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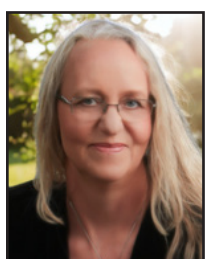
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Finding Calm and Joy, Even During Fire Season



by Kerry Schafer

I'm an optimist. So much so, that I've been known to annoy people with my relentless quest for silver linings. But despite my belief that happiness is largely a personal choice, it's easy to get sucked into the continuum of despair when the whole world seems to be burning up around you.

A few weeks ago, when all of the fires were burning out of control and smoke had been a tangible, persistent reality for days, I had a conversation with myself that went a bit like this:

Kerry: "If I was rich and had a ton of money I could go to a lake or somewhere else by a lake, where the sky is blue, the air is clear, and the sun is shining."

Also Kerry: "There is no such place. The whole world is burning. We're all gonna die without ever seeing a blue sky or a star again..."

In that moment, the only silver lining I could come up with was the hope of a dystopian colony on Mars where we all went outside only in space suits and helmets with breathing apparatus, and there was no sun or any green growing thing to be seen ever again.

At the time that I was entertaining these

cheerful thoughts and sliding toward despair, I was perfectly safe, my home and the forest around it untouched by the devastation of fire. I wasn't even in an evacuation zone.

My dip into the dark side was mercifully brief. I've lived through a few tragedies during my life, the kind that turn your life upside down and make you question everything you thought you knew. And one of the things I've learned is that joy, like hope, can live even in the darkest of spaces.

I want to share a few of the tools and practices that help me stay centered, calm, and joyful, even when the world feels dark and seems to be falling apart. Maybe you'll see something here that will be helpful to you.

Breathe. When we're in fight/freeze/flight mode, anywhere between mild anxiety and full-on panic, our logical thought processes go off line. Everything in the body, including the brain, is focused on survival. When you're actually running for your life, this can be helpful. Otherwise, not so much. One of the easiest ways to take yourself out of fight or flight is to take conscious control of your breathing. Slow it down. Deepen it. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try for an exhale that is longer than your inhale. It helps to count it out in your head as you breathe: In-2-3-4-5-6. Out-2-3-4-5-6-7-8. Doing this

breathing for just a couple of minutes sends a signal to your brain and your body that it's safe to calm down.

Accept where you are, and what you feel. Emotions are like the weather; they come and go. Tell yourself, "This is how I feel right now, and that's okay. No feeling lasts forever." There's a book for kids titled, "Sad Isn't Bad," and I think this is a good thing to remember.

Limit or step away from social media, or at least curate it. Looking at footage of fires or other disasters for hours on end makes it seem like that's all there is the whole wide world. Find some posts of sunny skies. Look at some silly cat videos. The fires and losses and grief are real – and these other things are also real.

Surround yourself with positive and supportive people as much as possible – and make a point of helping others, even if it's just with a smile or a hug.

Explore Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). This is an easy-to-use, scientifically proven method that works to calm anxiety, heal trauma, and regulate emotional states. It involves gentle touch or tapping on acupuncture points while you focus your attention on what's bothering you. This can be easily learned on your own. I love the work of the people at The Tapping Solution (thetappingsolution.com). They have an always-free Crisis

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Taste Budz Review: Tavolàta



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

We were absolutely starving when we arrived, and Italian food is my favorite, so we got lots of goodies to try.

We started with the olives, focaccia, and artichokes. The olives were marinated in a subtle yet zesty oil with garlic cloves and chili peppers. They were a perfect little snack.

We ordered the bruschetta but accidentally got the focaccia; however, it was so good we decided to just roll with it. The bread is house-made, and very light and airy. It is served with the most flavorful smoky olive oil I have ever had. We also got whipped ricotta drizzled with olive oil. It was divine. I love fried artichokes. They served theirs with a Calabrian aioli that I could’ve licked off the plate.

Onto the entrees, I normally order a red sauce pasta or white wine pasta. I decided to switch it up and try their arugula pesto pasta, which was delicious. They serve it with lemon shavings and panko bread-crumbs, so it has a lot of acidity with a nice crunch. I added chicken, which was so juicy and really completed the dish.

To me, the star of the show was Zack’s rigatoni. There were big chunks of spicy sausage, tossed in a bright, light tomato sauce with chili, topped with a generous amount of Grana Padano (fancy cheese). I loved the pasta so much, he ended up giving me half of it.

On this particular evening, we were going to see the “Odyssey,” and we were running short on time. However, we had a wonderful server who packaged our desserts up into to-go boxes with to-go silverware so we could take them to the movies. I got the tiramisu; it was rich yet light, the ladyfingers were still firm (not mushy), and the mascarpone was delectable. Zack got a rich and delicious chocolate ganache cheesecake, served with fresh strawberries.

Zack and I are soaking up the last bit of summer now that the smoke has cleared out. We decided to have a wonderful dinner on Tavolàta’s patio in downtown Spokane.

- What we enjoyed:
- ~ Fried Artichoke
 - ~ Marinated Olives
 - ~ Focaccia with Whipped Ricotta
 - ~ Pesto Radiatori
 - ~ Rigatoni “The King”



We will definitely be going back; there are so many more yummy things to try. The interior looked really cozy but urban; next time, we are going to eat inside.

They have happy hour every day from 4-6 p.m. and serve their full-size portions, so you can enjoy everything without spending a fortune. Next time you are in the mood for Italian, check them out.

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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.

Articles and ad space reservation deadline: 20th of each month

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Subscriptions

The *Huckleberry Press* is available for free at over 500 locations in northeastern Washington and northern Idaho, and online at huckleberrypress.com. Subscriptions are \$32/year to cover mailing costs.

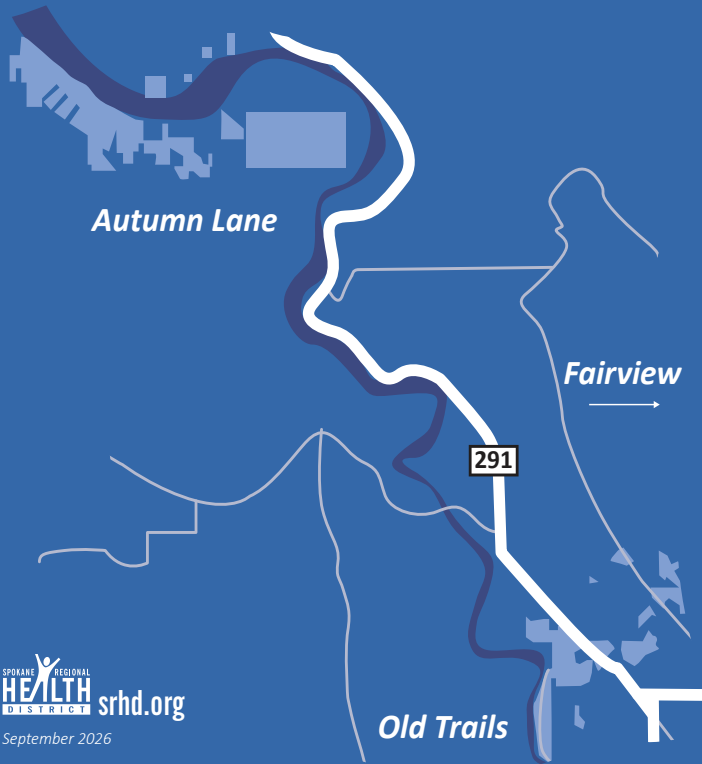
The *Huckleberry Press* is published 12 times per year.

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It's About Time for Some Updates



by Bob Johnson

Many people today have short attention spans, which explains why news reports on television rarely last more than 30 seconds. Give us a “Breaking News” banner accompanied by a dramatic sound effect, pop in some video with a voiceover to quickly tell us about it and move on to the next thing. Then repeat. There’s precious little time to provide any perspective, and there’s rarely any effort to follow up on the story once it has evolved or been resolved.

The lack of follow-up in the world of journalism has long been a personal pet peeve. Too often, the media would rather be initially wrong as news is breaking than take the time to fill in the blanks on a previously reported story.

Admittedly, a look in the mirror reveals a journalist who is guilty of a lack of follow-up in his own reporting. Today, we right that wrong by providing updates on the first 10 of the 22 columns I have written for the *Huckleberry Press*.

Column No. 1 detailed the many reasons we native Californians didn’t miss Las Vegas, where we’d lived for six years before moving to the Inland Northwest, even one little bit. We provided 13 reasons, including this one: “When driving on two-lane roads, the drivers of cars coming from the opposite direction often wave at us. In Las Vegas, if anybody waved at all, they did so with just one finger.”

Update: While driving on Highway 41 one morning in early August, the car ahead of us coasted to a stop in an area where the speed limit was 45-mph, so we did the same. We caught a glimpse of a mama wild turkey walking four or five babies across the highway. A moment later, we saw a truck coming from the opposite direction speed up and hit a few of the birds, one of which was thrust into our windshield and over the top of our vehicle, leaving a trickle of blood on the windshield. Honestly, it was a bit jolting. About a mile ahead, each side of the road opened to two lanes, where an elderly woman made a mad dash around our car, rolled down her window, and started yelling obscenities at us. She was so wound up that we couldn’t understand her. To me it sounded like, “*Bleep, bleep, bleep, turkeys, bleep.*” We sat there dumbfounded. What had we done, other than stop behind a car that had stopped ahead of us? We understand wild turkeys are an invasive species here, but is that any reason for a driver to speed up to kill them, especially if they’re going to be knocked into other cars? And why the bleep (to speak her language) was the little old lady yelling at us?

Column No. 2 dealt with my misspent youth – okay, one summer of it – when I did way too much “tanning,” relegating me to a later-in-life series of Mohs skin cancer surgeries. The column described the most recent surgery. “When Mohs Monday arrived, I was mentally prepared. With nary a tear trickled, I endured the sting of the numbing needle, the scrape of the small scalpel, the heat of the electrocauterization and the ‘click-click-click’ of 10 surgical staples. Two weeks later, I returned to have the staples removed, also exhibiting amazing bravery. This time around, the greatest pain had been caused by the invasive medical procedure known as the co-pay.”

Update: The ladies (mostly) who check in folks at medical offices love me because, unlike so many other patients, I come prepared. I have my license and insurance card out, and immediately after stating my name, without pausing, I add my date of birth. I pay so many co-pays these days that I feel as if my last name has become my middle name and my new last name is my DOB.

Column No. 3 touched on the differences between what we hear here compared to a big city: “Even given its breathtaking natural beauty no matter which direction one cares to look and no matter the season, the best thing about the Inland Northwest may well be its soundtrack, one that evolves from season to season, yet never assaults the senses.”

Update: From my home office, I can hear several different species of birds throughout the day. From our bedroom, the lovely Michelle and I are lulled to sleep by birds chirping, dogs barking and, depending on the time of year, other animals — what’s the phrase? — hooking up.

Column No. 4 looked at my first surgery here in the Inland Northwest and a pre-surgery visit from a pastor. “As I lounged on the gurney before surgery, the pastor stopped in to pray with and for us. As he stepped through the door, I spotted a shiner under his right eye. Pastor or not, I asked, ‘What did you do to tick off your wife?’ Without missing a beat he replied, ‘I brought her the wrong drink. I got her a Coke Zero and she wanted a regular Coca-Cola.’”

Update: The same pastor, this time without a shiner, visited me be-

fore my second surgery here and offered basically the same prayer. Afterward, I thanked him and said that I was glad his shiner had cleared up, adding, “Looks like you’ve been behaving.” To which he responded, “I thought I recognized you.” I figured it couldn’t be bad to have a pastor on my side, but he was a no-show for a prayer before my recent third surgery. Could he have brought his wife a Coke Zero again?

Column No. 5 was all about snow: “During my first snow season in the Inland Northwest, I noticed that the smiles of wonder gradually morphed into frowns of frustration as the snow would fall, stick and seemingly dig in, much like a burrowing groundhog. How could something so welcome one month be so loathed only a few months later? Why was there this love/hate relationship with the white stuff?”

Update: We’ve been here for two full winters now, and I’m told they were mild by Inland Northwest standards. When things get back to normal, I suspect my opinion on snow may change. But embracing the first day of snowfall won’t.

Column No. 6 dealt with the perils of the drive-through: “Almost all fast-food tacos come with some sort of mouth-burning ingredient, be it a sauce, a salsa, or a spice. This requires asking whether the item is spicy so you’ll know what to have left off. We’ve found that when we ask that question and the answer is along the lines of, ‘Oh, it’s not very spicy at all,’ what it actually means is, ‘Better stop for a pack of Tums on the way home.’”

Update: A couple new-to-the-area drive-throughs have since opened, one specializing in chicken strips and the other in burgers. Both have plenty of menu items that do not involve spice. They provide reminders of the place we left behind, but in good ways for a change.

In column No. 7, we recounted experiences with people that cemented our standing as official residents of the Inland Northwest, both of which ended with us asserting, “They must be from California.”

Update: That five-word phrase has become our official family utterance anytime we see someone do something – what’s the word for the opposite of smart?

Column No. 8 dealt with OFS, a condition many people acquire as they get older.

Update: I’m happy to report that old fart syndrome is one affliction I’ve been able to shake. It’s much easier – not to mention better for my health – to stop judging and opining on every little thing when there’s so much magic in this part of the world. Instead, we calmly utter our favorite five-word phrase.

Column 9 was all about gratitude – or, to be more accurate, the lack of it. We had attended a wonderful little festival devoted to lavender in Deer Park, and as we were leaving, a mother and daughter approached the entrance. That’s when we heard the mother say in a disdainful tone, “Well, this certainly isn’t worth \$13.” How could she possibly know that?

Update: Gratitude remains the greatest gift anyone can possess, even when being cussed out by a little old lady. In that case, had our

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Mama Gives You Wings



by Amy McGarry

One of my all-time favorite songs is “Landslide” by Fleetwood Mac. The landslide coming down in this song is a symbol for a sudden upheaval. It represents a time in your life when there’s a violent shift in the ground beneath your feet, for which you have no control.

“If you see my reflection in the snow covered hills
Well the landslide will bring it down.”

Hearing the lyrics to “Landslide” has always affected me viscerally and profoundly, but never more than right now. You see, right now, I’m preparing for my daughter, my one and only child, to move out of the house and leave for college at the end of September.

The line from “Landslide” that really gets me is, “I’ve been afraid of changing cause I built my life around you.” As the parent of an only child, I have, by choice, built my life around this person. So has my husband. That’s just parenthood, right? Every day prioritizing the safety, protection, and nurturing of this little one (she never got any taller than 5 feet, so we still consider her “little”).

The good news is she’s attending the University of Washington, so classes don’t start until the end of September, giving us a whole extra month to protect and nurture her, while most of her friends had to leave for college in August. I’m torn between sadness, for how much I will miss her everyday presence in my life, and worry, wondering if I have adequately prepared her for life on her own.

My husband is concerned that I (yes, me, the mother) have not adequately prepared her for life on her own because I didn’t spend enough time teaching her to cook (yes, I’m laughing out loud as I write this). Who needs their mom to teach them how to cook in the days of YouTube? Heck, even a recipe book can walk you through the steps. Never mind that her dorm room doesn’t even have a kitchen. But my husband comes from Morocco which is a country where teaching girls to cook is a mother’s priority. Not this mother; I had other priorities of what I wanted to teach her.

My husband didn’t have the privilege of attending college, so he doesn’t have the perspective I have. When I was preparing to go to college, like my daughter, I had always been a good student. But I had been raised by parents who never went to college. They raised me with their belief that if you are a good student, you go to college, then land a good job, make money, and live happily ever after. All in a neat, straight line. That was not my experience. So, in preparing my daughter for college I wanted her to understand a few things I wish I had known.

First, it’s okay to not be sure what you want to be “when you grow up.” My kid gets so many questions about what she plans to study, or what she wants to “go into.” She’s had the same answer for the last several years. But that could change, and that’s okay. My parents became very concerned when I changed my future goals every year and more frequently. That didn’t fit their idea of how going to college is supposed

to work. What we know now is the decision-making part of our brain isn’t even fully developed until the age of 25. Yet college freshmen are expected to be making decisions about what they’re going to do for the rest of their lives.

As for my parents’ belief that being a good student meant I was bound for success in life, that was also not my experience. I wished that I had known that being a good student doesn’t automatically ensure success as an adult. There are many, many more skills one needs in life that don’t even come from the classroom. I have worked very hard to instill this understanding in my kid.

Therefore, it’s perfectly okay to fail. Because my daughter has been such a good student and school has always been easy, her identity became wrapped up in being a good student. I worry that she didn’t learn the natural lessons through failure in school. Luckily, there have been some other opportunities for failure along the way to teach her that it’s okay to fail: a couple of losing softball seasons, debate competition losses, and not coming in first in the poetry slam. More importantly, we’ve had countless conversations about how much harder college will be, and if she fails, she can pick herself back up and try again. I wish someone had told me that.

Some big differences between my daughter and I, however, make her departure to college much different than it was for me 40 years ago. When I left for college, I had been driving for almost three years, I had been working at a fast-food restaurant for three years, and I would soon be 19 years old. My daughter doesn’t have a driver’s license, has never had a high school job, and she just turned 17. That seems very young to me to be kicked out of mama’s nest. I wish I would have considered that more when I made the decision for her to skip a grade. I was too focused on how important it was that she be challenged in school. I didn’t want school to be so easy that she didn’t experience failure. As noted above, that backfired.

How will my daughter fare sharing a room with a stranger when she has never had to share her space, the whole basement of our house? Especially since she desperately needs alone time to recover from the normal stimulation of life. How will she do that with a roommate? These are the worries that keep me up at night.

Although she just turned 17, fortunately my kid has some wisdom as well as book smarts. She also has a really good therapist. She’s thought of strategies to overcome these challenges.

One of my greatest joys recently was when my daughter told me she wanted to get a tattoo on her wrist that said, “Why worry?” I told her that’s a great question and I love that idea. Why worry, indeed? Maybe one of the greatest life lessons for both of us, is that worry does absolutely zero good. I wish someone would have told me that.

Another life lesson I hope I’ve instilled, that I wish I’d learned a long time ago, is a phrase on a ring my daughter wears. I gave her the ring for a graduation present. It says, “This too shall pass.” The ring also has an image of a dandelion with its seeds blowing away in the wind. Isn’t it empowering to remember that no matter how bad something feels at the time, it’s only temporary?

A landslide is devastating, but it’s temporary too.

One day my friend and I were sitting outside in her backyard when we saw an eagle in its nest in a tree. We thought maybe there were baby eagles. My friend, whose daughter just graduated from the University of Washington, pointed up to the nest and the eagle, and said, “See? That’s what it’s like for us. We take care of them in the nest. We prepare them to fly.”

I said, “Oh! Like Red Bull! Mamas give them wings!”

My friend said, “Ummmmmm.....okay. Sure.”

Whether it’s the mama eagle, or Red Bull, the hope remains the same. Did I give her enough love, confidence, and support so that she will grow her wings and fly?”

Maybe the most important message I have given my daughter, as she prepares to embark on her journey of independence, is that having wings and being able to fly on your own doesn’t mean the nest disappears. I will tell her every day, home will still be here. Mom and dad will still be here, always. She simply must believe that she can fly on her own.

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.



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Dog Days Are Over



by Alex Chaoukouri

The American school system failed me, but not in the way that most American students describe being failed by the system. I have plenty of friends that love to complain about how ill-prepared high school left them for adult life, and I understand that perspective. I personally think they would feel a lot more prepared if they'd paid a lick of attention to the class content instead of playing Racecar Driver Simulator on their school-issued Chromebook, but what do I know? A lot, apparently, because my grief with the American school system is derived from a special program called "academic acceleration." In other words, I got bumped up from kindergarten to the first grade, and 12 years later, I'm stuck with all the responsibilities of an adult with practically none of the privileges.

I turned 17 a whole eight days before I walked the stage at my high school graduation, and I won't turn 18 until the end of my freshman year of college. It's a cool fact that I often take pride in sharing, but moving five hours away to study at the University of Washington (UW) before becoming a legal adult sounds a lot better in theory than it is in practice. Going to college comes with many expectations; ones not usually bestowed on someone under the age of 18. The first thing that comes to mind for me is all the paperwork. I'm buried in forms to sign, miniature courses on hazing and alcohol culture, and a ton of emails. Just looking at the UW logo almost gives me a headache from the association of those unending emails. There's no better way to kill the joy and excitement of starting a new chapter of my life than having to ask my mom for our bank routing number or our tax forms. The best part: I can't even sign things for myself. Every legally binding document the university sends my way must also be signed by one of my parents, meaning I'm expected to follow certain rules and do certain things, yet I'm not the one who gets the final say. It really doesn't seem like the best exercise in independence.

In all fairness, I don't know how ready I am to be independent. My teachers have thrown that word around a lot because of my preference to work on my own rather

than in a group, but there is one person who I am absolutely not independent from: my mom. I've been attached to my mother's hip for my entire life, tagging along with her to do the most mundane tasks and talking her ear off the whole time. We've got a pretty good dynamic going, if I do say so myself. She makes my pasta sauce, I crack her back. She watches movies with me, I go grocery shopping with her. We are two gears in a machine, and me going off to college just throws a massive wrench in it all. That change might just be the scariest of them all, and I'm kind of in denial.

This whole process has always seemed like a very distant concept to me. Attending a university is something I felt I've been destined to do since childhood, but never really liked to think too hard about. Granted, I don't like to think too hard about a lot of things because I'm the definition of a worrier, but the level of avoidance I have been expressing towards college is pretty unique. I think what bothers me the most about the concept is the thought of such a substantial change to my routine. I struggle with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), and while you may not know this due to how horrendously misrepresented by popular culture and the media OCD is, routine and structure are integral to relieving anxiety associated with the condition. I have had the same bedroom and bathroom for six years, and I'm accustomed to having my own space – and a lot of it. The fact that I'm expected to just suck up the fact that all of that is going to change is really frustrating for me.

Considering that this article has devolved into a Declaration of Independence-esque list of grievances, I must make it very clear that it isn't all bad. Every time I'm feeling anxious about leaving my regular life behind or skimming a 60-page housing agreement, I remind myself why I'm doing all of this. The University of Washington is my dream school, and Seattle is my dream city. I've been navigating being a queer, mixed person in a relatively conservative area my whole life, and the promise of acceptance and understanding that UW offers me is everything I could ever ask for. When I leave at the end of the month, I leave behind my safe space and my built-in best friend (my mom), but I also leave behind a version of me that fears my own authenticity. I can be unapologetically me and celebrated for it.

No more snickering from my peers at the way I dress, no more dirty looks when I dare to voice my opinion.

As much as I will struggle under the weight of the expectations of being an adult, the weight of the expectations of my peers will be lifted from my shoulders the second I see that "Leaving Spokane" sign. I've lived in the same place my entire life and have thus been surrounded by the same people my entire life. Some great, some not-so-great. Regardless of how much I like the people I grew up around, staying around them prevents my own growth. I'm scared to try new things because I've already defined who "Alex" is, but that won't be the case in a brand-new environment. I may not be an adult yet, but UW offers me a chance to grow into the adult I want to be.

Evidently, the American school system did end up kind of screwing me over with this going-to-college-as-a-minor thing, but as my mom would say, "It builds character." There are a lot of obstacles to overcome and expectations to navigate in my future, but there are also new friends and knowledge waiting for me right alongside all of the doubt. Dog days are over, but Dawg days are just getting started.

Alex Chaoukouri just graduated from Central Valley High School with honors and will be attending the University of Washington in the fall to study law.

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by Ray Bilderback

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our fishing rig and take-my-brothers-to-the-swimming-pool rig. It was not equipped for high-way use, but it got to use the highway on weekend trips into the mountains. It just didn't have a top or fenders (or seatbelts, doors, a radio, a heater, or air conditioning). Too much fuss, those things.

I got to sit in the front while Dad drove. My two brothers reclined in the back with the sleeping bags, tent, and fishing gear. At the top of a steep grade, it would overheat and we would give it a chance to cool, then replenish the radiator with water from a canvas bag looped over the front bumper. Dad would add half of a sack of Bull Durham tobacco. The tobacco would circulate, swell up and fill those little leaks in the radiator.

An hour or so off the highway, we were pitching our tent at a mountain lake. Those were good years and the little jalopy played an important role in them.

If my dad were to choose his favorite vehicle, it might be the Reo with hard-rubber tires (that's right, no balloon tires on that truck). It was his favorite because driving it was his first paying job.

Skip a bunch of decades if you will. I was working with my father-in-law on his cattle ranch near Sprague, Wash. He had a '46 Chevy pickup equipped with duals and a diamond-plated deck instead of the regular pickup back. It had slots at the sides to accommodate racks which we usually left off because the Chevy's main job was to haul hay in the winter, fencing stuff in the summer, and whatever in between.

He bought it new in '46. During the war years, he got by with a '37 Dodge converted into a "trap wagon" (during the war, new trucks, tires and so on were not available; tanks and jeeps were what they made and those went to the war effort).

One summer afternoon, we worked cattle in the morning and were missing a heifer. We went looking for her in the Chevy. Joe drove so I got to open a pair of gates and close them (if it's closed, leave it closed, if it's open, leave it open). We were following a dusty, rutted track into the back pasture. About 10 minutes into the trip, Joe left the road choosing to plummet down into the big sage brush. I hung on.

In a bit, I asked him what I thought was a rea-

sonable question: "Why had we left the road?" He said, "There's a road here, I've been down it before."

We'd been lurching over rocks and sagebrush. One such lurch bounced us heavily to my side and didn't come back up. I looked up. One of the dual tires was passing the front of the Chevy!

"Joe, better stop. I think we've lost a tire." The truck was canted heavily to my side and my door was jammed against a large sagebrush. I had a hard time of it getting out of the rig. Meanwhile, the tire was bounding down the slope. Fortunately, it wobbled, ran into a big sagebrush and flopped on its side. I had to carry it only about 50 yards or so back to the truck.

While Joe jacked up the rig, I hunted for lug nuts on the sagebrush hillside. Tracking back the way we'd come, I found the other tire but as for lug nuts, I couldn't find a one. We borrowed one here and there from the other wheels and limped home. Next morning, the heifer was back with the herd.

Joe refrained from cussing or kicking the tires, which a lesser man might have done. We agreed that it simply wasn't the Chevy's fault and, looking on the bright side, we hadn't run into anybody or injured the truck. Good old truck.

That winter, Joe and Esther went on a cattleman's tour to Fiji, Australia, and the like and I fed the stock while they were gone. Naturally, we got a patch of miserable weather. One morning, I got a late start. I had to shovel the driveway and feed my own stock. Once at the barn, before I could load the faithful truck with hay, I had to break the ice off the water tank, start the pump, fill the tank with water, and feed the stock at the barn. I had been getting vocal reminders that lunch was late and they had not had breakfast either.

I ate an oatmeal cookie and had a cup of coffee while I drove the half mile to another pasture and another set of hungry cows. I had an hour left of daylight by that time. The feeding went smoothly, there were no cows missing and the cows seemed happy. A half-an-hour 'til dark.

But I had made a mistake. Do you remember "To Build a Fire," that short story by Jack London? In it, the young man left the cabin in

...continued on page 11

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Hit the Trail with Soph: Cedar Trees and Kitties, Oh My



By Sophia Mattice-Aldous

At the risk of sounding like a tree-hugging hippie (no offense to those who are, I am just not a fan of patchouli), old-growth trees deserve appreciation. “Our elders” as my mom refers to them. Browns Lake is a good place to visit them. An easy, one-mile hike takes you to a stand of cedars that were around before Prohibition was enacted, probably even before Washington was a territory. When mother and I reached them, we were privileged and lucky to take our time admiring them – finding the occasional stingingly sweet thimbleberry, listening to chipmunks scold us from the branches above, and inducting my latest foster kitten into the ranks of adventure cats (get ’em started young).

Granted, excursions like these are more challenging to plan when wildfire smoke clogs the region. With one more month of summer to go, we’re hardly in the clear when it comes to another blaze or several happening. All of that to say, if you find yourself craving a dose of nature with “our elders” and you have an opportunity to carpe some diem on the trail, you might want to check out or revisit these outdoor old folks’ homes.

Browns Lake

You might want a printed copy of the directions before you go, as cell service is spotty and hiking apps may not load efficiently or at all. From Newport, follow Hwy. 20 north for 15 miles to Usk. Cross the bridge over the Pend Oreille River on the east edge of town



and follow Kings Lake Road for four miles to the junction of Forest Road 5030000 (Browns Lake). Travel north on 5030000 for four miles to the campground entrance. The lake is open to swimming and non-motorized watercraft.

Roosevelt Grove of Ancient Cedars

Ancient is indeed the right word to describe these trees, as some of them are thousands of years old. The hike is two-and-a-half miles

roundtrip and fairly easy. Alas, a fire in 1926 destroyed much of the original grove, but it’s still worth the trek. Plus, there are waterfalls, meadows, and a great foliage color show in the fall. You’d be hard-pressed not to get a serotonin boost with this one. The grove is located near the Washington-Idaho border and is accessible via gravel forest roads from either state. The route from the Idaho side is suitable for all vehicles, but the Washington side is known to have some bumpy stretches better suited for vehicles with high clearance. It’s best to check with Forest Service staff before you head out.

Big Tree Botanical Area Interpretive Site

Of course, cedars aren’t the only veterans in the forest. The Big Tree Trail in the Tonasket Ranger District boasts two 900-year-old Western Larch trees with benches to take in the surrounding tree species. Interpretive signs are along the trail.

From Tonasket, take Highway 20 east for 24 miles to Ferry County Road #4953 (Bonaparte Recreation Area). Go five-and-a-half miles where it turns into Forest Service Road #32. Continue three miles to the junction with Forest Service Road #33. Drive #33 for five miles to the Botanical Area Interpretive Site parking area on the right. Heads up: vehicles are not permitted on Forest Service Road #33 when the gate is locked starting Nov. 30.

Sophia Mattice-Aldous is not a doctor, dietitian, extreme sports enthusiast, or a mini Sasquatch, though some of her exes may disagree with that last one. She just enjoys the opportunity to be outside and hike. If you have any recommendations where she should go next, email sophiamatticealdous@gmail.com.

Time for Some Updates

...continued from page 3

car been moving at a high speed when the guy in the truck decided to go turkey hunting, the outcome could have been much different.

Our 10th column for the Huckleberry Press consisted of 80 questions – and zero answers. Several of the questions focused on coffee, including: “Isn’t the coffee culture in Europe a good way to compare the general culture there with the general culture in America? Don’t the Europeans sit, sip and savor their morning espresso or cappuccino, whereas we Americans embrace the fast-paced grab-and-go nature of mobile ordering?”

Update: We’ve been fortunate to experience both cultures, and there’s definitely something special and even spiritual about slowing down to smell the coffee. The good news is we’ve discovered there are plenty of places to do that in the Inland Northwest. We simply need to seek them out.

And with that, we leave you with the words of the late, great Paul Harvey, who followed up on more stories than most during his legendary career in radio news: “Now you know the rest of the story.”

Bob and Michelle Johnson love nothing more than traversing the backroads of eastern Washington and northern Idaho, and sharing their experiences in words and (occasionally) pictures with Huckleberry Press readers. Reach Bob at bjibob@aol.com.

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- Agenda

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1		5	6					4
7			3		4	8		
		4					9	
	2				7			
	5			9			4	
			4				3	
	6					2		
		2	5		8			6
5					6	3		9

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!**

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Berry Funnies

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Why did the student eat their homework?
Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake.

What’s the hardest part of going back to school? Remembering what day of the week it is.

Why did the pencil go to school? To get a little sharper.

What did the backpack say on the first day of school? “I’m carrying a lot of baggage into this.”

Why was the math book sad? It had too many problems.

What did the student say when the teacher asked if they had done their homework? “Define ‘done.’”

Why do teachers love September? Because everyone starts the year saying, “I’m going to stay organized *this* time.”

What’s the difference between August and September? August has hope. September has assignments.

Why did the student bring a ladder to school? They wanted to go to high school.

Why was the student late on the first day? Their alarm clock needed a summer vacation too.

Why did the notebook break up with the pencil? It felt like the pencil was always drawing conclusions.

What did the teacher say when the classroom got too loud? “Okay, let’s bring the volume down from ‘concert’ to ‘class.’”

What’s September’s favorite type of music? Fall Out Boy.

Why does September have commitment issues? It can’t decide whether it’s summer or fall.

Why was September so popular? It had a lot of fall-lowers.

What is September’s favorite drink? Anything with a ridiculous amount of cinnamon.

SUDOKU ANSWER

6	8	3	9	7	2	1	4	5
9	1	4	8	3	5	2	7	6
5	7	2	1	4	9	8	6	3
7	3	5	2	9	4	9	1	8
2	4	1	3	6	8	7	5	9
8	9	6	7	5	1	3	2	4
3	6	9	5	1	7	4	8	2
1	5	8	4	2	3	9	9	7
4	2	7	6	8	9	5	3	1

Why are leaves terrible at keeping secrets? They always spill the tea.

Why did the pumpkin start preparing for school early? It wanted to be ahead of the gourd.

Why did the leaf get detention? It kept falling out of line.

What’s September’s favorite exercise? Running out of summer.

What did the squirrel say when September started? “Finally, my stock market is looking good.”

First day of school outfit: 10% confidence, 90% hoping nobody remembers what I wore last year.

September weather: 45°F in the morning, 85°F at lunch. My outfit: “I have made a terrible mistake.”

September walked into my life like: “Hey! Remember responsibility?” Me: “No, actually.”

My backpack after the first week of school: “We need to talk about boundaries.”

I found a lion in my closet the other day!
When I asked what it was doing there, it said “Narnia business.”

What’s the difference between an alligator and a crocodile? You’ll see one later and one in a while.

I went to the aquarium this weekend, but I didn’t stay long. There’s something fishy about that place.

Why did the snail paint a giant S on his car? So when he drove by, people could say: “Look at that S car go!”

What subject do cats like best in school? Hiss-tory.

Why can’t you make a dinosaur omelet? Because they’re egg-stinct.

Did you hear about the new squirrel diet? It’s just nuts.

When does a hippo have a tusk? After some rhino-plasty.

What did the snail who was riding on the turtle’s back say? Wheeeee!

What do you call a lazy kangaroo? A pouch potato.

What do you call a pony with a sore throat? A little horse.

RIDDLES

1. I have a spine but no bones, and pages but no skin. What am I?
2. I get shorter every time I work. What am I?
3. I can erase your mistakes, but I cannot erase your bad grades. What am I?
4. I have four legs, but I never walk. What am I?
5. The more you take from me, the bigger I become. What am I?
6. What gets wetter the more it dries?
7. What can you catch but never throw?
8. What has a neck but no head?
9. What has one eye but cannot see?
10. What goes up but never comes down?
11. I disappear the moment you say my name. What am I?
12. I am always in front of you but can never be seen. What am I?
13. I have cities but no houses, forests but no trees, and rivers but no water. What am I?
14. The more of me there is, the less you can see. What am I?
15. What belongs to you, but other people use it more than you do?

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7. A cold.
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9. A needle.
10. Your age.
11. Silence.
12. The future.
13. A map.
14. Darkness.
15. Your name.



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Truck

...continued from page 6

minus-60-degree weather. He decided to travel somewhere against the advice of wiser men. Walking beside a frozen stream, he plunged into a spring-fed hole and got wet to his waist. He managed to stay calm, started a fire, and began to dry out. But he built his fire under a snow-laden bough. The bough warmed up and dumped its load of snow on his fire. The cold got to him before he could make a second fire.

My mistake? The little truck had good traction as long as it had a load of hay. But I fed the hay to the cows and lost some of my traction. Usually, I would just get a good run at it and bounce onto the county road. Simple enough, but I had fed the cows too close to the gate. That was my mistake. Try as I might, with cows in the way, I couldn't get a good run at the slight slope that led to the county road. The little truck made several valiant tries at the slope, but I had come perilously close to sliding into the ditch and getting really stuck.

It was now 15 minutes 'til dark and the wind was whipping the snow along the road waist high. We were in a whiteout.

The truck had chains. But that would take time and what if it didn't work? I turned the truck's lights off and started walking. I tried walking into the wind, but I couldn't get a good breath. The wind was stealing it. I walked backward to the truck, turned left and, the wind at my side, made better time. About a half-an-hour later, using memory and glimpses of the neighbor's outside light to guide me, I found their driveway. By the time I got to their house, I was cold on all corners.

No lights in the living room; they were not home. Focus.

I tried the back door and, true to farming custom, they had left the kitchen door unlocked. Inside

the kitchen, I found the Sunset Telephone Company land line was working (no cell phones at that time) and my rescue was underway.

Next morning, my wife drove me to the pasture and the little truck started right up. No cows in the way, the Chevy pulled onto the county road on the first try. Good truck.

Midway through the '70s, the little Chevy, having served faithfully for a solid 40 years, was replaced with a new, long-bed Dodge pickup that had seatbelts and four-wheel drive. Fancy stuff, but no electric windup windows, no power steering, and no air conditioning. We affectionately named it "The Blue Goose" and it soon gained fame as a workhorse: It was late spring and hay was in short supply. We got news of a load of good alfalfa hay that had been barn-stored. It was a 50-mile round-trip, so fuel was a concern, but we needed hay. We decided to get as many 80-pound bales as possible on the Blue Goose and not make a return trip.

No problem. Joe figured out a way to get 53 bales on the pickup. Forever after in our family, it was known as a "Joe T. load." To this day, every once in a while, we see a cleverly-loaded truck and declare, "That's a Joe T. load!"

Good, honest truck.

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."

Finding Calm

...continued from page 1

Support First Aid Collection, and also an extensive free collection for First Responders.

It's okay to grieve. Whether it's for a lost home, person, pet, neighborhood, or even a sense of safety and the way the world used to be, please know that you get to grieve in any way that feels right to you. Nobody else can tell you how you should grieve or when you should be done. But also know that joy and grief can co-exist and don't need to be mutually exclusive.

This morning as I write, the smoke has cleared. The sky is blue again. The air smells like – air. From my front porch, I can see Old Dominion off in the dis-

tance, blue and beautiful, no longer obscured by smoke. All our windows are open wide, and I'm breathing without worrying about what I might be sucking into my lungs.

It's bliss. I'm aware that fire season isn't over yet, but I'm choosing to be in this moment. If the smoke comes back again, as it probably will, this moment will be a memory to hold onto, a reminder of all that is beautiful and good and right with the world.

Colville resident Kerry Schafer (who also writes as Kerry Anne King) is the bestselling author of 15 novels, the co-host of The One Happy Thing Podcast, and a licensed mental health counselor. Find out more at www.allthing-skerry.com.

Hoover Stew

By Cassie Patton

We have made it to September which means the start of soup season, when the kids are headed back to school and life feels like it's about to get 10 times more hectic. Those summer beach days were glorious compared to the screeches from the mini versions of yourself screaming, "Where's my cheer outfit?" or, "I'm going to be running suicides if I don't have my jersey for practice." What better way to kick off the season than with a batch of "Hoover stew" otherwise known as goulash.

Hoover stew originated right around the time of the Great Depression in 1929. Named after President Hoover, for the unsympathetic responses to the American people at the height of the Depression, the people blamed Hoover for the unrealistic expectations placed upon them during the hard economic times. Because of the stock market crash of 1929, millions of Americans lost their jobs; unfortunately, at this time in history there was no SNAP program (food stamps) or extra government assistance. Instead, churches led the way in hopes of coming together and helping the community, offering at least one hearty meal a day.

While President Hoover was the main source of how the Hoover stew came to be, a famous man by the name of Al Capone – yes that Al Ca-

pone – would go on and do more for the city of Chicago than the government ever did until the passing of the social security act. Capone made a positive name for himself for a short time when he opened his own soup kitchen and offered three meals a day to those who needed it. It's been noted that Capone once provided a Thanksgiving dinner in 1930 to over 5,000 men, women, and children.

During the Great Depression, there was another similar dish called "hobo stew." Hoover stew would typically consist of staples such as macaroni, canned/stewed tomatoes, hot dogs/cheap sausages, canned corn and beans. Specifically dried beans, because they were cheaper than canned ones.

Hobo stew on the other hand was made up of whatever migrant workers could find as they were constantly traveling. Hobo stew usually contained water or broth, and sometimes even ketchup, along with whatever meat and/or vegetables were available and some type of thickener such as potatoes or stale bread. While the Great Depression took a serious toll on the nation, it was because of this catastrophe that we have more ways to make up a batch of goulash.

Cassie Patton, born and raised in Washington state, says she has always enjoyed writing about any topic possible. When not actively writing, she can be found baking up a sweet treat or watching football.

Fall 2026

Woodland Theatre in Kettle Falls Presents



Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn

Written by Sandy Rustin
Additional material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price

Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture and the Hasbro board game CLUE

Music by Michael Holland

Directed by Melody Bowlby & Syvanna Denison



SHOW DATES
Oct 23 & 30 @ 7 PM
Oct 24, 25, 31 & Nov 1 @ 2 PM

Students/Seniors (65+) \$12 & Adults \$15

Tickets are available @ Tix.com,
Colville Chamber of Commerce,
woodlandproductions.org, or at the door if not sold out.

*Processing Fees May Apply. All ages must have a ticket.

CLUE is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of
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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.



MLS# 45526 \$799,000

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 just have to sign up.



MLS# 44881 \$579,000

Peaceful setting in a very private location. Crafted log sided home with covered deck, large carport, workshop with loft, separate dry cabin, garden shed and a 14-ft door RV shop. Beautiful double fenced garden with 2 sets of grape vines. Local rock landscaping around the house. Open kitchen, dining, and living area on the main floor with easy access to the deck. Wood cabinets and built-in pantry. The woodstove will keep you warm all winter. Upper level hosts a very spacious bedroom with full bath, easy access closet with built-in amenities, there is a total of 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Daylight basement with patio and a propane stove to heat the home if you have to leave. There is even 220 amp in the carport for an electric car hook up. You have to see this home to appreciate the beauty!

Over 3,000 Sq. ft. 4 bed/3.5bath on a large corner lot - within an hour of Spokane, with golf course & ski hill as a part of your new community. This home highlights custom craftsman build including a theater stage and full screen wired for sound, lights and projector for all your family and entertaining possibilities. Chewelah's Pey Creek babbling through the front yard, under your very own bridge, lighted pathway and established native and elaborate landscaped yard. Fully fenced back and side yard in addition to a 2-car attached garage with workshop. This home has it all and the room and design to accommodate a multitude of living enjoyment and options! Come see it today.



MLS# 44403 \$535,000



MLS# 46027 \$575,000

Charming 1911 farm home with new 28'x32' shop and functional barn. Additional outbuildings all on 28 acres. Just about 5 miles from Bradbury or Daisy boat launch and day beach. Bay and dormer windows along with elegant dining room. Year-round pond w/ the Quillisnuck Creek running through. This home has been restored and preserved and is ready for its next owners. All updated windows. Updated wiring and plumbing in 2009. Re-roofed in 2018/19. Basement is partially finished and includes utility room and canning storage. Wood cook stove, front door screen, front porch swing and greenhouse don't convey.



MLS# 45880 \$670,000

Peace and tranquility. Wildlife abounds w/13+ acres of seclusion on the 1310 line of Lake Roosevelt, less than 1/2 mile from French Rock Boat Launch. Lake views from all main living spaces and bedrooms. 2 bd/2 bath main floor, fully finished walk out lower level w/pellet stove, in rec room w/2 additional bedrooms (non-conforming) & 3/4 bath. This home has been well maintained including a new pressure & H2O tank! One owner. Triple pane windows in basement and upstairs slider. New flooring 2017/2026. The list goes on. Pellet and electric heat w/cooling for main living & main floor bedroom. Add the 2-car garage/shop with additional covered parking. All buildings have a metal roofs.

Single family residence ready for you to move in and make your own. This 3 bed 2 bath has a large living room, a large kitchen and dining area. Sits on a large, partially fence lot with plenty of room to garden or entertain. Mud/utility room, enclosed front porch, and newly redone covered back patio with ramp if you need to bypass the stairs. Many upgrades have been done: The back patio/porch was repaired/rebuilt, new exterior paint, a new hot water heater, and more. Alley access with plenty of parking, RV parking and boat parking. The home is located in the small town of Marcus, WA and just minutes from Marcus Island boat launch and Lake Roosevelt.



MLS# 45921 \$260,000



MLS# 45567 \$329,000

46+ acres of quiet beauty, varied terrain with pastures, trees, plus a seasonal pond that brings in an abundance of wildlife. Many possibilities to develop your homestead. Beautiful views if you build on the high point of the property. All of "Spirit Ridge Ranches" parcels have water, power, and phone available. Sensible CCR'S and a road maintenance agreement to protect your investment. Secured locked gate for all the parcels. Community water system is \$250/yr per 20 acres.

This lot is ready for your new home! There is a 2-car garage, plus power, water and septic and concrete pad are installed. (The old home was removed.) Last home was 23'x44'.

MLS# 44032 \$119,000



MLS# 45774 \$629,000

Mission Lake Waterfront at its best. This custom-built home has everything you need. Beautiful gourmet kitchen with open dining that lets the views of the lake inside to enjoy while you're cooking or dining. Huge primary ensuite with screened in porch for your outdoor pleasure. Large laundry room, covered deck with access to the lake, daylight basement has 3 bedrooms and full bath plus additional storage area. Walk out and fish from your private dock. Extra-large 2-car attached garage. The house sits down from the road for extra privacy.

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MLS# 45910 \$334,900