

The Abbey *Echo... Echo... Echo*

A monthly newsletter by and for the residents of Eugene Abbey - **May 2025**

Newfoundland - 2009

By The Happy Wanderer

Last month I left you, my readers, at the Ferry Terminal in N. Sydney, Nova Scotia, waiting to embark for Newfoundland on the MVCaribou, the largest ferry I have ever seen in my life. Commissioned in 1986 and built as an icebreaker it held 1200 passengers, 370 cars or 77 tractor trailers on 5 decks and was crewed by 106 able bodied sailors. It was retired in 2010 one year after our journey. The journey from N. Sydney across the Cabot Strait took 6 rolling hours (not counting the off and on) and 96 nautical miles to Port aux Basques, Newfoundland. First a little history.

The Viking, Lief Erickson, was the first European to visit and settle the northern tip of Newfoundland in the 11th Century. It is now a National Park, L'anse aux Meadows, as well as a World Heritage Site (UNESCO). Next a British citizen, John Cabot, founded a colony and in 1583 it was claimed by Britain as its earliest colony. In the early 1500's what was to become Port aux Basque was a sheltering place for Basque whalers from Spain. It was first settled by fisherfolk from the Channel Islands in the 1700's.

France claimed parts of Newfoundland but then ceded its rights to Britain in 1713 in exchange for the use of the coastal lands for its French fishery. In the 1880's the Government of Canada erected a lighthouse there to protect its ships bound for the Gulf of St. Lawrence even though Britain still claimed it as a colony. The first steamer between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, the Bruce, made the first crossing in 1898. In 1949 in a referendum the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador voted to become the 10th Province of Canada. By the mid 1960's The TransCanada Highway went all the way through Newfoundland to Labrador.

Back in 1989 I was still an East Coaster used to the Atlantic shoreline which was mostly mellow sandy beaches and a gentle surf. I had not seen Oregon's coast yet. In retrospect I can compare the shores of Newfoundland to the more rugged coast of Oregon with lighthouses along steep cliffs overlooking a wild sea.



continued...

There were few roads and none along the southern shore; fishing villages were accessible only by boat. As of my writing there are short roads reaching some of them. This is a beautiful and rugged island.

The spine of Newfoundland is the northernmost point in the Appalachian Mountains with glacially scoured and bare peaks. There are steep sided valleys and long narrow lakes which look like fjords.

We stayed mostly in Provincial Park campgrounds with attractive, private and spacious campsites mostly just with outhouses.



I remember mostly our first night camped by a gurgling brook that soothed us to sleep. From there we headed north stopping to explore small towns (with laundromats to dry Jeremy out), fishing villages, lakes, the wild shore all frequently in foggy and chilly weather. At a little fishing village of a few houses we bought freshly caught salmon and took it “home” to cook over a campfire. Even though I had grown up on the Atlantic

shore, I’d never tasted salmon and never again have had salmon that tasted that good. I wished we had had the time to explore further north to see

the Historical Park about the Vikings and to see some big icebergs, but all too soon it was time to head back to the ferry which would take us to Prince Edward Island, home of Anne of Green Gables, red sand beaches and unbelievably green meadows. Back home Jeremy had a part time job as a bike mechanic and just before we left he had bought an expensive bike with a great employee discount. Of course that bike had to come with us. He had a great time riding it along that red sand beach, but soon it became apparent that the bike and the red sand were not compatible. So now added to the bookstores for Stephen King, and the laundromats we went searching for a bike shop. We found one; the bike got a good washing and oiling and we got a lecture about our stupidity.

The next day and another ferry we were off on our endless crossing of the deep Maine woods. Finally we entered Vermont, headed south and were home after 3 weeks of camping and 2000 miles.

Betsy Hall

From the recent Food Committee Survey:

Pot roast and beef stew topped the list for favorite entrees at the Abbey, according to results of the residents' food survey. More than half the residents returned their surveys, which also showed that least favorite items were pasta dishes and tilapia.

A document with a rundown of the survey results was distributed at the March town hall. If you didn't get a copy, please ask one of the members of the Core Food Committee (listed below).

"I am happy to see changes happening, and that we are moving in a positive direction," announced Abbey Manager Michele Sheridan at the March town hall. "The meetings are just getting started, so our priority right now has been food. As we continue to move along, we will address other items on the agenda, but we want to have one focus at a time."

Patty, a member of the Core Food Committee, announced at the April town hall how residents may contribute their ideas to the committee. In the pub on the counter are now comment forms titled "Improve Our Dining Experience" for you to fill out and a box to put them in. Your opinions matter. On an ongoing basis, we'll provide comment summaries and track how often different issues come up.

The Core Food Committee will meet monthly with Michele and Daphne the week before a town hall, and then will report back at the town hall.

"I would like to let everyone know that I am getting some good ideas from the Food Committee," wrote Daphne Wingham, the Abbey's kitchen manager, in the March issue of the Echo. "I have already made some of the recipes that have been brought to me. We talked about using less potatoes and more grains, so I am trying to add more grains."

As background, an initial Food Committee meeting was held January 10 with Michele and Daphne where it was decided a survey would be the best starting point. Next, a first Resident Food Committee meeting, chaired by Linda G., was held February 7.—Core Food Committee
Linda G. (chair), Jeanne, Patty, Nita and Cindy

Bill Winkley sent us this –

How I Relearned the Art of Doing Nothing

By Bob Brody, AARP – 2 January 2025



Italian culture has practically trademarked the concept of *la dolce vita*, a phrase translated as “the sweet life.” But Italians also specialize in a related custom called *dolce far niente*, literally defined as “the sweetness of doing nothing.” Decades ago, as a boy, then as a teenager and young man, I excelled at doing nothing. My mastery of idleness bordered on genius. I could easily lie on a beach all summer long without budging, much less feeling guilt.

But my attitude about expending energy shifted in my mid-30s. I had a wife and two children to support. I finally grew a conscience and adopted something unprecedented for me, namely an operative work ethic. From then on, I rarely took my foot off the gas pedal, my eye always on how to propel myself to a better job and a bigger salary.

Fast forward 35 years. I moved from New York City to Southern Italy. I now live in an ancient hillside town named Guardia Sanframondi. I have no plans to retire and can afford to tap my brakes. But I nonetheless aspire, at age 72, to bring myself full circle. I wish to learn anew how to practice *dolce far niente*.

This philosophy is generally interpreted to mean slowing down enough to come to a standstill and indulge in embracing the smallest, simplest pleasures of life. It could mean daydreaming under a tree in the countryside or sipping cappuccino in a café watching people parade past. The origin of the term is credited variously to the poet Lord Byron, the Italian adventurer Casanova and the Roman writer Pliny The Younger, who wrote, “It seems ages since . . . I knew what it was to do nothing, and rest and enjoy that lazy but delightful state of inactivity where you hardly know you exist.”

As it happens, Americans are evidently getting better at it. We now devote more time than ever before, if only slightly, to “relaxing and thinking.” So found the most recent Time Use Survey from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), released in June 2024. Examples of activities the BLS fits in this category range from “goofing off,” “wasting time” and “hanging around” to “breaks at work,” sunbathing, sitting in a hot tub and “reflecting, daydreaming, fantasizing, and wondering.”

In Memorium

Dorothy Sofge



Dorothy Sofge, a long-time Abbey resident, recently passed away peacefully in Seattle.

From her obituary, written by her son, Tony:

“She'd fallen yet again last week, and struck her head. She ended up in the hospital with broken hip as well. That was operated on and a plate and screws inserted to bolster her gait. But the trauma was too much for her fragile system. She was unresponsive and took no food this past several days. Hospice came daily and morphine added to her drip; oxygen was withdrawn earlier today. And the nurse called to notify us time was short.

She had been lovingly cared for right up the end. Bo came faithfully to visit every week and put her calls thru to friends and family. Tab dutifully updated the clan via text on setbacks and issues as they arose. And I passed along the somewhat belated news to concerned friends, Jan and Terri, among others.

Her impact left a major mark on all our lives. Her death is a stunning blow, for all our preparedness. Her influence on her children, nieces and nephews, grandchildren, etc. will remain with us. Friends from church, oil painting, and county fair are included in her circle. As are her siblings and their spouses, and extended family. May she will live on in our hearts and thru our memories of her many acts of hospitality, homespun mementos and good works.”

Tony

Antho Sofge <tts@centurylink.net>

1641 Bellevue Avenue #201

Seattle, WA 98122-2065

2 April 2025

Another week has passed and it's **pun**-ishment time once again.

Why couldn't the couple get married at the library?
It was all booked up...

Without geometry life is pointless...

What is the worst part of a money addiction?
Withdrawal...

Why did the banana put on the sunscreen?
Because he didn't want to peel...

Sometimes I tuck my knees into my chest and lean forward.
That's just how I roll...

Where do fish keep their money?
In a riverbank...

Put down the torches, we are done for now.

_(Once again, this contributor wisely chooses to remain anonymous.)



Carolee noticed this Black-capped Chickadee, perched upside down upon what appears to be some kind of transformer. (Carolee has a very sharp eye for birds!)

The Chickadee is looking for a nesting spot, perhaps?

Betsy's Ramblings;

Are we Abbeyites, Abbeyeans or something else entirely ?

I am responding to Karen's writing in the last edition of this newsletter about what should be in the newsletter. I agree; I would like to see less "canned" stuff off the internet and more original work by our talented artists and writers. Skip the awful jokes. But I do like the words of wisdom from folks much wiser than me.

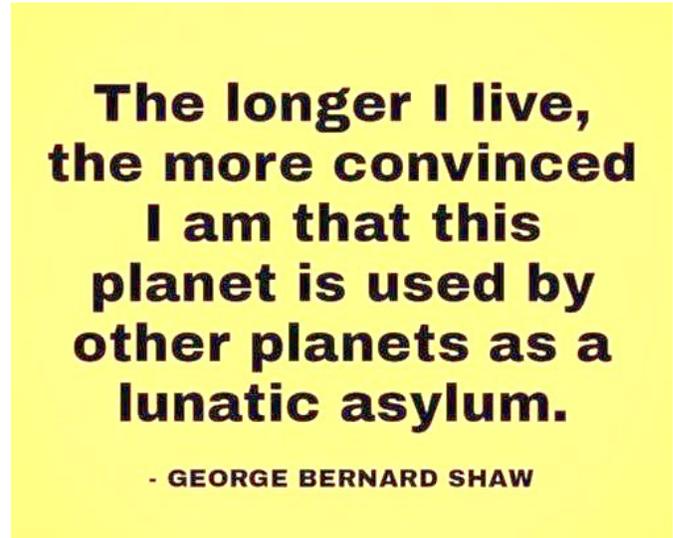
However I do have another bone to pick, one which Karen chose to overlook and that is the question of what we residents of the Abbey wish to be called collectively. Karen used the word "Abbeyites". Jim objected as he and Bill Winkley prefer the word "Abbeyean" which sounds better to their ears. Karen chose to go along with our white, male patriarchs and I take objection to that. I will tell you why and then ask for suggestions from the newsletter readers for their preference.

I have just finished reading "The Dance of the Dissident Daughter", A Woman's Journey from Christian Tradition to the Sacred Feminine, by Sue Monk Kidd. I came upon this book sort of by accident. I read Kidd's "The Secret Life of Bees" a story of African American sisters in the deep south who rescue a runaway white teenager and her African American nanny. The sisters also are successful beekeepers and there are parallels. Like bees these sisters have created their own lives and rituals. I liked the novel and wanted to know more about its author and so I bought her memoir not knowing what I was about to read. As the subtitle suggests it is her 8 year journey from being a "handmaid" (her word) of the patriarchal Southern Baptist Church to her transition to becoming a more independent woman in touch with the wisdom of what she terms the Sacred Feminine. It all began on a retreat to a monastery. In introducing herself to the abbot, out came the words, "Father Sue". Her quest was on. Eight years of research into prehistory - the time of Goddesses, retreats, deep female friendships, risking her marital relationship led to her leaving a lucrative career as a writer and speaker of Christian inspirational views to becoming a novelist and teacher of creative writing.

It obviously resonated with me, raised in the Episcopal Church at a time when God, all clergy, deacons, lay readers were white males, postponing my own career to earn the money to get my husband through seminary, beginning my study of the history of the Christian Church to finally saying, I will not be a second class citizen in my marriage or in the church. I finally got divorced with the blessing of a newly minted female Episcopal Priest.

So this is a long rambling request for suggestions as to what residents would like to call themselves. : Abbeyites, Abbeyeans, Olympians (from Olympus), or something entirely different ??????
Please respond to me at hbetsyann@gmail.com Thanks.

This month's Meme Page is courtesy of Andie Douglas:



“Hands Off!” Demonstrations: (By Betsy Hall)

Abbey Residents Join the Resistance - On Saturday, April 5th Hands Off!, a collection of pro-democracy and environmental organizations spawned well over 1000 rallies across the country. There were 100,000 people at the National Mall and probably at least 2 million across the country. Eugene’s KLCC estimated 2,500 in town spreading from City Hall in all directions and there were many smaller groups around town. My little collection of HOA’s in Green Valley, AZ took back a main intersection that used to belong to ½ dozen Trump supporters waving flags. Hands Off! was 350 strong. In Tucson’s Reid Park Amphitheater, where there was a crowd of 20,000.



This collage of photos shows the demonstrations were nationwide. (Thanks Larry). The photos here may not show all of our residents who were at a rally somewhere. Many more of us who couldn’t be there physically were there in spirit.



Susan Matthews and Granddaughter



Patty and Linda G.



Stan and Bill among the crowd at Ferry Street Bridge



Larry and Anne



Karen F.



Is that really Jeanne?

Don Quixote

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra

« When life itself seems lunatic, who knows where madness lies. Perhaps to be too practical is madness. To surrender dreams – this may be madness. Too much sanity may be madness – and maddest of all; to see life as it is, and not as it should be.!»

In March of this year I went to Mexico City, living with 27 other clowns, for a week-long Patch Adams Clown Camp. This was my 5th time to go to this gathering. We lived together in an International Hostel. Daily we'd get up, eat a wonderful breakfast, in full costume, then "get on the bus" and go to hospitals, schools, women's prisons (where mothers were allowed to raise their children *inside* the prison, until the age of six). Flash Mobs in the middle of streets and in open plazas was also a daily occurrence.

After the clowning activities outside the Hostel, we'd return to 'home' and de-brief, have lunch, play games, sing and dance and build our community. It was interesting to me that we each paid for travel, lodging and the overall experiences, came mostly from medical, educational and other "caring backgrounds." This past March, we were three medical doctors, seven schoolteachers, one policewoman, and other folks with similar intentions.

Why? Why do I clown? Patch uses the phrase "healing with humor." As the quote above indicates, life can be "maddening" and pushing the limits of silliness and compassion, is for me, a way of creating 'hope' in a world that is often cruel and absurd. Loving kindness, joyful foolishness, and a desire to push myself to assume that life is worth living...this is how I try to stay upright and balanced. "Sing as if no one is listening and dance like no one is watching."



By John-Roy Wilson

¡Una Fiesta Grande!



Cinco de Mayo



Brush up on your Spanish and grab your guitars, guacamole, maracas, castanets, tequila, vino, y cerveza, all you Abbeyanitos!

We're celebrating Cinco de Mayo (realmente, the 4th) with a sing-along (in English!) and true potluck.

When: Sunday 4 May, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Music starts at 1:30 p.m.

Where: Fourth floor Lounge and Solarium and, weather permitting, Deck (and maybe the Third floor deck).



Músicos: Señores Dañiel Powell y Francisco Tarantino.



Put it on your calendar now and plan your contribution to our “comida y bebidas!” (i.e., food and beverages) –

This will be a food and beverage potluck, so bring something you'd like to share (or just bring yourself).

Ole!

Questions? Check with any member of our Activity Committee: Betsy H., Chris G., Karen N., Katherine W., John-Roy, Christina, Stan, Jim Mc., Sue Wineland., Wes B, Bill W.

A Commercial Announcement:

Dan Powell with his buddy Frank, and two former students, are playing at the **Springfield Art Walk, Fri. April 11th at the Willamalane Adult Activity Center** (2nd & C St., Springfield) beginning at 5:00. Take advantage of the shuttle service that goes between the Adult Center and downtown Springfield for more art displays. This is a free concert, TIPS are appreciated.

Art Committee Report:

There is not much new to report this month. Judi Cameron now has her beautiful paintings displayed in the Pub through May.



(These photos of the exhibit by Jim, so don't blame Betsy.)

We still need artists to display their work for August and beyond each for 2 months. If anyone knows an artist who might be willing to participate, please let one of the committee members know of them. We do need help on this front. Art committee members are Jim Mc, Carolee, Betsy, Patty, Wes, Bill, Nita and Karen Nestor. Meetings are on the first Thursday of each month at 2 PM in the Lounge and art hangings are during the first week every other week.

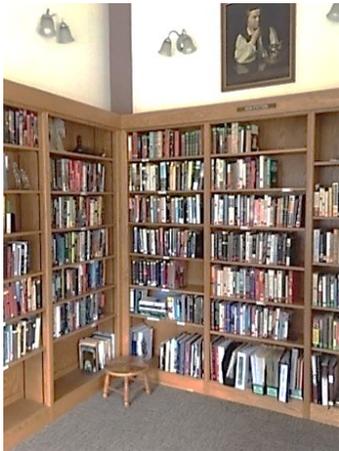
Betsy Hall

Somebody has to hang all that artwork:



Nita with her painting of Alaska Bruce and Nita hanging artwork Bruce and Patty admiring it.
(Nita's late husband at the lower left)

Abbey Library Committee Report



Middle School Outreach Program Exceeds Expectations

“I enjoyed every single moment,” said Jeanne in describing Spencer Butte Middle School Kindness Day, which more than lived up to its billing as an educational, intergenerational and interactive program. Matt Bradley, Jeanne’s grandson and a teacher at the school, along with two parents, 14 middle-schoolers and 15 Abbey residents, sat around dining room tables and talked for an hour about so many things. Just a glimpse at the range of subjects included careers, friendships, sports, slang, families, and travel.

“I was really impressed with the kids,” said Sue Wineland, who organized the event on behalf of the Library Committee. Thank you, Sue!

The finale to the program was Larry’s Magic Show, which turned us all into children at heart. Larry’s act, complete with prize giveaways, had everyone mesmerized. His volunteers, including Abby resident John Roy, were top-notch. Thank you, Larry!

Also, special thank yous to Michele, Daphne, and the kitchen staff for their help in organizing and preparing a variety of snacks, cookies, and punch.

“Let’s do it again,” said Linda Gordon.

If you participated and would like to share your experience in the June issue of the Echo, please write up a paragraph or two and email it to nickles.cindy@gmail.com by 5 p.m. Thursday, May 8.

Books on Display

The Library Committee’s current Books on Display, which is located under the window at the top of the stairs on the first level, is New Acquisitions. Abbey resident Nita Nettleton’s book, “Nowhere Else to Go But Dyea,” is included.

Library Magazines

Magazines, including recent Smithsonian magazines, may be checked out for a week.

Eugene Public Library Book Loan

New volumes from the public library will be available toward the end of May. Keep on checking out books, but think of finishing them up as we reach the middle of the month. A book can always be held over by arrangement. Since 2013, the library has been loaning its books with the Abbey.

Book Talk

Sue Wineland leads the monthly Book Talk, an opportunity to share what you’ve been reading. The next Book Talk is Thursday, May 15, from 4-5 p.m., in the Downstairs Lounge, B Floor.— Library Committee: Chair Chris, Jeanne, Sue (Wineland), Wes, Linda (Gordon), Cindy.

The First Deck flowers are thriving despite the limited sun exposure



photos by Susan Matthews



Q: What's the difference between
a cat & a comma?

A: one has claws at the end of his paws
& the other is a pause at the end of a clause.

A culinary treat well worth repeating:

Ten adventuresome Abbeyites went to lunch at the Renaissance Room restaurant at Lane Community College on April 25th, and were treated to an exceptional menu of Cajon and Creole food prepared entirely by the culinary students.

The food was incredibly delicious, beautifully plated and (with the exception of a bit of hot spiciness) enjoyed by all.

Another luncheon is tentatively planned before the end of May- check the bulletin boards for announcements!

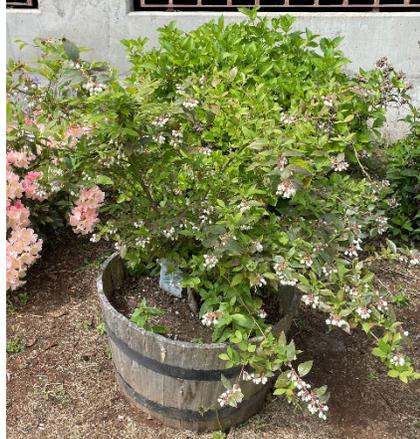


Group photo by Patty



Text and food photos by Christina

Spring has come to the Abbey and we have proof.



Many thanks to our Abbey resident gardeners.