

Minnekahta *eMessenger*®

VOLUME I

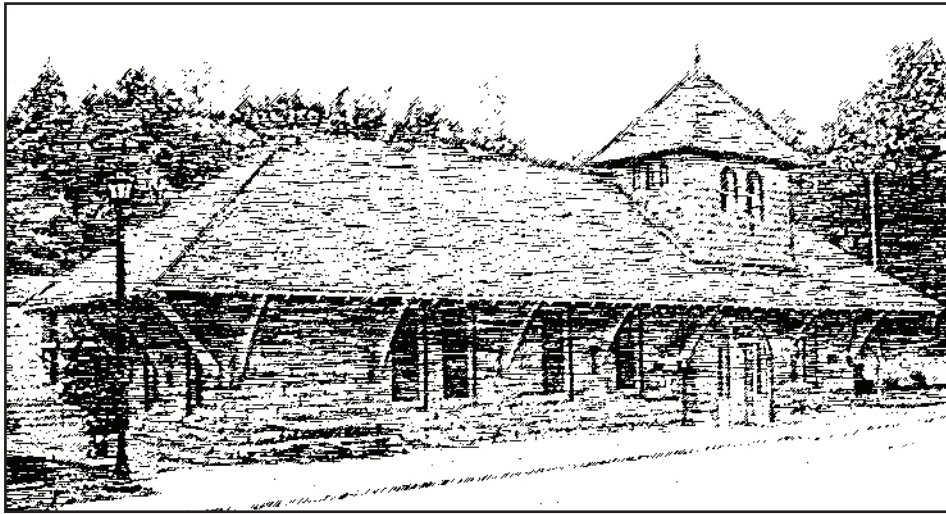
MINNEKAHTA PUBLISHING, LLC

NUMBER 10

SOUTHWESTERN SD.

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

FRIDAY, AUG. 4, 2017



We're not against
Printing
We're against
Wasting Resources

We don't want to stop printing
Minnekahta Messenger
for readers and advertisers.

We simply think that wasting paper, ink, and toner
doesn't make economic or environmental sense.

We hope you enjoy this copy of *eMessenger*; the electronic version of
the hugely popular original newsletter, *Minnekahta Messenger*.

eMessenger has the added convenience of programmed hyperlinks for
all cited source websites, table of contents page and story titles, and
news and feature stories' (continued on/from page) cross-references.

The *Minnekahta Messenger* staff will be taking a one month vacation.

Minnekahta Messenger



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FRIDAY, AUG. 4, 2017

MINNEKAHTA MESSENGER TAKES ONE MONTH BREAK

**WE SUPPORT OUR
FIRST RESPONDERS
THANK YOU
ALL LIVES MATTER**

GROWING UP IN
RED CANYON

Adapted by T.L. Matt

From *The Edgemont Centennial, 1889-1989*:

Frank Albright was born in Denmark and came to the United States when only five years old. He married Ella Gilkey in Cleveland, Ohio, May 26, 1911. They spent their honeymoon looking for property.

Nothing in Rapid City suited them and Frank took a trip to Minnekahta all dressed up in a suit and derby hat. He disregarded the station master's advice and walked up to Red Canyon to check it out. He located the Green land with a nearly new two-room log house with trees and a creek and decided this was it—his dream come true!

Frank and Ella came by train to Edgemont and then rented a livery team and buggy. It seems that Frank had never driven a team before and this was Ella's first buggy ride. The city folks started on what was to be a wonderful and fulfilling adventure. The first night in the log house, Ella awoke with a big snake beside the bed! What a honeymoon!

From *Red Canyon Echoes*, ©1999 by Caroline Curl:

The uniquely beautiful Red Canyon, close to Edgemont, was home to many strong, courageous families in the last century. Caroline was born March 29, 1914 in a log house on the homestead property. Caroline says, "My parents Frank and Ella Albright were very optimistic about their chosen life. They came west with an unwavering pioneer spirit."

When Caroline was born, her sister Catherine welcomed her. Baby brother Frank was born when Caroline was a year and a half. "My parents were agreed that I was born with a spoon in my hand instead of my mouth." As soon as she was able to climb and stand on

a chair, she was up to the cupboard always stirring something. She felt somehow that everything had to be mixed together.

She spent many hours outside and learned from her dad at a young age. Being his helper, she dug post holes, grubbed sagebrush and fixed fences. Life was one grand adventure after another.

One of her jobs was to feed and water setting hens. When the chicks begin hatching, they would take them into the house for warming and then when they were all hatched, they were returned to mother hen.

Early in the Spring parsnips were ready to eat. They had been left in the ground all winter and as a result, were especially tasty. Onions, rhubarb and asparagus came next. Besides these early crops, the Albrights raised a big garden, which really provided a healthy diet for the family.

One time the Albright children were hired out to dig posts and bring them down the hillside to be loaded. They were paid ten cents a post, which wasn't too bad, as a man's wages at that time was about a dollar a day. It was slow and hard work, and after several days, they decided to quit. Dad said, "No" and they learned integrity and honesty by completing the job that they had promised to do.

Middle Red Canyon School was a one-room frame schoolhouse built in 1919 and measured 14x20 feet. A cistern was dug to hold water and parents took turns supplying wood for the heating stove. They had two outside toilets! This was an improvement over the first two schoolhouses, made of logs in 1908 and 1910 in other parts of the Canyon.

It was wonderful in the winter when mothers brought in homemade soups warmed on the wood stove. Such a treat from the usual cold sandwiches that the children brought from home!

Teachers boarded with the Albrights. Caroline and Catherine gave up their smaller bedroom for the teacher. Having a teacher in the home reinforced good table manners and completing chores without grumbling. The teachers didn't help with the homework. After it was done came the fun.

Caroline's dad could play the guitar and mandolin and two of the teachers that stayed with the family could play the mandolin as well. Sometimes songs were played that the children knew and they would sing along. Music was really important to people back then. Frank almost always sang while he worked, which made him easier to find, of course!

A telephone line was brought in after 1914; and after Frank Jr. was born in 1915, the next four or five years saw grasshoppers and a bad hailstorm. A trying time for them all. During those hard years the children never knew it as they had a warm home, clothes and plenty to eat.

Even in the worst of times, they had a garden. They sometimes shared a beef with a neighbor for meat, which was canned and put away for summer use. They ate canned vegetables and fruits as well. Canning was the key to survival then.

Maisie was born in 1921 and Rose in 1923. In July 1923, there was a huge cloudburst and a tremendous flood. Crops were flooded with wood, trash and mud. The neighbors always repaired and maintained the Red Canyon road—not an easy task.

Frank had to return East to work several years at different times, while Ella stayed on the place with the children to prove up the homestead. Neighbors and schoolteachers helped out.

Darlyne, Carolines's next sister, was born in 1927 without a doctor. Her dad, working back East, had planned to make it home, but she was born two weeks early. Ruth Young helped at this crucial time until Grandma Gilkey came. Also, illness was a signal to friends who came unselfishly to help. (see *Canyon on back cover*)

INDIGENOUS ACTIVISTS WIN MAJOR COURT RULINGS AGAINST MONSANTO IN MEXICO

By Alex Pietrowski

Waking Times

Monsanto must now consult with indigenous communities throughout the Yucatán peninsula before they will be granted any

future permits for GMO soy farming, as of a court decision in early November 2015.

Monsanto planned to farm genetically modified soybean in over 250,000 hectares of the Yucatán region, yet a Mexican court has suspended the Biotech giant's permit.

The judgement was based on constitutional law that requires the consideration of indigenous communities affected by development projects.

The key organizations involved in the effort to stop GMO soy farming in Mexico were the Maya beekeepers, made up of about 15,000 Maya families who produce and collect honey and who filed the injunction, with the support of Greenpeace, Indignación and Litiga OLE.

The Mayans primary concern is that "growing the plant requires the use of glyphosate, a herbicide classified as probably carcinogenic," putting their communities, environment and economic activities at risk. (see *Monsanto on back cover*)

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Mitakuye Oyasin

Coming Together To Stop Meth

By Lorelei Marie

The growing problem of methamphetamine, or meth, abuse in South Dakota was addressed during a rally on Friday, July 28 at Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield, SD. The rally was organized by inmates Robert Horse and Phillip Steel, creators of a program called Fathers Against Meth, also known as F.A.M. First.

The goal of F.A.M. First is to prevent meth abuse and to get users off of meth so they don't end up in the prison system.

Friday's rally, the first of its kind at the prison, attracted speakers and organizations from across South Dakota. It was supported by Chief Warden Robert Dooley and Denny Kaemingk, Secretary of Corrections, both of whom spoke at the rally, as well as other administration officials in the SD Department of Corrections.

"We're trying to save the next generation," Steele said. "We want other men that are in prison to follow our lead and get out there and combat meth in their neighborhoods and communities."

Speakers throughout the day shared their stories of how meth has impacted their lives. An especially heart-wrenching account came from the father of Vinny Brewer, III, who was murdered by a drug cartel on the Pine Ridge Reservation on October 16, 2016.

On that day his family heard a popping sound they attributed to a passing truck. But Vinnie's uncle and former Oglala Sioux Tribal President Bryan Brewer explained, "I know what an AK-47 sounds like. We have to stop this, it can't continue."

Vinnie was beaten and shot multiple times, then shot in the head. The murder is attributed to a conflict about meth, according to Bryan. He supports the efforts of F.A.M. First and other organizations to draw attention to and provide solutions for the current meth situation.

Chief Warden Dooley also praised these efforts saying that meth is a "plague" in communities that needs to be addressed. "Anybody can help," he said.

Dooley suggests changes can be made by starting community groups, organizations,

and clubs for children or just speaking out because "the plague doesn't discriminate."

"Together, we can do something about it. Make a difference," Dooley said. "Together we need to find a solution and the only way we're going to find a solution is if we get together and act together."

About 60 inmates attended the sessions in the morning and afternoon. Speakers, corrections officials and inmates stood united against meth.

"Some of our most vulnerable populations are being victimized by this horrible and evil drug," said former South Dakota State Senator Ron Volesky. "We were here today to rally to bring attention to that and to try to talk about and bring about solutions to break the cycle of addiction, not only in rural communities, but particularly in our Indian reservations," Volesky said.

Oglala Sioux Tribal Vice President Darla Black explained how she left an abusive relationship because her partner was on meth. He "threatened my life," she said.

Black said that meth was his main drug along with an alcohol addiction. She took her children and walked out of her home in a blizzard, barefoot and not sure where she would go. Her children were not allowed by her partner to have their coats or shoes because he had bought them. Fortunately, she found help.

"If that's how I was going to die, I was ready to. I wanted a better life for me and my children," she said. "I have scars on my face that still remind me where I came from."

Robert Horse's mission is to come full circle. Horse wants to help keep the youth and others from entering the prison system, but also "to prepare guys that are getting out real soon, get them prepared, open their minds, open their hearts, their spirit and hope that they can make that change we all seek," he said. "Addiction is everywhere."

Horse believes that social status, family history, environmental situations and poverty are the root causes of meth and why the problem is widespread. He hopes to see other prisons, schools and youth groups

hold anti-meth rallies as well, believing that people will unify to find solutions to eradicate meth from the state.

He added, "You can never give up on something good. These are words we need to hear so we can become better men and live better lives."

Horse and Steel held the F.A.M. First rally despite intimidation from other inmates who are "in favor of" meth.

For Steel, meth addiction has directly impacted his life and those of his family. A former meth addict, he is using his experience and knowledge to advocate for others.

Two of his sons are also incarcerated due to meth usage. Steel takes responsibility for this. "I have two sons in here. That's my fault—if I wasn't here maybe they wouldn't be, and that's something I have to deal with because I chose drugs over my family," he stated.

"If I can save one person, though, that's what I'm here for." He added that his children are supportive of F.A.M. First.

Steele also explained that there are many good people in prison and that they are ready to do a lot of good when they come out, including continuing to advocate against meth and for creating a better life for our children.

A Song For The People

By Art Solomon

Grandmother your children are crying,
Grandfather your children are dying.
The hands of greed
And the hands of lust for power
Have been laid on them
And all around is death and desolation...

We your children whom you created in
your likeness and image—
We will reach out,
And we will dry our tears
And heal the hurts of each other.
Our sisters and brothers are hurting bad,
And our children, they see no future.

We know, Grandfather, that you gave us a
sacred power...
The name of that power is love...
We dedicate our lives to affirmation.

There's Something To Be Said

The Kindred Spirit By Barbara Hauseman

My Green Oasis

In the last issue of Minnekahta Messenger, I described the treasures in my front yard. Many people tell me what a nice yard I have, especially liking the lush green lawn. I am not surprised; I work hard to keep it looking nice. I manicure it every day to keep it looking healthy and attractive. Along the side of my house is a large tractor tire rim and within the circle I have planted a yellow climbing rose bush.

When I first moved into this house almost four years ago, the front lawn had many brown spots. I was eager to get my hands dirty and repair the damage. However, November isn't the time for such work, so I waited for spring to arrive to get my project started. I began by loosening the soil and putting grass seed down, followed by fertilizing and adding plenty of water. With my green thumb and natural tendency to be patient, I succeeded in transforming a neglected lawn into my green oasis.

My constant daily maintenance routine of pulling weeds and mowing and watering my

lawn resulted in turning it into something I was proud to view. Folks around here said it looked great and made a real difference to the neighborhood. Beaming inside, I knew I couldn't have agreed more.

Each season brings its own challenges of lawn maintenance. In the summer months, the three huge elm and cottonwood trees provide much needed shade, especially when the sun pours on the heat. Mother Nature sometimes steps in with a much needed rain storm to add nutrient-rich moisture. As long as I keep my lawn watered and mowed, it will continue to look full and lush.

Autumn tells the trees that it's time to shed their leaves; they cover the lawn with the bright yellow, orange and gold colors of the season until I rake them up. With winter comes the much needed moisture of snow that blankets the dormant tan-colored grass.

The signs of spring will appear in March or April, depending on that year's snowfall, and it usually takes about three or four weeks for the new blades of grass to grow and cover the old. And then, once again, I can enjoy the beauty of my green oasis.

Ode to Thistle

By Debbie Daybrest

Oh lovely color so bright and purple
Dare I touch this bright-some bloom?
Ah but no, it is a thistle, fearful
creature, choking for the want of room.
Many times I prick my fingers,
Many times bite through my gloves.
Leave my garden, foulest villain,
false pretender amongst my dearest loves.
Oh how fearful this wicked weed.
I chop and dig but it fain retreat.
Only to pop up again beside the lilies,
mocking me at my feet.
Yet I notice in the meadow, the thistle
kingdom bright and full.
Along comes munching, fat brown bossy,
bovine queen with grace her own.
Swiftly wraps her tongue around it
and with a tug the thistle gone.
With a "moo" she seems to praise
as she savors the prickly stalk.
"Ode to a Thistle, a lovely meal,
a pleasant treat along my walk."

We who garden know the frustrations
from weeds we can't get rid of, but to
some a weed and to another a delightful
flower.

Lies They Tell Writers, Part 6: Join a Critique Group—and Be Positive!

By Rod Miller

You've already endured my rant on why I'm not a member of a critique group. Brace yourself for the follow-up: why no critique group would want me.

It has to do with social graces. When moved to speak my mind, I have a hard time resisting saying what's on my mind. No euphemisms. No ambiguity. Nothing cryptic. While I never intend to be unkind, it sometimes comes out that way. Most writers don't want to hear it.

Then there's the fact that I am irresistibly drawn to the negative end of the magnetic field. Whenever I look at a piece of writing, whether my own or someone else's, the first question I ask is, "What's wrong with this?" I automatically look for what's wrong, I find it, and I fix it.

It has been part of my advertising job for years, and it spills over into poems, novels, short stories, nonfiction, essays, magazine articles and any other string of words I encounter. Again, that holds true for my own words as well as someone else's.

Here's why. What's written well doesn't require attention or comment. It's supposed to be well written. Fawning over it or heaping praise on writers for doing what is expected seems to me akin to congratulating them on remembering to inhale and exhale in the proper sequence. So, in the interest of better writing, I zero in on what's wrong and why.

On the other hand, if you can't say something nice...

Maybe I should just shut up. Or stay away from critique groups.

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 6: Join a Critique Group—and Be Positive!" is the title of a blogpost by Rod Miller. It was published on Oct. 25, 2014 on the author's website, <http://writerrodmler.blogspot.com/2014/10/lies-they-tell-writers-part-6-join.html>.

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 6: Join a Critique Group—and Be Positive!" was reprinted with permission from the author. Writer Rod Miller writes poetry, fiction, and history about the American West and writes online about writing and reading at writerrodmler.blogspot.com. Information about Rod and his books and other works is available at writerRodMiller.com, his Amazon Author Page (<https://www.amazon.com/Rod-Miller/e/B001HCTX7G>), and at CowboyPoetry.com.

If You Could Change One Thing

True Manifestation and Realization of Miracles

By Dan P. Davison

Somehow, when we have the tugging of anxieties around, watching our dreams and visions, reviewing them, asking if we are doing things right and questioning ourselves and blaming others, there comes a ray of hope to point the way.

I am learning that “spiritual leadings” and “spiritual messages” are good and balance me, but there is a whole other aspect of manifestation and living in peace—seeing the spirit turn to matter which empowers our being to have great influence.

Most spiritual activities come through the soul, mind and emotions. Thoughts and feelings are linked to God’s thoughts and feelings. Based on a teacher living pure values, God’s Spirit truly comes to us. Teachers can “speak” manifestations into place in our lives, but results come from both our values and theirs. This creates a pure bed for miracles.

“When two agree on earth, touching Heaven (only love and faith allowed) the miracles come. Criticism and creativity (to others or ourselves) in the same pot will not grow beautiful flowers. You can describe them every day but often they do not grow well. Fear and negativity = poor soil for growing miracles.

Spirit is about solid, unwavering values ever-present in a person’s life: consistently harnessing our thoughts, words and actions to align with a loving, caring, inspired and purposeful life; eliminating any need to constantly pick out observations as to why another person is different from me; and not being tempted to enter into arguments and conflict with another because you know you will win and suck energy from them. Instead, strive to build up their good attributes in an honest manner. Often it is better to ask, “Does this matter?”

When you truly evaluate those differences, they are *all* in the body and soul (thoughts and feelings) area and NEVER in the divine. My miracles cannot be stopped once I acknowledge that I am divine and so is every one of the seven billion people in the world.

When I “forgive my enemies” and pray for them, the tap turns on. Why? Because by loving and praying and acknowledging their divine side (regardless of how weak or fearful they are humanly), I must acknowledge MY divinity which means that I have opened the spiritual flow of virginal, immaculate, unconditional, transcendental love (because I embrace the God in me) and I co-create.

When they see my divine actions (forgiveness and lack of criticism) and yet know my weaknesses, they realize they are also God! Now you have two people saturated in God-ness and, two-by-two, you now co-create miracles. Both of yours, firstly, and then it spreads like mosquitoes in Gunter! (If you don’t know where that is, you have already received your first miracle).

As I watch, the people humbly live lives when they move toward less criticism of others. In understanding both the divine and human nature in all of us, and trading in “panic” for “peace,” then that which we wish for is only moments away.

There is no bad and good in my day. Only lessons and sessions toward my purpose. I have no enemies. There is no fight. I have suggested to younger people who love the challenge of winning and losing that I do wish to create an army someday.

“The only weapon we will every carry is unconditional love and the only enemy we ever identify is the fear in our own hearts.”

Once you honestly and passionately hand over everything you are, own, desire, hold or long for, to the Universe—absolutely no one can take anything away because you don’t own it anyway. End of story.

THEN, you can manifest that which you see and that which others help you see. The knowledge of good and evil; the concept of rich and poor, who is controlling or liberating, and self-judgement that we use freely, just has to go if we wish to produce the miracles we can see but often cannot seize!!!

Get rid of it—in all aspects of our negative thoughts, feelings, words or actions. If I walk around and every minute think how

poor I am and how much lack I have... that is EXACTLY what I am drawing to myself. And in it, usually blaming someone else for my poverty. It has zero value in your life.

If you feel uncomfortable with an angry person or one who hurts and steals, then just walk the other direction and say “never mind!” Out of my thoughts! Like eating berries and leaving the mushy ones behind. I don’t fight with them or call them names for three months afterwards.

Another area which I am slowly seeing “harnessed” in the lives of people is eliminating the illusion and pretensions in different areas of our lives by appearing to hide part of who we are.

We learned much about acting from Hollywood and drama. When a person lives and insists that, internally, the energy of their heart, words, feelings and actions will NEVER be at odds with any of those other four parts and only portray a common value and virtue—then watch the miracles erupt like volcanoes. I mean hard, solid and complete healing manifestations.

We know we can have thoughts about a person (as if no one can tell... right?). We may have negative feelings toward that person and yet, when asked by their friend, we smile and make statements like “so-and-so is just fine.” But then, when we hear of a really good job that would seriously help that person, we don’t share the information with them. Our thoughts, feelings, words and actions are hypocritical and non-unified in the immaculate purity of wishing the best for all humanity and the earth.

Blame is such a useless drain of energy and time. I see it as somewhat like finding last week’s cup of coffee in the garage where you were working before and drinking it. You know it is bad coffee, so throw it out and make a fresh cup. Don’t even try to figure out why it might taste bad. Next!!!

When a captain of a ship enters a harbour, he watches the buoys to miss the rocks. When they all line up properly, he carefully and circumspectly adds moderate power, and eventually meets his goal. It is little wonder we struggle in seeing our visions, readings, and leadings sit on the shelf for weeks, months and years when we spend (*see Miracles on page 5*)

Miracles (cont. from page 4)

time zigzagging using different light-markers with our thoughts, feelings, words and actions in regard to the earth and any other human being.

Yes, it is exciting to have spiritual confirmations. They are very real and give us hope and empowerment. My business day was full of many separate reports of diverse aspects of the dealings today, but I could see the order and calm progress toward manifestation needed to launch a global effort, starting small and right here.

Controlling one's mind to only process faith, hope, love, goodness and beauty for

everything and everyone will bring a reality and play a symphony. It all makes sense and a deep calm will come over you.

Focus on your lack—and you create LACK! Focus on the good gifts God gave to you—and more come pouring into your life. I have to do nothing but be silent and wait.

If asked, I act. Pushing, bullying, deceiving, manipulating and using the “you said” guilt trip on someone, for any reasons, have zero benefit.

Stealing another's power to get them to hurry up or to bring our manifestations, benefits no one.

It is in the stars and all we have to do is read it and ACCEPT it! If we give goodness and love, we bring the same to ourselves. We get what we send out!

Yes, this takes time but I believe it to be an accurate rendition of the results we are all waiting for in our own visions. God can create a miracle-a-second if our heart is right, and our mind is controlled toward believing that “God is a good God; therefore, only good things can come to me!!!”

Say it 1000 times if you have to, if it is needed to shift your fearful and negative energy. It is a good day and I will not think “lack” but will think “love.”

Nurturing Our Systems

By Andy Skadberg

It is time to imbibe the “breath consciousness” into the “systems” we “think” run the world. “Money” and its pursuit is showing us it destroys life. Money has created vast industries of images, stories and such that say the energy of life, which is love, is fighting or opposing ITself. It is not.

All the angst, addictions, crises, and challenges are our collective bodies telling us our “image-based” solutions are not working. Our internal guidance system (feelings) is telling us something. Like a bell ringing louder and louder. We have become addicted to the juicy feelings, but “thinking” the solutions will be found outside. They never will.

Everything is inside. Our bodies are held together by a vast, vast, vast intelligence. So is nature. As we turn our attention in, and learn to experience life in the only REAL context, ONE BREATH AT A TIME, we can TAP INTO the vast intelligence and power that will set us free from the myriad of image- and word-based prisons we have constructed in our thoughts.

Nature shows us simple truth. So do our pets and children. They know, until we convince them otherwise.

Our bodies are telling us. Turn IN. Turn to the love everything is made of. It is generated in our hearts to be shared out. It's time to remove our power, attention, from all the constructs of the “lunatic” the “tyrant” that has been implanted in our head.

Use The Practice, Conscious Deep Breathing, Breath Tapping, Language Awareness and the other tools we have Shared. They are free. Our breath contains our life, and we get 25,000 of those IN OUR FACE!, every day. If you want to count something (we seem ob-

sessed with counting) count them. Be grateful for it.

I feel that is what God wants from us. To appreciate how we are given life. Experience something you love, and know that IT is your breath.

Money never saved a life. It is inanimate. It is looking more like the destroyer of life. But that is just our collective doing. Maybe our catalyst to be more loving. You cannot hoard love.

Love saves lives. We save each other's lives, through Sharing love (which can come in the form of money). But ultimately, we can only save our own lives. We CAN do that by giving ourselves to the task of helping others save themselves.

Jesus is not coming to save us. He is in our hearts. God never left Earth.

I love you all. I saved my life, with the help from friends. I have done my best to Share the best, most refined things to help others. To save them time.

Selfishly I did this to make the world a better place for my six children. I “almost” love them more than my own life, as I do my sweetheart. However, I decided if I killed myself, who would carry on my dream, my Vision - the one I found in my own heart?

So... Here I am, doing the best I can... Sharing LOVE—ONE CONSCIOUS, DEEP, APPRECIATIVE BREATH AT A TIME.

www.reverenceforlifeuniversity.com
“Nurturing Our Systems” is the title of a story by Andy Skadberg. It was written by the author upon awakening from sleep and was inspired to write on Jul. 27, 2017.

“Nurturing Our Systems” was reprinted with permission from the author.

Andy Skadberg is a consultant in rural development and innovation in agriculture, with a foundation in environmental protection. He is a proponent of sustainability.

Writing Poetry

By Andy Skadberg

I used to write poetry.

I liked it when my sister and mother said they were good.

Then my sister went away.

She wrote poetry.

She was an artist.

I don't think I wrote any more poetry.

My sister died.

She hung herself.

I couldn't imagine writing poetry

I've cried.

I miss my sister.

I saw a doctor today.

My back was hurting.

We cried together - I don't really know why.

She said she asked my body a question.

Then she felt very sad.

She told me to forgive.

She told me to ask for forgiveness.

And to let myself to be forgiven.

I don't think God condemns.

I do - but I'm trying not to.

I wrote my sister a letter.

I didn't write her when she went away.

I told her things I could remember.

I remember more.

My sister was my friend.

I asked for forgiveness and to forgive.

Is this a poem?

Special Section

Frederick Whiskers Matt

By T.L. Matt and D.E. Matt

We weren't really looking for another pet. My husband had recently acquired a puppy for our family. Noodles Woofington Matt had passed the puppy test for aggressiveness, friendliness and submissiveness, and, of course, nervousness. He seemed a well-rounded pooch unlike his nervous sisters and came running out to greet us and was promptly adopted.

Then, Fred the cat appeared at our door and was very persistent about becoming a member of the family—two members of which had rather hostile tendencies toward him. I don't know how many times Don chased him out of the yard—even going so far as to place him over the fence a few times. He was a medium-sized, gray-striped cat, with yellow eyes and one front tooth missing—not much to look at, but with an alpha personality that wouldn't quit. He finally grew on us, probably because of his just being around all the time. This was a time when there were no leash laws and Noodles stayed home more—to keep Fred in line.

When we were scheduled to move onto our 10 acres in the mountains, we thought, "What about Fred? Should we take him with us?" Obtaining a large box, we planted him in it and closed the lid. Our daughter, LaDonna, and I sat in the back seat and held the top down as we proceeded along Highway 93, the main road through the Flathead Valley of Montana.

We were driving at night and the road was two-laned. It was also heavily traveled and quite dangerous. The local saying was, "I drive 93, pray for me." We struggled to keep Fred in the box, his fierce snarls coming from within.

Suddenly, with strength we didn't know he had, Fred burst out through the top, landing on Don's head, his claws extended and digging into his forehead for stability. With a swift arm movement, Don flung him to the floor, where he lay motionless, stunned by the impact. LaDonna and I both cried out, "You killed Fred! You killed Fred!"

Well, Fred survived and became king of the forest—in our little part of the Mission Mountains, anyway. We later found out that his name was Homer, and he belonged to a young man who lived a few trailers down from our place at the Pablo Trailer Court. The man was never at home; thus Fred had an interest in *adopting* us. When we offered to return Homer to him, the young man said, "Keep him!" and we were very glad.

Our canine, Noodles, outweighed Fred, the feline, by about eight pounds but Fred held his own with his quickness and sharp claws. At games of tag, Fred even took the role of aggressor, chasing and pouncing on Noodles—even riding on his back occasionally. They were often found sleeping together, resting their heads and shoulders on each other. Don compared the relationship to that of brothers—a combination of love and jealousy. LaDonna would sometimes wait until Fred was dozing and stealthily dress him in doll clothes. Upon awakening, he would take revenge, chasing her around the house and biting her ankles.

At times, however, Fred was a most spiritual cat, and would come running to join the family circle whenever we had our devotionals, which were begun with a hymn and a prayer.

I believe Fred sincerely thought he was a dog, as he protected our home with such a ferocity. One afternoon, our daughter's cousins visited, accompanied by their large Samoyed, named Kara, and a big German Shepherd, Shoka. I opened the door and, while I went to get LaDonna, Fred stood guard, growling. He then jumped on the Samoyed's head and the German Shepherd backed away with trepidation. Another time, the meter man complained about our *guard cat* who would try to tackle him at the ankles. Fred was a cat with no fear.

My parents came from Missouri to visit us and I think Fred could sense their importance, because he deposited a dead squirrel he had killed at my mother's feet. She was naturally horrified at the gift, as you can imagine. We weren't aware he was such a hunter and were astonished.

His bad deeds were all forgiven one night. We were sleeping soundly, seemingly safe in our beds, when our pot-bellied

stove started sending out hot coals onto the rug. Sensing danger, Fred made his way to our bedroom at the far end of the house and walked back and forth on us, meowing a warning and probably saving our lives.

Fred loved our family walks in the forest and accompanied us everywhere, in spite of our many streams that frustrated him. Before the move, when we had lived in Pablo, I would sometimes walk into town, even though there were big dogs on the loose. Some reminded me of lions, they were so big and ferocious. I carried a stick and filled my pockets with rocks at all times. Fred trotted like a dog by my side.

Porcupines live everywhere on our forested land. One day I noticed that Fred was having trouble eating his food. His whiskers seemed to have grown. I looked closer; they weren't whiskers, but porcupine quills. What followed was a sad scene. With Fred wrapped in an old coat, I held him while Don pulled out the quills with pliers. Fred cried out exactly like a baby would cry. It nearly killed me to hear his cries of pain.

We finally decided to get Fred neutered. After that, he became less of a tiger and would drool when held on our laps. LaDonna got a pet hamster, Fuzzy, and we tried to teach Fred to stop harassing the poor thing and keep his claws away from the cage. One day as I was reading, I glanced up to see a mouse heading to Fred's feeding dish where he proceeded to eat the Meow Mix. Fred watched him and merely blinked his eyes. He knew he was not to harm rodents.

When we had to move, we gave Fred to an elderly couple. The last memory I have was of seeing Fred, frantic, clinging to the couple's screen door as we sadly walked away. I surmise he would have escaped into the forest as soon as they opened the door.

Several years later, Don's brother, Chuck, told us of an incident outside his house. A feral cat had chased and treed a bear. The cat was at the base of the tree, switching his tail. Chuck didn't have batteries or a long-enough cord to record the event.

We have always wondered—was that a descendant of Frederick Whiskers Matt? Well, we will ask him in the next life—if he chooses to live with us, of course.

My Beloved Companions

By Barbara Hauseman

I have two sweet-natured Australian Shepherd's named Rudy and Keeva. They are my *kids* and I love them with all my heart.

Rudy is a red merle, which means his fur coat is blotched with red areas on top of a white undercoat. He has a special marking on his right ear, a distinctive white cross on the red fur background, which is a unique design for my beloved dog.

Rudy's eyes are a bright cinnamon color, like an eagle's eye; very distinctive. When he smiles, he shows off his pearly whites. When he cocks his head to one side, and there is a twinkle in his eyes, he is telling me that he loves me.

Keeva is called a tri-color; she is mostly black with white and tan markings. Her muzzle has a stripe of white. Her chocolate-colored eyes seem to see right through me.

I buy my kids many doggie toys so they can play by themselves or with each other. The toys are stored in an old red wagon that is in the side of the yard, but most often their toys are scattered around on the front lawn. Rudy's favorite toy is a purple Miss Piggy. He really likes that it squeaks when he picks it up and runs around the yard with it.

Rudy and Keeva love two rubber tug-of-war pull toys that I got them. One is a circular green rope and the other is a long pink tongue with a ball at the end. They grip these toys in their teeth and pull in opposite directions. It is fun to see which of my kids has the most strength and stamina to hold on until the other one gives up. They also have an

assortment of colored balls that they gnaw on while resting on the cool grass.

As all dog lovers know, along with having dogs comes the task of cleaning up after them. Doing doggie doo-doo patrol is a daily ritual. I use a black plastic jaw-like tool with a long handle; it helps me avoid having to bend over many times. I use plastic grocery bags to collect the refuse. Looking for passed-through dog food in my yard is like a scavenger hunt!

My kids' favorite places "to go" are where I always start my search, but after I finish getting those loads, I have to seek for hidden gems among the tall grasses that grow next to the fence.

I enjoy walking around barefoot, but along with that freedom is the need to be wary where I step. On some days, walking around requires tricky step-by-step maneuvers. I am not done patrolling until I retrace my yard again, looking for poo I may have missed.

Aussies who have their tails bobbed at birth, done to eliminate gate closure accidents, are also called "wobble butts," and they demonstrate this when they are excited and glad to see me home again.

Smiling faces and wiggling butts are the true signs of love from my kids. People who are not familiar with this special breed are apprehensive at first with these reactions.

Listen to your dogs, for they will tell you that the love they give you every day is unconditional. I know their love is surely a gift from them to me. I am blessed.

driveway—*getting a tan!* I had never seen a dog, before or since, roll from side to side in an effort to ensure he got an even tan.

Jess and Barb gave us Pard and he came along when we moved to Hudson, Florida. I taught Pardy to stand and balance on a boogie board our nephew had left us and, with the board leash extended by a length of nylon rope and tied around my torso, I swam in the Gulf of Mexico towing Pardy behind me.

Boaters always steered closer because, from a distance, Pardy seemed to be *walking on water*. Pardy could also sit or lay on his belly on the board. One day he surprised us, moving his legs and keeping his balance, and turned 180 degrees to face the other way.

Guard Dog Ghost Repellent

By Chad Nováček

I'm addicted to ghost stories. One of my favorite pastimes is interviewing people on their personal paranormal experiences.

It seems that about 3 out of 10 people I talk to have one or two credible and convincing stories, but about 1 in 20 have what some call the "shining" or the "sixth sense." These people claim to be able to see and interact with ghosts on a regular basis, and have done so throughout their lives.

One such *shiner* was an old roommate of mine. Since she was a young girl, Kate says she has had many encounters with those in the spiritual realm. One evening, Kate had an encounter with a specter, an early 20-something-aged man who appeared forlorn and silent in her bedroom doorway.

Tall with long, dark hair that fell like a stringy waterfall over his face, the guy had a protruding belly beneath a striped shirt. He just stood there, creeping out Kate as she lay in bed.

Before she could conjure up some small talk, her two little mixed-breed dogs began barking at the apparition, causing it to immediately fade away.

Animals, including dogs, are known to possess extraordinary senses that humans can't or won't manifest.

So, if your house is frequently occupied by souls of the netherworld, you may consider owning a little doggie to do some ghostbusting for you. It's one handy benefit pet stores don't advertise.

We had a lap pool put in the back yard of our Las Cruces, NM house. Pardy loved to walk laps around the pool... when he wasn't swimming in it. I would spread a towel on the bottom of Pardy's raft, Rosie Kitty and Toshi Terror would climb in, I tied the tow line to Pardy's collar, and *The Amazing P* would drag Rosie and Toshi up and down the length of the pool. It was lots of fun for all of us.

Pardy became *Captain P* when he dressed in his pirate costume, complete with bandana, sword and sash, and his black eye patch.

Pardy is with the angels. I miss him a lot. "*If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went.*"

—Will Rogers

Oh, It's Just a Lil' Pard

By Grits McMorrow

A cute, woolly, white-and-tan-colored dog kept coming to our new home in Cloudcroft, New Mexico. He lived up the road with Jess and Barb, an older couple who had found him in a Walmart parking lot. He was one of six dogs they had rescued in as many years.

They named him Pard—after the dog that appears in the 1941 Humphrey Bogart movie, "High Sierra." We think Pard was a Lhaso Apsa-Terrier mixed breed.

When Jess played with the other dogs in the front yard, Pard would be laying in the

This May Interest You

Life on the Rio Grande

By Larry Stocker

It was the same sun but it seemed particularly proud. No matter what the clocks said, I could tell he was taking a little extra time floating out there above the western horizon—making seconds, minutes and hours last a little longer like you want to do when you are having a good time.

The Rio Grande was trying to contain her joy. She didn't want to attract attention for doing what a river should just normally do, but there was no way to hide the fact that blue water, not brown, was flowing beautifully all across her wide expanse.

Kids and adults were jumping in and climbing out of her waters wearing clothes, swim suits, diapers and, in the case of one little guy, nothing at all. They were having fun so they agreed that the sun should naturally slow down the time so they could forget about it a little longer.

I sat on the bench with the guitar thinking that just a few hours before I walked out on a long pier into Lake Nicaragua feeling the welcome lake breezes and talking to people about how life is now and how it got that way—history—and how it might be in the future.

A security guard with a dark blue uniform said that the future was going to be better and a Christian missionary from San Diego said that God has a plan for all of us. I think that the more people you get talking like that the more that possibility opens up.

I'm pretty sure the sun, up there over the Rio Grande, agrees with me because as I was thinking these thoughts he angled himself directly over Picacho Peak and rested on that pinnacle for a few extra moments before calling it a day. Now I don't necessarily go around believing in signs from

heaven or anything—but what do you call that?

An old friend with a bicycle showed up to sing a song about Cuba. So, naturally my mind floated over there for a while. Just as I was getting ready to leave, the old river-walking trumpet player showed up and dug that instrument out of its case. We had no choice but to play a series of songs using the guitar, trumpet, harmonica and voice.

Some of them must have been pretty good because we gradually accumulated a rather large audience and actually received applause at the termination of each song.

The audience sat cross-legged around the music-playing bench and inched closer to us so they could hear better. Almost all the audience consisted of people no more than four feet high.

They asked questions about the songs and the instruments but I knew what they

were really doing. They were following the example of the sun—just trying to stretch out the time.

Maybe if the river always had water in it, we who come to the banks would take it for granted. Maybe then this joy would become so thinned out that it would not have such magnetism. I don't like to think like this because it almost seems like I am voting for drought!

I guess it just makes sense to try to make all our seconds, minutes and hours be the kind that we want to stretch out as opposed to the kind that we want to hurry up and get through fast.

"Life on the Rio Grande" is a weekly email blog written by Larry Stocker. This story was published on Jun. 27, 2014.

"Life on the Rio Grande" was reprinted with permission from the author.

My Son's Yellow Boomerang, Flung Up In A Pine

By Michael Neuertz

Waylaid by the branches in its arc the boomerang banks in the green air and glides for three nights

on a stream of needles, tributaries to its standstill motion.

Usually, when something caught, he cried for me to shake it down.

Did he think it lost, or did his next-door playmate call?

Three mornings I watched from the kitchen window, blowing the steam from my coffee toward it,

seeing it thrash in the wind.

While no one stared, something shook—

a squirrel, the rain-heavy limbs slipping back into place as the water drips,

or the night drafting down—shunting the curve

in orbit toward my son who finds it on the grass

and learns for the first time that what's unwept sometimes returns.

The Musical Saw: An Ethereal Sound

By T.L. Matt

On Mother's Day, 2017, we arrived at the Cheyenne River Social Club in Edgemont and were persuaded to stay for the music after the dinner. I was amazed when I heard an unusual sound and it seemed like fairies with harps had been allowed to join the county/folk band!

Then, I realized it was a saw that I heard and this beautiful instrument was an outstanding addition to the band's musical numbers. After the performance, I talked with Beverly Gray, the talented sawist. She said she had been playing the saw since she was a teenager. Her father, who played for the first *talking pictures* and was featured in Vaudeville productions, instructed her in the art.

(see Saw on page 9)

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Rhyme Or Reason

OVER THE BACK FENCE

By Carrie Cofer

Circles

Canyon walls gather the sun,
baking the lost fox kit
into a mummy.

Harsh Saguaro spurs,
blown from their cactus home; some
are washed down by the century floods.

The wind shapes the canyon with other spurs,
using them to decorate the sandstone
leaving Nature's timeless poetry.

Hawk's golden feathers flash
as she banks left into the canyon,
her eyes choosing a plump lizard.

Her crop is empty,
her chicks don't yet know the price
she pays for their comfort, their lives.

Uncounted seasons have molded the canyon,
lifting the birds, floating the trout,
and growing the lizards meals.

Nothing much changes, nothing much to do;
the sun shines hot, the water runs red
and the wind does what it wants.

Just another circle of the wheel.

She's Wanting Me

By Anon

You are watching me
but you look past me.

You like what you see
although you don't look at me.

You descend the staircase
as it curves away

taking you from me
but you are wanting me.

Merely a flash of your stocking
as you turn sideways,

and a quick glance, you're down the stairs
giving me a soft swift smile.

As you tease your eager audience,
your attention is all for me.

Finally we meet in the crowd,
and I present a glass of Merlot from the
waiter's tray.

My breath catches in my chest
as you accept my offer.

We choose seats by the fire
for now.

Saw (cont. from page 8)

Beverly will be in our area for the summer and then will head out with the Ramblin' Rangers, a country/cowboy band, for engagements in Montana, Colorado and New Mexico. The group plays often here in the Black Hills area as well.

My curiosity about this unusual instrument led me to musicalsaws.com for some background information. It's interesting to note that the original musician who first experimented with the saw in Appalachia remains unknown.

"By the early 1900's... it's popularity peaked on the musical hall stages of the 20's and 30's." The Weavers, one of the most renowned groups in Vaudeville, helped generate the fascination with the "singing saw."

According to Beverly, this unique instrument can be bought for around \$30 to \$130. There is no sheet music as the musician has to play by ear. It's a real talent to be able to pick up notes from a song, anticipate and

blend in perfectly with the band. Beverly is an expert.

The saw is played by holding the handle between the knees and bending the blade while bowing along the flat edge. A handle, called a *cheat*, is located at the tip of the saw for easier bending and better sound.

I learned at Wikipedia.org that "*An International Musical Saw Festival is held every other summer in New York City, produced by Natalia Paruz. Paruz also produced a musical saw festival in Isreal. There are also saw festivals in Japan and China.*"

Musical saws are incorporated into the background music for many films as well as TV soundtracks, especially those with eerie themes. Orchestras also feature this instrument as part of their performances. I was quite surprised to find how widespread the musical saw has become.

It's an instrument that can truly touch your heart and soul with its heavenly sound. If you happen to be in on a live performance, you are blessed!

Swapping Horse Stories with Alan Day

By Rod Miller

A few years ago, H. Alan Day co-authored the ranch memoir, *Lazy B: Growing up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest*, with his sister, Sandra Day O'Connor.

Not long ago, he wrote *The Horse Lover: A Cowboy's Quest to Save the Wild Mustangs*. It's the story of how he built Mustang Meadows Ranch, the first government-sponsored wild horse sanctuary established in the United States. In addition, the book relates a wealth of stories about the author's lifelong love of horses, with tales of his adventures and misadventures.

I was asked to review the book for *Roundup Magazine* and I wrote, among other things, "Those who don't know horses will find this book an engaging introduction. Readers who do will find themselves nodding in understanding page after page."

I had the pleasure of meeting Alan Day at the Western Writers of America convention a few months ago. He's a cowboy through and through and as nice a guy as you'll ever meet. He asked me to write a little something about horses for his web site (<http://thehorselover.com>). At the site, you'll learn more about Alan and his remarkable book, *The Horse Lover*. My "guest" post is here: <http://thehorselover.com/blog/>.

Stop by and visit Alan Day. He'd love to swap horse stories with you.

"*Swapping Horse Stories with Alan Day*" is the title of a blogpost by Rod Miller. It was published on Aug. 24, 2014 on the author's website, <http://writerrodmilller.blogspot.com/2014/08/swapping-horse-stories-with-alan-day.html>.

"*Swapping Horse Stories with Alan Day*" was reprinted with permission from the author.

Writer Rod Miller writes poetry, fiction, and history about the American West and writes online about writing and reading at writerrodmilller.blogspot.com. Information about Rod and his books and other works is available at writerRodMiller.com, his Amazon Author Page (<https://www.amazon.com/Rod-Miller/e/B001HCTX7G>), and at CowboyPoetry.com.

Well, If You Ask Us

Biting the Tongue of Talebearers

By Grits McMorrow

In July, I discovered I was the subject of gossip—though not the sole victim of it. There were two other victims, both being good friends of one another, who were directly affected by the gossip perpetrated by two gossipmongers—a transplanted, retired, married couple now living in Edgemont.

The first of the two victims had her self-confidence (a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities, and judgment) attacked by the male of these two *talebearers* (Leviticus 19:16 KJV) and the second victim had her comments—spoken to the female evil-doer in a private conversation—twisted to hurt the feelings of the first.

Merriam-Webster defines a gossip as “a person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts about others” and a gossipmonger as “a person who enjoys talking about other people's private lives.” Urban Dictionary is more graphic about gossip: “Something nasty people do when they are bored, have no life, or are really stupid” and have “[no] shred of conscience whatsoever.”

Although I would change the “or” to “and” in the first part of the Urban Dictionary definition of these two *nasty people*, the last part is dead on. It perfectly explains how they could inflict harm and suffering on the first victim—a law-abiding, church-going, friend-to-all individual. *They have no shred of conscience whatsoever.*

“Addicted gossipers frequently imply by their tone and choice of words that the subject of their gossip is inferior, flawed or simply unworthy of respect. People caught in this trap of gossip consciously or subconsciously parade themselves as the standard of all true knowledge and judgment. They seem driven to search out and speak of the shortcomings and failures of others” (<https://lifehopeandtruth.com/relationships/communication/taming-the-tongue/>).

As the subject of the gossip, I was a victim. The woman was prying into my private life and the man was denigrating my character. They preyed on two innocent people to get their fix as gossip addicts, but I was the target—a former warrior of the pen and press who once loved the battles. Their choice seems “*really stupid*” to me.

So, what are the takeaway messages of such an editorial? Since my research on this topic revealed that some gossip can be good for social and professional situations, if you must gossip, be a *good gossip*. My other message is a warning: If you go to the Cheyenne River Social Club, be careful—two *bad gossips* hang out there.

What is a Miracle?

By T.L. Matt

When people think of miracles, they usually think of the big, unusual things that happen in their lives—the oncoming car that nearly hit them but missed, the day the check came in the mail just before the foreclosure, the time they almost stepped on a rattlesnake, but didn't, and so forth.

These indeed may be miracles, but I am addressing the small miracles that happen on an almost daily basis, if we just have the spiritual eyes to discern them.

We have the miracle of a fresh new day—a chance to say, “I'm sorry”—and start again to be a better friend to others. I started keeping a “miracle journal” months ago to record each time I experienced a small but poignant happiness. Nature gives us many beautiful moments to remember.

One day I was clipping grass around my rock garden and turned over a rock to find a beautiful little black and gold garter snake. I enjoyed watching it uncoil and make its way under the steps.

When I was sitting low on a stool, repairing our garden netting, a young doe appeared. After awhile, she drew closer to weeds in the neighboring yard, and a new fawn leaped out and started nursing. *What a precious moment!*

The little fawn butted his mother for more milk while she licked him continuously. It was truly a spiritual moment for me. They were so close but accepted me somehow. I watch them as they appear from day to day, thankful the fawn is thriving.

Sunsets and sunrises are special miracles, if we will only stop and allow ourselves to soak in the colors and the changes in the shadows—and be thankful for the artistry of the Maker of our Earth.

The way our hearts feel warm when we comfort another and see how kindness can soften a hardened soul, is a miracle we need to put down on paper. Looking back on recorded miracles will help sustain us in hard times.

The ability to love and be loved is a miracle that is God-given in a sometimes cruel world. If we are open to miracles, they will come.

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Off the Beaten Path

Kaqchikel Ladies Make Special Tortillas By Hand

By Larry Stocker

After a very pleasant ride, Juan dropped me off at a crossroads on the Pan Am Highway north of Los Encuentros. I gave him an extra ten dollars and he gave me seventy-five quetzales because he knew I was going to need something for the bus. He left me standing at the tip top of a hill with forest and farmland all around. I knew the buses passed frequently here and though Pana was only about 25 kilometros down the road, the road was going to be very weird.

This was a mountainous country. I let a couple of buses go by because I just wanted to breathe some of the moist scented air. Then I stuck out my right arm ever so slightly, but I didn't have to, because the bus driver immediately interpreted my intention telepathically and stopped the big bus.

The *assistante* had already opened the back door of the old school bus and indicated that I should get in. I am not as young as I used to be but I threw my backpack into the bus and clambered in using every drop of my formerly inert energy. I made it. Standing room only. I clutched the overhead rails and prepared for what I knew was going to be a bumpy, up and down, jerky ride.

From the windows I could see the small farms with the ramshackle houses and lots of people—mostly dressed in *traje*—the woven clothing that identifies the particular branch of Maya culture in Guatemala that the wearers represent.

One seat, just ahead of me, was shared by three women and two little girls. They all wore the same long dresses with the guipil tops of woven color. They had almost identical black heads, which bobbed back and forth with the movement of the bus. They were like dolls—too perfect to be humans.

Soon, the bus jerked its way through the busy narrow streets of Solola. The activity

of life is so basic and honest in these places. Solola is a big town, more than 80,000 people, but it's a small town, too. It doesn't take up much space, and the people are economical, not aspiring to any more than they need. Humans living close together in an ancient and unpretentious form of harmony. From Solola, you could pick up a rock and almost throw it to Pana, something like a thousand feet below a steep cliff on the big lake—Lake Atitlan (which is advertised at the Guatemala airport as being the world's most beautiful lake).

The bus I was on stopped at the central park in Solola and, about exactly one minute later, at the urging of a new *assistante*, I was on another bus to take me down the mountain to Pana. This time I got to enter through the front door, a lot less work! Pana is 8 kilometros by road, but like I said, the straight-down difference is a lot less.

The road is brutal, but now-a-days, it is totally paved. Spectacular views can be had of the great volcanos and the deep blue water—if you can spare a few moments from worrying about if the bus is going to make it or not. I read in the guide book that every year one of these beautiful buses plunges off a cliff. It's an ugly thought but I guess it does happen.

Once on the little shelf of semi-flat land that Panajachel occupies, you can feel the welcome, warmer beams of sunshine that greet you. It's a ramshackle town. That's all you can say but it's beautiful in its own way. A mixture of Maya, Ladinos, and world-weary hippie types—you can let your hair down here.

Carrying my backpack, I stumbled into a notorious place called La Palapa and ordered a Coke before pondering my next move. I decided to walk down the main street, called Santander (a street the Mayas call La Calle de los Locos—locos meaning

gringos).

I located Chalet Tony and, finding a place in the sheet metal gate that made the most noise, I pounded loudly so someone could let me in. Marion remembered me from two years ago and showed me to my small apartment. Immediately, she started trying to find a guitar for me to use. I told her not to worry but secretly hoped that she would be successful. I paid her the \$300 for two weeks of hospitality.

The waters of Lake Atitlan are up—something I will be sure to mention to the Rio Grande at my next opportunity—and overflowing an old retaining wall. The water taxis still crisscross the surface, providing transportation to the various communities out there to the north and the west. The *tuk-tuks* still buzz annoyingly along La Calle de Los Locos, scaring children and tourists... and me more than anyone.

Mornings and evenings you still hear the distinctive pat-pat-pat sound of the kaqchikel ladies (one of the indigenous Maya peoples of the midwestern highlands in Guatemala) making their special Guatemalan form of tortillas by hand to be placed with care upon the hot comales.

The cleaning lady, Yahtun, brought me a beautiful bouquet of roses and daisies yesterday and wants to clean the room *right now*, so I have to get out of here for now.

There's a guy named Kurt who comes to Las Cruces to sell beautiful Guatemalan weavings. He says that Chichicastenango has the best Maya market in Guatemala. I think I'll go over there on Thursday. I will let you know if he is right or wrong. So far the best market I have seen is right up the hill in Solola.

Adios, Amigos.

(This story was written by Larry Stocker. It was published on May 27, 2014 in the author's weekly email.

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Canyon (cont. from front cover)

Red stone was quarried in Red Canyon and there was a coal mine just across from the Curl homestead. They also manufactured paint from the red dirt in the Canyon years ago.

There are very interesting pictographs from centuries ago on the walls beside the road, visible today. The ancient people here viewed this canyon as special and spiritual.

There was a rock, called the Hold-Up Rock, where robbers used to hide until unsuspecting travelers were accosted. There was a filed slot where a road agent could see who was coming on the road and could put his gun barrel through the slot.

The school always had a Christmas program with poems and songs to be memorized. Middle Red Canyon School didn't have a piano or pump organ like some of the other rural schools. At the end of the school year, there was always a picnic with families with wonderful food and homemade ice cream. There were games and races as part of the entertainment.

One big highlight was being able to listen to the Inauguration of President Calvin Coolidge. It was the first inauguration to be recorded on radio in the United States. This was in 1925.

At the Stevens home, they had a radio with three headphones and when taken apart, let each student have an earpiece.

Griff Stevens put together a high antenna by stretching a long wire across the Canyon from one mountain to another. They were amazed and thrilled with no static and great reception. It was a clear day as well. It was a wonderful experience for the children.

There was no electricity. Electric lines came into the Canyon on October 18, 1962. One Christmas at the schoolhouse there was a beautiful tree, lit by candles. As Santa moved around the tree, his beard caught on fire! Men quickly helped him exit outside to snow, which saved the day. I'm sure no one forgot that particular Christmas.

Caroline received a small homemade fiddle made out of a thin board from an orange crate. It had two rubber bands for strings. She was really pleased with this gift!

A steep hill was used for sledding. On the same hill,

Caroline fell into a cactus patch and teacher removed most of the spines, accompanied by many tears. Caroline's mother found more at home.

Also, at a very young age, a piece of her clothing was laid on an anthill. After putting it back on, the ant bites were horrible.

Teachers let the students ice skate on a broad part of the creek during the noon hour. Also, they gave up their two recesses, fifteen minutes apiece, to lengthen the skating time.

Some of the games played were pump-pump pull away, New Orleans, fox and geese, tag, follow-the-leader, anti-over and softball.

Spelling bees were fun and they took place in a town school. Caroline said, "It was a real thrill when a country kid could spell down the town kids—which we did several times."

One very special event was the raising of the American flag each morning at school and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. "I'm proud of the Red, White and Blue and what it represents," said Caroline.

The schoolhouse was the place where Sunday Schools were held and community dances involving the whole family. People got together for house building projects and weddings.

They had only the entertainment they made for themselves, resulting in close family and community relations.

Everyone had Sears, Robuck and Montgomery Ward catalogs. From these, children cut out paper dolls and clothes. Women could keep up with the latest fashions. You could even buy a stick-built house and an automobile from the catalogs.

Caroline's first ride in a car was to a picture show in town. She didn't remember what the show was about, but did remember the car ride was a wonderful experience.

Ella Albright was the first woman in the Canyon to have water in her kitchen. It came from a large cistern dug near the corner of the kitchen. Snow and rain water were used. A small pressure hand pump was installed in the sink.

Caroline's parents bought a light plant so they could have electric lights and an electric iron. However, no one had a bathroom until the power came on in 1962 so people could have a pressure water system.

There was sadness in the Canyon with accidents, diseases and deaths. Polio, typhoid fever, a ruptured appendix that took the life of little Rose, Caroline's sister, and diphtheria were present in those years that took many precious lives.

Families who lived in Red Canyon were always ready to help each other out in times of trouble. When Caroline's dad had an accident which resulted in a crushed heel, which he painfully reshaped himself, Griff Stevens and his family helped with the farming and ranching.

Tragically, Frank and Ella died in a car accident on October 18, 1962, just before the electric line came into the Canyon. They had lived on the land for over 50 years and left a grieving family.

Caroline married Barney Curl on April 1, 1934. They lived at Wind Cave for a year where Barney worked for the Wind Cave Game Preserve.

Because of the Depression, he lost his position and they moved to the Curl house on Seventh Avenue in Edgemont.

He had several jobs then: helping ranchers, county road work and, during WWII, he worked as a fireman on the railroad. In 1944 he was employed by the SD State Department of Highways until retirement in 1970.

They bought a stone house a mile northeast of Edgemont and lived there over 34 years. Their children, John and Mary Ella, lived to adulthood in the home. Unfortunately, because of a new highway, the house had to be sold to the SD Dept. of Highways.

Caroline did dressmaking and tailoring at home when the children were growing up, then worked at the Rainbow Motel, Southern Hills Feed and Grain and then nine years as a bookkeeper for the Edgemont Lumber Company.

Barney wrote *Looking Back at Edgemont*, published in 1984, the first of the historical books concerning the town. The loss of their son, John's left arm in May, 1965, at the uranium mill was a very traumatic time, but many friends and family helped.

"Give us a small town anytime—the people feel with you, hurt when you hurt and laugh when you laugh," Caroline said, "We are proud to be a part of this wonderful community called Edgemont."

Monsanto (cont. from front cover)

Not surprisingly, Monsanto continues to argue that GM soybean has no effect on bees or honey production. Monsanto has already been accused of contributing to the deforestation in the state of Campeche, Mexico, where it has been expanding its agrochemical interests.

Since 2013, transnational agrochemical companies have been aggressively seeking permission from the federal government to lift the provisional ban on the sales of transgenic maize seeds in the country.

Even though the ban was overturned in August 2015, a new court decision also in early November, made by federal judge Benjamin Soto Sánchez, head of the second Unitarian Court in Civil and Administrative Matters of the First Circuit, "upheld a provisional suspension prohibiting federal agencies from processing and granting the privilege of sowing or releasing into the environment of transgenic maize in the country."

This latter victory against Monsanto is a result of activist organization *Colectividad en Defensa del Maíz (CDM)*, which was also supported by Greenpeace México.

René Sánchez, the attorney for CDM, applauded the court's decision and stated that sowing of transgenic seeds "threatens the biological diversity, agricultural activities and culture of Mexico."

About 30% of maize farmed across Mexico and 30% of soy in the Yucatán are currently grown from GMO seeds. Mexico also imports GMO yellow corn from the United States, where it accounts for about 90% of the market.

Mexico is part of a larger Latin American movement to stop Monsanto from expanding into the territory.

Alex Pietrowski is an artist and writer concerned with preserving good health and the basic freedom to enjoy a healthy lifestyle. He is a staff writer for WakingTimes.com and Offgrid Outpost, a provider of storable food and emergency kits. Alex is an avid student of Yoga and life.