

RAMBLINGS

by Susan Urhausen

It seems that the much delayed arrival of spring is finally here, or at least just around the corner. With every warm and blustery day, hopes soar. I'm trying to ignore the weather report that I heard this morning that somewhere in the western half of the United States the forecast includes snow and sleet in higher elevations (5-23-11). Seriously? I think it was Utah. Please let it be Utah. I'm a big fan of snow and winter weather, but all in the right time and place. May and June is definitely not the right time.

With the springing of spring, the subject is gardens. Everything is late this year due to the unseasonably cool weather we have had. But late is better than nothing. If there was ever a time to plant a garden for one's own benefit, this year and into next year is it. At the food bank, I keep staring down the barrel of diminished or totally vanished government funding for emergency food procurement. Grants for these funds are now tied up at both the state and federal level. The bottom line for me is that I may not be able to purchase my staple items (vegetables, proteins, flour, fruit, etc.) in the quantities that I have in the past. Before that happens, I would volunteer a pay cut or work as a volunteer myself, but it would alter food bank life as we know it. Maybe that's a good thing, it remains to be seen. Fortunately there is Northwest Harvest backing us up all the way, providing even more food these days for free, every other month. We once received one ton per delivery, now that amount is up to one and a half tons. Even with that, I would urge everyone in reading distance to plant a garden, however small, however large. Gardens not only provide healthy food straight to one's table, they provide exercise, the potential to preserve food for use throughout the year and produce that can be sold at the local farmers market or given to neighbors, the soup kitchen or the food bank.

I have been urging clients that I have come into contact with to look to their lifestyles in order to more safely navigate the tough times we seem to be facing. Not only are funding sources being challenged, by and large, donations have seen a dip to most organizations. Across the board, donations to organizations like this food bank, church-related charities and service organizations have seen a decline in operational cash flow lately. It is not only a time for personal belt-tightening, but organizational belt-tightening as well. Our ability to assist clients in the area of evictions and utility shut-offs has diminished right as the need for such assistance has increased. It is a good time to make changes, quit smoking, quit drinking, turn off the cable TV; plant a garden, play board games, go for walks, volunteer in your neighborhood.

It is all so easy to say. I know as a former smoker myself that quitting isn't easy. I know for many, not having a beer or two each evening can be just as difficult. I don't think the present state of unemployment in our country is permanent. I refuse to believe that we as a country can't come back up out of this mess. But, it will take time. Unfortunately time doesn't pay the rent, keep the lights and heat going or put food on the table. No matter how one feels about it, left, right or center, the mood in the country is to cut support programs. Those cuts, should they come to pass will affect this food bank, the clients who patronize it, and myself personally. The only recourse to survive much of this is personal responsibility. There's nothing wrong with that.

So, I'm back on the same bandwagon from the last couple of years, but with more urgency. Plant a garden. If you don't know how, ask. Ask until you get an answer. Call the food bank. Talk to your neighbors, plant gardens together. If we all lean on one another, we just might make it, and become a stronger community when we emerge out the other side.

On a huge positive note, a new community garden space is getting underway. In conjunction with a 6th grade curriculum, a garden is being planted behind the middle school on city property. It was my distinct pleasure to attend a meeting with middle school Principal Tracy Vining, high school agriculture and shop teacher Gary Axtell, Mayor Dorothy Slagle and organic gardener Eldon Roush recently concerning this garden. I will say without any hesitation that it was one of the best meetings I have ever attended, with ideas being received with open minds all around. This may not come into full fruition for a few years, but the beginnings show extraordinary hope for a great project. I'm excited, as are all the other parties involved. This garden is a dream come true for many of us in Kettle Falls. My most sincere debt of gratitude goes to Tracy Vining for bringing this to my attention and allowing me to participate. This is exciting news!

Kettle Falls Rotary Club
ROTARY NEWS**We Need New Members****Come Join Us!**

The Kettle Falls Rotary Club is a small, but active club. Our projects include, but are not limited to the Kettle Falls Spray Park, the Kettle Falls Senior Citizens, Coats for Kids, School Supplies for the Kettle Falls schools, the Cemetery Cleanup, Pennies for Polio, the Community Reader Board, the painting of the Steam Engine at Happy Dell Park and the Adopt a County Road Program so you could immediately get involved if you were interested. We will be participating in the parade and have a booth at Town and County Days. We are also making plans for our biggest fall fundraiser, the Rotary Auction, and would love your help. Please consider joining the Rotary Club of Kettle Falls.

What is Rotary?

Rotarians are a diverse group of people, many of which are business and professional leaders who take an active role in their area while greatly enriching their personal and professional lives by serving their community. Rotary International, the world's first service organization, is made up of over 33,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas. Its members form a global network of business, professional and community leaders who volunteer their time and talents to serve their communities and the world. Rotary's motto, Service Above Self, exemplifies the humanitarian spirit of the organization's more than 1.2 million members. Strong fellowship among Rotarians and meaningful community and international service projects characterize Rotary worldwide. Rotary enjoys a rich and sometimes complex tradition and organizational structure, with many programs that can be confusing to new and even not-so-new members.

So, what would I have to do?

What Rotarians get out of Rotary depends largely on what they put into it. Many membership requirements are designed to help members become and remain active participants in their clubs and enjoy their Rotary experience.

All Rotary clubs share a key mission: to serve their community and those in need throughout the world. By participating in club service projects, members learn about their club's involvement in local and international projects and can volunteer their time and talents where they are most needed.

Attending club meetings allows members to enjoy their club's fellowship, enrich their professional and personal knowledge, and meet other business leaders in their community. Rotary policy requires members to attend at least 50 percent of club meetings in each half of the year. However, Rotarians can make up meetings.

Thursday morning at Sandy's Restaurant at 7:00am. Come have breakfast with us

**Friends of the Library Meeting:**

Interested in becoming a "Friend"? The "Friends" could use your help with shifts at the Book Nook and enjoyable fundraising events. Talk to the library today about how you can become a "Friend" of the Kettle Falls Library!

The Knitting Group:

Join us every Wednesday from 10:30 – 12:00. Bring your sticks, strings, and projects to the library to create, ask questions, and be in good company. All skill levels welcome.

Book Nook Hours:

The Friends of the Library will have the Book Nook open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 – 12:00, as well as the 2nd Saturday of each month from 10:00 – 12:00. Come down, buy some books and help support the Kettle Falls Public Library building fund.

Book Discussion Group:

Everyone is welcome on Monday, May 13th at 2:00.

StoryTime:

Introduce your child to the world of stories, songs, and activities every Wednesday at 10:30 (for ages 2 – 5).

A love for reading and books is one of the most precious gifts parents can give their children. While knowing how to read is essential for day-to-day survival, loving to read opens new worlds for children. By reading, children can visit people in different lands, fight fire-breathing dragons to save a royal princess, or learn how to build the perfect windmill. The possibilities are endless. Even so, fostering a love of reading requires a bit of work on our part as parents. Please join us for Storytime at the library. We would love to see you and your little ones.

Open Computer Lab:

Do you want to learn how to use word, surf the internet, access email, create a flier, download audio books, upload pictures, or something else? Bring your questions to the library on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month from 11:30 – 2:30 for personalized computer instruction. You can also work on the Microsoft e-learning program via WorkSource during lab times.

Kettle Falls Lady Lions

"Serving Our Community"

The Lady Lions met on May 17, 2011 at the home of Pam Douvia, with Gail Avey Rowland co-hosting. Thank you so much for the wonderful dinner and dessert. We had a huge contingency of Lady Lions attend as it was our Installation meeting for the new officers. Those initiated were: President, Diana Baxter; Vice President, Jody Boring; Secretary, Sherry Kaelber; and Treasurer, Amy Miller. Congratulations to them, and we are looking forward to another exciting year under their leadership. This was the last official meeting of the Lady Lions until September, because we do not meeting during the summer months. We still do however, have one more commitment and that is to assist with the Grumpy Grouch Fun Run during Town and Country Days. Member of the group were most happy to sign up to help with this event.

Even up until the end of our year, the group made commitments to donate to a couple more worthwhile causes. As the Lady Lions have done for several years now, we agreed to pay for the Bagpipers to participate in the Town and Country Days parade, and stage show. The community as a whole, enjoys their music and having them visit each year. We also voted to donate \$200 to the Slam Jam Basketball backboard, as one of their sponsors. Giving back to the community is what we are all about, and these are just another couple examples of our participation.

Thank you so much to Peg Frostad, who upon her return from Arizona, always takes care of planting the potted flowers at the Meyers Falls Cemetery. She has also volunteered to begin the process of working with Jo Nullet, to eventually take over the charting of all of the cemetery plots, and where each person is buried, and keep that updated at all times. What a wonderful gesture on Peg's part.

We would like to take this opportunity at the end of our year, to thank all of you who participated and attended our Christmas Craft Fair, those of you that purchased community calendars, and in general, the entire membership of the Lady Lions for their hard work and diligence in these projects that continue to make monies that we can filter into our community for the benefit of everyone.



NEXT MEETING - SEPTEMBER ... WE DO NOT MEETING DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS