acorn and Downy, were sighted at Lynn Newbry Park in the fall, along with a whole flock of Wild Turkeys and a flock of Cedar Waxwings.

Numbers of birds are up, and the numbers of species reported are increasing as well. Everything looks pretty encouraging for the birds except for the Tree Swallows. The wind and tremendous heat of the Almeda Fire caused upward gusts taking fire embers to the treetops, which caused the crown fires that destroyed the Tree Swallows' habitat. It may be a longer time before that is restored enough for them to return. For now, they have found other homes.



The Suncrest area provides a variety of environments, and therefore a variety of birds. Emmalisa says, "I really like this portion of the Suncrest survey walk because you have a large diversity of environments for different types of birds, big trees, grasslands, and the creek. As we were nearing the end of this transect, we saw a group of California Quail. That is the first time I have recorded and photographed California Quail in Suncrest park. There was a Black Phoebe in this section and a nice group of 34 Red-Winged Blackbirds." Another special experience in Suncrest during her last survey walk was a Sharp-Shinned Hawk that had taken a bath in the creek. That hawk followed them for a bit as they walked down the path. They also saw five Red-Tailed Hawks, Mourning Doves, Rock Pigeons, 50 Lesser Goldfinches, an American Kestrel and 21 Canada Goose.

Water birds are seen in large numbers and include, in addition to those mentioned above: American Wigeons, Mallards, Bufflehead, Pied-Billed Grebe, Wood Ducks, Ringed-Necked Ducks, Double-Crested Cormorants, Northern Shoveler, American Coot, the Gadwall and Northern Pintails. Ground birds are increasing. The Dark-Eyed Junco, which Emmalisa also calls the "Oregon Junco" was most prolific in Lynn Newbry Park, and many Gold-Crowned Sparrows were seen as well. The little song Sparrow in the photograph showed up to be counted too. Both areas had large totals of birds: Lynn Newbry 473, and Suncrest 383 in December.