

Huckleberry Press

The Community Paper of the Inland Northwest

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How Dollar General is Reshaping Local Communities



If you've driven Highway 2 north of Spokane lately, you've probably noticed something changing. There's a new presence cropping up along the roadsides: modest yellowand-black signs, and simby Robin Milligan ple boxy buildings, each one tucked into the edges

of towns like Chattaroy, Chewelah, Elk, Loon Lake and Nine Mile. Dollar General has arrived in the Inland Northwest; quietly, and with intention.

At first glance, these stores seem like a welcome convenience. They offer basic goods, they are open daily, and they save people the long trip into larger urban areas such as Spokane or Deer Park. As their numbers grow, a deeper conversation has started to unfold in our rural communities about what their presence means; not just for how we shop, but for how we live

I started my research after I noticed two new stores that are only 10 minutes apart on the route to Newport from Spokane, which led me to think about why both locations were needed. But the more I learned, the clearer it became that Dollar General isn't expanding randomly. They're following a model designed specifically for rural America. And in many ways, it's working.

Through the course of my research, I learned that Dollar General specializes in building small-format stores in places where retail options are limited. These are not mega-stores like Walmart or Target. Most Dollar Generals are around 10,000 square feet. Their footprint is intentionally modest, allowing them to be placed close to schools, trailer parks, and rural neighborhoods where people may not have reliable transportation. The store in Chattaroy, for example, is located just off Highway 2, positioned directly across from Riverside's middle and high schools, taking advantage of a high-visibility corridor and reliable traffic that's estimated at over 12,000 vehicles daily. Elk's store, not far away, is similarly positioned to serve a slightly different part of the local population

along the same roadway.

Dollar General's strategy is to make shopping easier for people who might not otherwise have easy access to everyday essentials. Despite their rural-friendly design, these stores aren't locally owned. Dollar General is a publicly traded corporation based in Goodlettsville, Tennessee. The stores are not franchises. Each one is managed and supplied by the corporation itself. The buildings are often developed by real estate investment groups, who then lease them back to Dollar General under long-term leases.

What that means for small towns is that, while the stores do typically provide six to 10 part-time positions per store, much of the financial benefit leaves the community; property is often owned by out-of-state investors, corporate profits go to shareholders, and decisions about pricing, product selection, and even whether a store stays open, are made far from the communities the stores serve.

For many people, Dollar General, and stores like them, fill a real need. They carry a range of essential items: canned food, boxed meals, cleaning supplies, toiletries, over-the-counter medications, paper goods, snacks, pet food, batteries, and seasonal items. These goods are especially important in rural areas where grocery stores may be 30 or more miles away, or where the nearest drugstore has already shut its doors. These stores quickly become part of the weekly or daily routine for many residents.

Whether or not Dollar General is truly "cheap" depends on how you shop and what you're comparing. For items like toothpaste, hand soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, and canned vegetables, prices are often very competitive (especially in smaller, budgetfriendly package sizes). If you're buying just one or two things, the total cost is usually lower than what you'd spend on a largersized product elsewhere. That can be a real help for people trying to stretch a paycheck or anyone who doesn't have the gas money for a bigger shopping trip. Greeting cards, school supplies, gift bags, and small seasonal decorations are also consistently affordable. Recently, I found glasses sold at Dollar Gen-

PioneerTitleCo.

eral for \$1.25 being resold at a Goodwill in Spokane for \$3 each! It is much cheaper to buy a strainer or potholders there too.

But there's a flip side to the pricing model. Smaller packages can sometimes lead to a higher price per ounce or per unit. A fourounce box of cereal, for example, might cost less than the full-size version at another store, but you'll get less for your money. Frozen food tends to be limited in both variety and size and often costs more per serving. Overthe-counter medications are sold in small bottles with a high cost per dose. Pet food and batteries are also areas where quality and value don't always stack up. The electronics, when they exist, are basic and often shortlived.

While Dollar General makes a lot of sense for convenience and one-off purchases, it's rarely the best value for bulk buying or longterm stock-up trips. These stores are great for quick trips to buy basics such as toilet paper.

This convenience can come at a cost, especially when it comes to the long-term health of local economies. In some towns across the country, research has shown that when Dollar General opens, small grocers and independent general stores often close within a few years. These aren't just anecdotes. A 2018 report by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance found that towns with Dollar General or Family Dollar stores were more likely to lose existing food retailers. It's not necessarily because the chain stores are cheaper, though; it's because they're more convenient and they benefit from massive national supply chains that allow them to have lower prices and ride out economic dips in a way smaller stores can't.

This tension between access and autonomy is something rural communities have been navigating for decades. Whether it's bigbox stores, fast food chains, or online retail giants, the story is often the same; we get more options, but we lose something along the way. Locally owned stores close. Profits leave the community. Local control shrinks. And in many cases, what we gain is shortterm convenience for long-term dependence

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Three Easy Ways to Feel Happier Now



by Kerry Schafer

last time you woke up in the morning feeling energized, positive, and ready to take on the day? your an-

swer is, "Why, this morning, of course! And yes-

terday. Every day, really. I can't remember the last time I didn't," then you are a rare being among us, a genuinely happy person. Either that, or you're in love. Or you've figured out how to mainline coffee before getting out of bed to drink it. Most of us start the day happy only some of the time. And even if we start out happy, chances are good we are not feeling quite so chipper by the time the day is over. If you can't remember the last time you actually felt happy, you are not alone. Somewhere around 29% of North Americans reported that they felt depressed in 2024.

There are a lot of reasons to be unhappy right now: financial worries, political upheaval, natural disasters, and rising costs of food and housing to name a few. However, there are also many reasons to be happy. Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be." And it turns out he was right!

Thanks to medical and psychological research, we now know that we can absolutely increase our happiness levels.

When was the Even better, we know how to do it. Yes, it requires a little time and effort, but the pursuit of happiness is well worth it, and not just because happiness feels

Research tells us that people who are happier tend to be more productive. They bounce back more quickly from adversity. Their immune systems are stronger, so they are healthier. They have more fulfilling relationships. They are more creative. They even live longer. Happy people are also kinder and better at taking care of each other, which makes the world better for all of us.

If you have a skeptical mind, you might be wondering whether happier people are that way because they have better relationships, health, creativity, and productivity to start with. This is not necessarily the case. Happiness comes first and the other things follow. Think about that person you know who has a ton of money and is still absolutely miserable vs. someone else you know who has just enough to squeak by and is happy most of the time.

Some of this has to do with a theory called the "Happiness Set Point," which is a baseline level of happiness, and is different for each of us. The Happiness Set Point tells us that some people are luckier in the happiness department and are born with a predisposition to be more positive and optimistic. Others... not so much.

You have probably experienced this for yourself. Think back to a time when something good and exciting happened. Maybe you fell in love or landed the job of your dreams. Probably you felt happier for a period of time, but gradually fell back to your usual, habitual level of happiness. This is true, by the way, for people who win the lottery. Within a year, they tend to revert to the same old Happiness Set Point.

Surprisingly, the same is true for tragedies. People who experience loss divorce, unemployment, or even the death of a loved one – tend to rise back to their previous Happiness Set Point over time.

The good news is that, while our set point has a strong genetic component, we are entirely capable of shifting it by cultivating habits of happiness. Here are three simple things you can do to start feeling happier right away.

1. Cultivate Gratitude

You've likely heard this before, and for good reason. Gratitude is powerful. It releases "feel-good" endorphins in our brains, reduces stress, and shifts our focus to what is going right, instead of what is wrong. In fact, it's impossible to experience anxiety or resentment or anger while you are experiencing gratitude. No matter where you are right now, or what is happening in your life, there is something to be grateful for: the gift of breath, a beating heart, the taste of a food you love, the warmth of sunlight, a smile, or a roof over your head. If you're reading this, you not only have the gift of sight, you have the ability to read.

Gratitude is like a muscle in the body; the more you work it, the more it grows.

And the more things you can find to be grateful for, more good things will come into your awareness, almost like magic.

2. Laugh More

You already know that you feel better after a good laugh, and that is for a number of reasons. Laughing increases the release of those feel-good endorphins in your brain. Don't wait for something funny to come your way, seek it out. Stop doom scrolling on your phone and search for some comedians or comedy clips that make you laugh. As a bonus - social media algorithms will reward this by sending more funny things into your stream so you don't have to go looking for them. Make a point of watching comedies, reading comics, or hanging out with people you know who are funny and make you laugh.

3. Get some exercise – preferably outdoors

Exercise increases the flow of oxygen to your brain and releases more of those feel-good endorphins. In some studies, taking regular walks was found to be just as effective for treating depression as an antidepressant! Add in the benefits of walking in a natural setting (not difficult to do in our part of the world) and the benefits are amplified.

Don't wait. Start now. What is one thing you are grateful for in this moment?

Colville resident Kerry Schafer (who also writes as Kerry Anne King) is the bestselling author of 14 novels and the co-host of The One Happy Thing Podcast. Find out more at www.allthingskerry.com.



Huckleberry Press

The Huckleberry Press began in the Fruitland Valley, nestled in the shadow of northeastern Washington's Huckleberry Mountains. Since 2003, "Huckleberry Country" has expanded throughout the Inland Northwest to the 12 counties of Adams, Benewah, Bonner, Douglas, Ferry, Kootenai, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman.

The Huckleberry Press is dedicated to celebrating and connecting people with their communities by featuring stories of people making major contributions as individuals, with new or expanding businesses, and through special, community events. Also included are small business advice, lifestyle, humor, and seasonal features. The Huckleberry Press is dated the 1st of each month.

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Working Pets



by Ray Bilderback

Most families have a favorite pet of some sort and there is a great variety of these companions: dogs, cats, chickens, snakes, aquariums crowded with fish and horses. Mustn't forget the horses. I have had three pet dogs over a marvelous stretch of time and they have all been "working pets."

This first story involves Spot. Not a very inventive name for a dog, but a very exceptional dog none-theless. He was responsible for a hundred acres of farm. His charges included cows, pigs, chickens and a growing group of grandchildren that would come and go. In the late 1940s, I spent as much time as I could at my grandparents' farm where Spot was in charge.

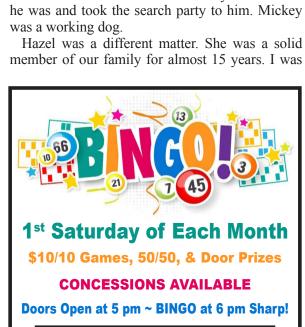
One bright summer day, I made such a visit. Spot had been sick for two days and the banty (bantam) chickens felt bold and entered into forbidden territory. They got behind the netting that protected grandmother's prize ferns and scratched to their heart's content. There were bits of five-fingered ferns scattered across the sidewalk. The third day Spot rose from his sickbed and herded the banties back where they belonged. Too late for the ferns, much too late. "Oh, Pshaw," exclaimed grandmother (as close to cursing as she ever came), "Ed brought those ferns to me for my birthday. He took a day off from planting the garden and traveled to Bear Valley. That was a long years back."

I came close to missing her next words. She said them more to herself than me, I suppose. "And Ed gone just six months now."

Sometimes I actually knew what to do. The next

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morning we made sandwiches and lemonade, left Spot in charge, and packed a blanket, lunch, and ourselves into her little Ford for the two hour drive into the Sierra Mountains. We traveled past Gold Run, Dutch Flat, Alta, Emigrant Gap and down the long grade into Bear Valley. Once there, she found a grassy place and laid out our lunch, while I crawled back under the flume and dug five fingered ferns from the deep, black soil.

There were grey squirrels and blue jays in the black oaks and wildflowers in the shade of the flume. "So peaceful," she murmured. "We spent our first two married years in this place. Ed was hauling lumber to build the first flumes and I was helping the camp cook feed a hungry bunch of carpenters. Ed would be here overnight and maybe a night more if the horses needed rest. Then he would be gone for several days to the mill at Rattlesnake Creek to fetch another load of lumber"

After lunch, she rested in the shade while I caught little silvery trout from the meadow stream. It was a rare day away from the farm for her and a trip back in time.

Note: In the late 19th century, the area around Dutch Flat and Gold Run was torn up by hydraulic gold mining. They were digging up an ancient riverbed and the damage extended eight miles across in places. That sort of mining was stopped by the federal government but not before it had laid waste to wide swatches of riverbed. Such mining took great quantities of water and little companies throughout that part of the Sierras developed complicated systems for gathering the needed water. These systems and their water rights were eventually acquired by the Pacific Gas and Electric company for use in a series of power plants. The flumes at Bear Valley were part of such a system.

I don't remember so much about Mickey. We had to part with him when my father took a rigging job in the shipyards at Vallejo, California in 1940. I do know that Mickey found my youngest brother, Jack, when a search party couldn't. Jack had just wandered off into the woods. Mickey knew where he was and took the search party to him. Mickey was a working dog

in my 30s and married when we got her. She was a border collie-black lab cross and we thought she was the dumbest dog either of us had known. She would lay in the sun and the chickens would come and lay on her back, sometimes two at once. Then we adopted Julie. Hazel brightened up. She would come into the house whenever she got the chance to be with Julie. Then Jason came into our family and Hazel redoubled her efforts. Julie told me recently that Hazel would protectively force herself between Julie and visitors even if they were regulars at our house.

When the children were a little older, we went to the Lincoln County farm of my wife's family to help with the cattle. Hazel found farm life a pleasant challenge. She found 4-year-old Jason when he was lost just like Mickey had done with brother Jack long years past. Jason claims that he was not lost. We had simply lost track of where he was.

Our house on the farm was just across the fence from Aunt Kate's. She couldn't see the house but viewed the barn and a stretch of sagebrush pasture from her kitchen window. We had consented to dog sit while friends took a vacation. They were small city dogs and when the coyotes called a welcome, they wandered into the sagebrush. They had just about joined their new friends when Hazel arrived on the scene (coyotes love to eat farm cats and dogs when they can get them). Aunt Kate said she saw Hazel throw one coyote over a sagebrush and saw the other one in full retreat. Hazel put the two little dogs in front of her and marched them back to the house.

Hazel was a prized member of our family and a working pet.

Ray Bilderback, creator of the Reuben Braddock novels, was born and raised in the Sierra foothills of California. He served in the U.S. Navy Seabees during the Korean War and taught for many years in the west. He makes his home in the mountains of eastern Washington with his archeologist wife, Madilane Perry. "In the 1930s and 1940s, where I lived, we still used horses and hand tools, canned and preserved what we grew or raised, lit our kerosene lanterns, stoked our woodstoves. In my writing, I draw from those times like water from a sweet well."



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Taste Budz Review: El Patron



By Zack & Brooklyn Bolin, Facebook: Taste Budz, Instagram: tastebudz_spokane

I didn't think Coville had room for another Mexican restaurant, but Zack and I were happily surprised to see that El Patron brings a whole new flair to the scene.

What we enjoyed:

- ~Street Tacos
- ~Oueso Birria Tacos
- ~El Azul Cocktail

I think everyone's favorite part of Mexican restaurants is the chips

Patron takes this to a whole new level; not only do you get salsa but also pico and a warm bean dip.

I went with the street tacos. Their protein options include: asada, lengua (beef tongue), adobada, pork carnitas, pollo, al pastor, and chorizo. Now I am not quite adventurous enough to try the beef tongue, although I know many people who love it, so I went with two asada and two carnitas tacos. The corn tortillas were warm and packed full of meat. The asada was so tender and flavorful and the carnitas was juicy and melted in your mouth. I scarfed them down fast. The meal came with rice and beans, and the Spanish rice was some of, if not, the fluffiest, freshest rice I have ever been served.

Zack went with the queso birria tacos and the portions were extremely generous. The tortillas were toasted and filled to the brim with ooey-gooey cheese and juicy shredded meat. The consume wasn't too oily and had a savory yet lightly sweet flavor. It was absolutely

> between lunch and dinner) on a Friday, so it was time for me to have a cocktail. After much consideration, I decided to try the El Azul, a combination of rum, 7-Up, pineapple juice, and blue curacao. It was so good, Zack even tried to steal it from me. Not only do they bring street tacos and amazing cocktails to the scene, but they even put their own spin on the Buñuelos (the dessert fried tortilla chips) by adding a scoop of ice cream on top. But watch out when you bite into it or your teeth will freeze!

delicious! We visited for a "linner" (the time

and salsa to start the meal. Well, El

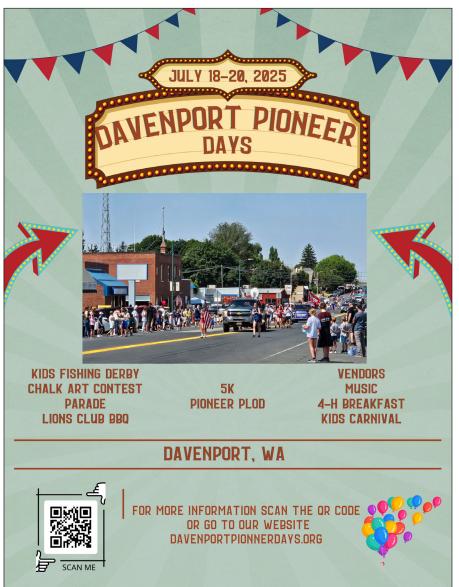
The building is on the corner of Main Street and 1st Ave. and they did a wonderful job fixing it up. The interior is extremely clean and the decor is lovely. The service is fast and efficient, and everyone had a great attitude. The prices are great considering the amount of food you

get, plus the unlimited chips and salsa!

We have a lot of family birthdays in Colville and this spot will definitely be added into the rotation. Next time you have a craving for amazing street tacos, make sure to stop in and give this place a try!

El Patron, 100 South Main Street, Colville, WA 99114 509-253-8451 www.elpatronmexicanrestauranttaqueriawa.com







Hoping for a Cure or Perhaps a Vaccine for OFS



by Bob Johnson

We see ads on TV for a panoply of afflictions and treatments, from asthma and Xolair to diabetes and Mounjaro. Being of a certain age, I have

my own set of daily pills, both daytime and nighttime, to take. But it is an affliction not yet diagnosed that I worry most about getting: OFS.

I worry because I seem to have multiple symptoms, all tied to the perception that things were better in my childhood than they are today.

Take political debates, as an example. When I was young, I can remember watching two opposing politicians standing on a stage, being asked a question, and respectfully discussing their views on the topic. They did not call each other names such as "Nazi" or "idiot," but rather explained why one point of view carried greater merit than the other. It was an intellectual exercise, rather than an emotional one. That, to me, seems much more worthwhile than what we see and hear in today's political discourse.

Then again, I could just be suffering from OFS.

I'm one of those people who believes a good deal of the political vitriol, occurring on both sides of the spectrum, is fueled by social media. What began as a vehicle to share pictures of newborn babies, puppies and way too many plates of lasagna, gradually evolved into a forum for debate. And because so many people do not know how to express their views clearly and politely, social media soon devolved into a cesspool of name calling, often done with the cowardly cover of anonymity. To me, social media really isn't all that social and has done far more harm than good.

Then again, I could just be suffering from OFS.

With summer in full swing, thoughts occasionally wander to my childhood days in Orange County, Calif. It was a time when Orange County still had orange groves. Today, the 948-square-mile area might more accurately be called Concrete County, given its labyrinth of six major freeways winding through 34 cities

My folks both came from big families, one originating in Vermont and the other in Wisconsin. Throughout the year, aunts, uncles and cousins would come to visit, and a trip to Disneyland was always on their agenda. I could have easily become a tour guide at the theme park as I learned the best routes to take from one ride to another, the best times to experience each attraction (when the lines were shortest), and how to get the most out of those ticket books without using all the E Tickets first.

Disneyland E tickets should not be confused with e-tickets loaded onto mobile phones for the purposes of boarding airplanes. In many ways, the Disneyland E Ticket was better than an airline e-ticket because it could take you on a cruise through a jungle inhabited by wild animals, underwater to view exotic fish and plants, and even near the peak of the snow-covered Matterhorn Mountain. For me, Disneyland E Tickets evoke far fonder memories than e-tickets.

Then again, I could just be suffering from OFS.

Thinking about Disneyland's Matterhorn ride, it was probably the most adrenaline-pumping attraction in all of southern California until the Magic Mountain amusement park opened 60 miles away in 1971. That park was all about roller coasters the steeper, faster and wilder, the better. This was not something my aunts and uncles were interested in, but many of my cousins wanted to go. Thus, beginning in 1974, the year I got my driver's license, I became a three-park expert: Disneyland for outings with entire families, Magic Mountain for excursions with my cousins, and Knott's Berry Farm (six miles from Disneyland) for aunts and uncles desiring a less-frenetic pace.

All three parks are still in existence today, although both Disneyland and Knott's have added coasters to their attraction mixes, and Magic Mountain has increased its number of coasters to 19, which is said to be the most in a single park. As one of a certain age, who once walked right past the health-related warning signs at coaster entrances but now stops to read every word, I long for the days when slower, highly-themed rides commanded a larger footprint at

theme parks.

Then again, I could just be suffering from OFS.

Now that we live in the Inland Northwest, we look at the entire summer season differently. As kids, the summer was a carefree time. We played outside most of the day (sadly, sans sunscreen), got home in time for dinner, then went back outside for a few more hours before dusk. When we weren't playing baseball outside, we were bowling inside. The local alley had a Youth Bowling Club that cost \$1 to join. A member could bowl all summer long for 24 cents per game, and for each game bowled, received a ticket to fill out for a prize drawing at the end of the summer. The prizes were bought with the membership fees. One year, I won 50 free games of bowling. Another year, I won a bicycle, which I used to ride to school the next two

Today, knowing that sunshine will give way to snowfall more quickly than we'd care to think about, we spend a good amount of time on house-related chores. Yes, some of the chores can be fun, but I have to believe that the summers of our youth will always be better than our summers as adults.

Then again, I could just be suffering from OFS.

Food. Now there's a topic that should be a part of every OFS discussion. Remember when you could eat anything — and I do mean anything — and you'd simply run it off that same day or the next day on the

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baseball field or the playground? Pepperoni pizza. "May I have another slice, please?" A trip to the donut shop. "Why can't I have more than three?" An afternoon at the movie theater. "Extra melted butter on the popcorn!"

These days, it's just one slice of pizza to avoid going the gluten-free route, just one donut to avoid adding five miles to the day's walk, and only a little bit of butter – or whatever that liquid is – on the popcorn to keep the veins from clogging. The mere fact that we now must think about such things leads me to believe that pizza, donuts and movies were all better in my childhood.

Then again, I could just be suffer-

ing from OFS.

When we were kids, missing school fell into one of two categories: excused absences and unexcused absences. Even one unexcused absence could result in a trip to the vice principal's office, and if your reason wasn't deemed acceptable, the next step could be a call to your parents. For an absence to be excused, one had to be pretty sick and a parent had to call the school office in the morning. Attendance was exceptional back then, and herd immunity definitely was a thing.

As adults, absences from work may be called "sick days" or, depending on the employer, fall into the category of PTO (personal time off). I've worked for companies that allow a certain number of "sick days" as well as companies that utilize PTO. I can tell you, without equivocation, that companies utilizing the sick-day system experience far more absenteeism because virtually all the employees treat at least some of their sick days like additional vacation days.

As one who has always worked hard, rarely missed work, and picked up the slack for co-workers abusing the sick-day system, I believe the excused and unexcused absence system of my school years was far more effective.

Then again, I could just be suffering from OFS.

Whether it involves political de-

bates, social media, the evolution of theme parks, how we spend our summers, junk food, taking time off or so many other aspects of our lives, the affliction known as OFS stands ready to influence how we feel, think, and even act

That's why I'm hoping that, one day soon, scientists will find either a cure or a vaccine for Old Fart Syndrome.

Bob Johnson is the author of the sports biography, "Mr. 900: The Glenn Allison Story," and recipient of 99 national writing awards. Now a resident of North Idaho, he and his family enjoy exploring the Inland Northwest, and Johnson is sharing his observations with Huckleberry Press readers.

Dollar General ...continued from page 1

on companies with no local roots.

At the same time, Dollar General has moved into many areas that had already lost their local grocers. In that sense, the stores have become placeholders, serving a role no one else would. They keep residents from going without. They anchor small clusters of rural housing with affordable, familiar goods. They also offer modest jobs in places that need them.

The question isn't whether Dollar General should exist in our towns. The stores are already here. The better question might be, "How do we make sure these stores are part of a more resilient local economy, not the only thing left standing in it?" I love the local flare of small towns, and I prefer to shop small and local when possible, but it isn't always possible.

Some towns are exploring alternatives.

Community co-ops, locally owned general stores, mobile markets, and even farmer-run food hubs are beginning to show up in parts of rural America where Dollar General has dominated for years. Others are advocating for policies that prioritize locally owned businesses in zoning decisions or offer grants to community-based entrepreneurs.

In the meantime, the choices we make as individuals still matter. Shopping locally when we can, even for just a few items, helps keep those businesses going. I think that as consumers we have the right to vote with our money, choosing to shop where we want our money to go when we have choices, and to make the best of it when the choices are slim.

Speaking up at community meetings about what we want to see in our towns can influence what gets built next. Even the way we talk about these stores matters. Rather than

viewing Dollar General as either a villain or a savior, we might view it as a tool. Each store is just one piece of a larger picture that our rural communities have the power to shape.

We work with what we have; after all, rural life has always been about adaptation. We find creative ways to make it work. Dollar General is part of the landscape now, but so is our collective wisdom, our ability to build things from the ground up, and our ongoing commitment to shaping communities that reflect the needs, values, and stories of the people who live there.

Robin Milligan is an artist and entrepreneur living in Spokane, Wash. She curates art shows, runs an IT company, and teaches ceramics and painting from her home studio. When not working, Robin spends her time with her three children exploring nature, rockhounding, making art, and swimming.







912 S Keller Street

August 9 & 23

11 am - 2 pm











Celebrating the 4th

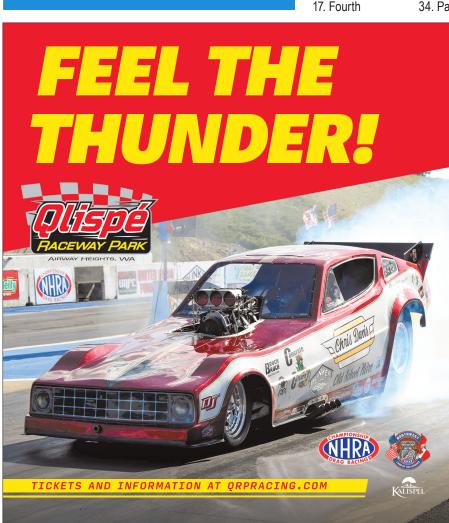
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 20. Friends
 21. Games
 22. Hamburgers
 23. Hamilton
 24. Holiday
 25. Hotdogs
 26. Independence
 27. Jay
 28. Jefferson
- 25. Hotdogs
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 29. July
 30. Lemonade
 31. Liberty
 32. Madison
 33. Nation
 34. Parade
- 36. Popsicle38. Rights39. Smores40. Sparklers41. Stars42. States43. Stripes44. Sunglasses45. Sunscreen46. Sunshine47. Thirteen48. United49. Washington50. Watermelon

July 4th

35. Picnic

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509-775-2295

Sudoku Puzzle Instructions:

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing.

Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces.

Every row must contain one of each digit – so must every column, as must every 3x3 square

Puzzle difficulty level is "Medium." Good luck!

SUDOKU SOLUTION: Below is the Solution to

This Week'sPuzzle

Daily Sudoku: Mon 23-Jun-2025							_		
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Jokes curated from the Internet and books, and created by Thea Cruden

Is there a 4th of July in the UK? Yeah... right after the 3rd of July.

How do pandas stay cool in July? They use bear conditioning

What treat do dads like on the 4th of July? POPsicles.

What do you say when your friend says it's June 31st? July'd.

What did Polly the parrot want for the 4th of July? A fire-cracker.

How is looking up your symptoms on WebMD like your July Horoscope? It's probably cancer.

Two drunken Irishmen in a graveyard. Paddy starts reading the gravestones. "Mick," he says, "Would you look at this, a feller here who was 90 when he died!" "Who's that?" says Mick. "Somebody called O'Toole from Kerry," he replies. Mick says, "Never mind him, there's a feller here called Murphy, was 99 when he died! From Castletown of all places!" "Well that's nothing!" says Paddy. "What about what's written on this feller's stone, here right beside the gate! The stone says 147!" "147? That's amazing!" says Mick. "Who was he?" "Well, according to the stone, it's somebody called Miles from Dublin...!"

What did the ghost say on the 4th of July? Red, white, and boo.

What do you call a snowman in July? A puddle.

Why did the tomato turn red in July? Because it saw the salad dressing.

Why did the ice cream get invited to all the July parties? Because it was always the coolest.

What do you call a lazy kangaroo in July? Pouch potato.

What do you call a month that loves to go to the beach? Ju-ly.

What did the colonists wear to the Boston Tea Party? Tea-shirts.

What was the most popular dance in 1776? Indepen-dance.

A guy asks a lawyer about his fees. "I charge \$50 for three questions," the lawyer says. "That's awfully steep, isn't it?" the guy asks. "Yes, I suppose so," the lawyer replies. "Now what's your final question?"

What does the Statue of Liberty stand for? It can't sit down.

If you cross a patriot and a dog with curly

hair, what do you get? A Yankee Poodle.

What does our flag and a sad candy cane have in common? They're both red, white and blue.

Was the Declaration of Independence written in Philadelphia? No, it was written in ink.

Why did Paul Revere ride his horse from Boston to Lexington? Because the horse was too heavy to carry!

A boy read a restaurant sign that advertised fat-free French fries. "Sounds great," said the health-conscious boy. He ordered some. He watched as the cook pulled a basket of fries from the fryer. The potatoes were dripping with oil when the cook put them into the container. "Wait a minute," the boy said. "Those don't look fat-free." "Sure they are," the cook said. "We only charge for the potatoes."

What is the most popular sport on the 4th of July? Flag football.

What protest by a group of dogs occurred in 1772? The Boston Flea Party.

What did a patriot put on his dry skin? Revo-lotion.

Did you hear the one about the Liberty Bell? Yeah, it cracked me up too.

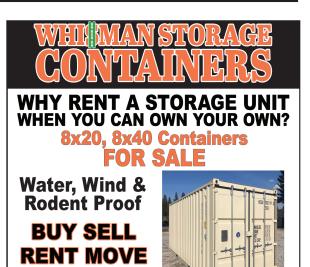
Which colonists told the most jokes? Punsylvanians.

Jerry King cartoon printed with permission. www.jerryking.com

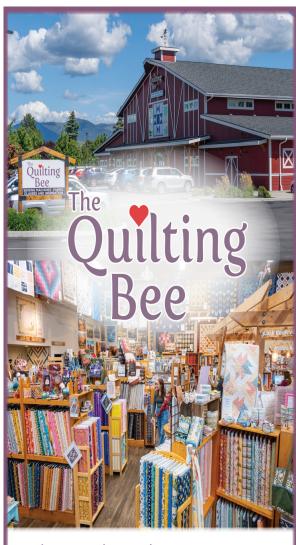


"Pinky swear doesn't cut it anymore. My attorney has a few documents for you to sign."





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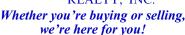


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Asking \$135,000 / Hunter Sanderlin (509) 977-1305



3bd, 2bth on 1.35 beautiful acres! Wrap around deck, spacious rooms, updated bathrooms, 30X30 Shop, 2 car carport, 50X50 Garden, two fire pits (one gas) & a chicken coupe. Short walk to beautiful water views

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The Saturday of Sum



by Amy McGarry

believe it's July!

A lot of us spend all year waiting and planning for When summer. it's raining every day in fall, we

long for summer sunshine. When winter temperatures maintain a sub-zero plateau, we long for summer heat, sometimes joking that we know we will complain when summer heat gets a little too hot.

Then we make our way through spring, which is always teasing us with its blossoms and new growth, its warm temperatures, then hot temperatures, then - psyche - cold again. Always we take comfort knowing summer is just around the corner. In fact, Memorial Day, the "unofficial start of summer," happens way before the official start of summer in June. We all know that those Memorial Day barbecues and camping trips have as much chance of drowning in rain as being blessed with the sun's rays.

June arrives with even more mixed messages. If you divide the Northern Hemisphere's four seasons neatly into three-month increments, June is definitely a summer month. But my kid didn't even get out of school for the summer until June 17. How can it be summer if kids are still in school? Never mind that, because I'm a teacher, when I say kids are still in school, I mean I'm also still going to work.

And don't get me started on June weather in Spokane. Talk about mixed messages. First, we had days when the highs reached the 90s. So, I put away all my long pants and long-sleeved shirts for the summer. The next week we had a high of 58 degrees and I practically froze to death. Speaking of freezing, I remember one June in the early 2000s when it

My oh my, I can't snowed in June. My car got stuck in a snowbank from all the previous spring snow. Oh, that Mother Nature and the games she plays.

Of course, the official start of summer isn't until about three weeks into June. That would be the summer solstice, when the upper half of the earth is tilted toward the sun, creating the longest day and shortest night of the year. This year, the summer solstice fell on June 20 at 7:42 p.m. Pacific Time. Despite the fact that I'm a morning person, and kind of old, I can't stay awake long enough to see the sun set on the longest day of the year, I like the idea of it. Until I remember that it also means from 7:42 p.m. onward from June 20, every day is getting shorter and every night is getting longer. What the heck? Summer just started!

I'm being kind of hard on June; it has its endearing qualities. It seems to take forever, but school does eventually get out in June. Despite the occasional freezing spell, I rarely have to scrape my windshield in the morning in June. And June is like the Friday of the summer. Everybody loves Friday because, even though you still have to go to work or go to school, Saturday and Sunday are just around the corner. Excitement's building as you're on the cusp of the weekend, gearing up for fun times or just relaxation. Even though we're still in school for half of June and the weather is unpredictable, you know that July, and full-on, real summer, will soon be here.

Fast forward to August. August is the Sunday of the summer. On Sundays, we try to relax and make the best of another day off, but thoughts of the upcoming week cast a shadow over the pleasure. We know that all too soon the weekend will be over. We might even have to take care of last-minute chores or errands before the workweek starts. If you're a procrastinator excursion to do that. Of course, July is the like me, you have way more to do on Sunday than you should.

August is like Sunday, but for the summer. It's still summer, but we know it's coming to an end soon. The upcoming fall starts to weigh on our minds. The stores have switched to fall clothes and have stocked up on every manner of school supply one could dream of. (Okay, I know that starts right after 4th of July these days, but humor me.) The days start to become noticeably shorter.

July is the Saturday of summer. The sweet spot. It almost feels like summer is never ending because we started living summer life in June and we know we have August still ahead of us. According to artificial intelligence, the average high temperature during July is 83 degrees and the average low is 56 degrees. Absolutely perfect in my humble opinion. What's more, July typically gets very little rain, averaging around 0.64 inches. Furthermore, there's less risk of smoky air from wildfires in July than in August. Statistically, most people take summer vacation in July.

It just so happens that my family is taking our summer vacation in July this year. This is kind of a big deal for us. I usually teach summer classes in July, but I decided to take July off this year. My husband's father has been having health issues this year and isn't getting any younger. This July, for the whole month, seemed like a good time to go visit him and the rest of my many, many in-laws in Morocco, my husband's homeland.

July in Morocco is quite a different story from July in the Inland Northwest. And because a dear friend of mine is joining us for part of this trip, and because she has always wanted to take a camel trek in the Sahara Desert, we have booked a two-day

hottest time in the Sahara. The tour books all recommend avoiding excursions in the Sahara during July. But for my friend, who is in her 50s, this is probably a oncein-a-lifetime opportunity.

In July, the Sahara Desert typically exceeds 109 degrees during the day. On a positive note, the Moroccan part of the Sahara is a little cooler – 90s that creep into the 100s. More good news - nighttime temperatures can cool to as low as 77 degrees. The best news of all is that, as improbable as it sounds to me, my husband assures me there is airconditioning in our tents.

Still, we are preparing to be uncomfortable. I do know that highlights of the tour are sunrise and sunset camel rides, which indicate we'll most likely be avoiding the hottest time of the day. I'm sure the guides don't want to be in that heat any more than we do. On the bright side, we are guaranteed that like the heat in the Inland Northwest, it's a dry heat. None of that East Coast humidity heat index that makes it feel like 10 degrees hotter.

My hope for you as you read this in July, is that it's the perfect Inland Northwest July, just like a perfect Saturday. I wish you safety for your travels. And if a heatwave happens to come to this neck of the woods in July, remember me, my friend, my husband, and my daughter are sweating it out in the Sahara - with sore butts from our camel rides.

Amy McGarry grew up in Spokane Valley, Washington. After a 20 year hiatus, she moved back to Spokane Valley where she lives with her husband, daughter and two cats. She is the author of I am Farang: Adventures of a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand, available on Amazon. com, Auntie's Bookstore, and Barnes and Noble.



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Kettle River Waterfront Paradise: it's like buying your own park! Elegantly built home with an open floor plan, vaulted ceilings with lots of windows to let the sunlight and views inside. Floor to ceiling tiled wood stove in the living room with a spacious redwood deck to watch the river flow. Special crafted kitchen with Acacia wood



counter tops from Africa, hickory cabinets with an abundance of counter space and storage, large dining room with a private viewing deck. Primary bedroom with jacuzzi tub, walk in shower and closet plus electric fireplace. Plenty of bathrooms for entertaining and sleep overs. Separate cabin with running water, electricity and private outhouse in a serene setting with large deck, trees and expansive yard. Plenty of water with a private well and 2 car Carport with storage, RV Carport & shed. 6.57 acres.



MLS# 44588

Beautiful home in Colville offers a harmonious blend of spacious living areas, modern conveniences, and delightful outdoor space. 4 bed/2 bath, fenced yard and detached garage/shop. Home boasts large rooms, classic formal dinning and breakfast nook with heated flooring in kitchen. Main floor features a spacious living area, perfect for family gatherings and entertaining guests. Main floor bedroom and a conveniently located bathroom. The expansive rooms and skylights allow natural light to flood in, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. The main floor includes sitting/library room and a

separate laundry room. Corner lot w/ 2 charming porches that extend the living space and offer the perfect spot for morning coffee or evening relaxation. Many updates furnace, on demand hot water heater, gutters, and more. Upstairs, 3 generously sized bedrooms/full bath and skylight.

4-bed, 3 & 1/2-bath with 95' of Peye Creek frontage, Chewelah's finest. Meander over your own bridge, with creek babbling through your fully-developed, landscaped yard. Fully fenced back yard. Charming details, wired and set up for big screen movies and stage plays. Boasting elegance and functionality. Lighting and ambiance in every room. Upstairs laundry, office or rec room as well as main bed, bath and 2 additional bedrooms with dormer windows. 2 car garage and street parking on 2 sides. Nothing was forgotten when this home was built.





\$565,000



MLS# 43205

full basement with 2 additional sleeping spaces and full bath. 36'x36' insulated shop with full roll up doors. 2 car attached garage electric 12'x7' door, and one 8'x8' manual. Basement is partially finished, ready for your final touches. Plumbed and wired \$405,000 for second kitchen space. Don't

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miss the root cellar just before going upstairs to outside from basement. Garden/greenhouse and small tack shed along with partial fencing. Some finish work still needed, but the Sq Footage and usable acres just outside KF city limits - MANY OPPORTUNITIES WITH THIS PROPERTY!

Breathtaking 180' Views of Lake Roosevelt and the Columbia River. Main floor living with master suite with walk in shower and large closet. Beautiful woodwork and ceilings throughout. Open kitchen, dining and living room with great views. You have to see this home to understand how comfortably elegant it is & great for entertaining. One additional bedroom on the main level and 2 bedrooms upstairs and a family room. MLS# 44277



\$599,999

2 shops 36'x48' & 24'x40', 2 car carport, 2 car attached garage. Large patio for bird watching and enjoying the views. Upstairs has a relaxing balcony with views of the mountain and fields. Did I mention the views are outstanding? Close to all amenities and easy access off the highway.

Wait until you see this Barnominium Home! One-of-a-kind beauty, located on 30 acres with amazing views of the Columbia River, mountains, sunsets and a seasonal creek. 3 bedrooms 3 baths plus a craft room, (the 2 upstairs bedrooms are suites) and 2 living areas, hardwood floors throughout. open kitchen, dining and living room. Partial basement for cool storage and all your water treatment and equipment. Large viewing deck for relaxing and enjoying the views. Covered parking, and wood storage, wood and propane heat,



MLS# 44654

\$495,000

Kohler 12KW generator wired in, 16'x16' summer guest house, 3 50'x17' storage sheds, 30'x20' tractor shed, chicken coop, large, fenced garden with fruit trees, berry bushes and grapes.



Beautifully updated split level 4-bedroom 2 bath home in the heart of Kettle Falls. Fenced large yard makes this a very private setting. Alley access on both sides of the garage for easy access. This home has all the amenities, deck overlooking the yard with great views, updated kitchen, walk-in tub, gas free standing stove, lots of windows adding light to all the rooms and an entry to the basement from the back yard. Extralarge 1 car garage with work bench and storage, plus an open carport with added storage room and Natural gas furnace It's all here! Currently has a VA loan.

MLS#44437 \$369,000

This home has been updated to perfection! Outstanding kitchen with new Island and expansive counter tops, plus new appliances. Open floor plan to the well-sized living room and fireplace. Beautiful mountain and territorial views. Upstairs bathroom is completely remodeled and 2 freshly painted bedrooms with barn door closets, and laminate floors throughout. Laundry room hosts

a half bath and easy access from the upper floor and expansive recreational space, that was the garage and is completely finished. Lower level invites you into a comfortable living area with a country tub room and separate half bath. Two additional bedrooms, extra storage room and laminate flooring throughout, with lots of windows. Brand new relaxing deck to the garage/carport and chicken coop. 5 acres is hay pasture. Separate RV hook up with septic, power and water. 30 gpm well for all your gardening and watering needs. MLS# 44755



Waterfront Oasis: Listen to the sounds of the Kettle River from this stunning, custom built home situated on 6.52 acres bordering the Kettle River. Large open floor plan with views from the kitchen, dining and living room. Plenty of windows to bring the beauty of outside inside. Main floor living with radiant heat, laundry and primary bed and bath. A beautifully finished basement includes wet bar, stone floors, a wood stove, bed and bath, lots of windows and an outside entrance. Two decks for your entertaining enjoyment & oversized 2 car garage. Secondary house for family and friends, that includes a kitchen, bath and huge bonus room with



pool table and room for several sleeping areas and includes 2 car garage. In-ground sprinkler, huge woodshed with storage, Screened gazebo and shed. Custom wood working throughout this home. radiant heat, wood stove and a mini split is included and the pad is in it just needs to be installed. Generator stays, 220 on the outside of the garage and STAR Link service stays - you **\$879,000** just have to sign up.

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