

## AN INDIAN PRAYER

Oh, great spirit, whose voice I hear in the wind

And whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.

Let me walk in beauty through all of my days.

May my eyes ever behold sunrise freshness and sunset glory.

Make my hand respect the things you have made

And my ears sharp to hear your many voices.

I am small and weak. I need your strength and wisdom.

Make me wise, that I may learn the lessons you teach my people,

The lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength — not to be superior to my brothers,

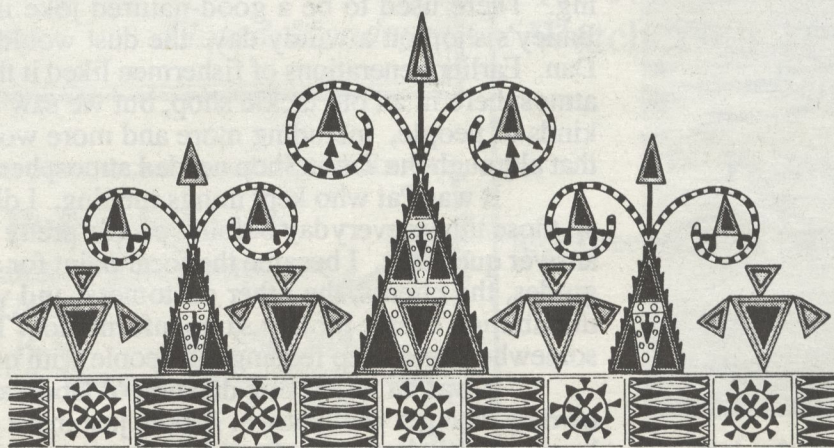
But able to fight my greatest enemy — myself.

OH GREAT SPIRIT, hear me, make me ready,

So when life fades to a last sunset,

My spirit will come to you without shame.

— Joe III  
Navajo



# A fly fishing family

from *A Trout's Best Friend: The Angling Autobiography of Bud Lilly*

by *Bud Lilly and Paul Schullery*



*"We did it together, and I can't imagine a finer thing a family could say than that."*



Photos: Top, the Lilly family in the late 1970's, from left, pet Poppy, Annette, Greg, Pat, Bud, and Mike. Bottom, Annette in her custom waders. Courtesy of Bud Lilly.

It was always the family that made the Trout Shop matter. I don't mean that the shop mattered because it helped support the family, though that was also true; I mean that the Trout Shop, with its long hours and all the rest, became such a central part of our lives because we were all involved. We did it together and I can't imagine a finer thing a family could say than that.

Greg was born in 1949, and Mike and Annette came along after the shop was in operation, Mike in 1952 and Annette in 1955. I don't know now how we found the time to run both the shop and the family, but I do know we were lucky things didn't get really busy in the shop until the kids were older.

Life could hardly be called routine in West Yellowstone, even for such a small town. For one thing, there were the bears. There were grizzly bears using the dump north of town every night until the early 1970's, and they were often seen in town at night (and still are), as were the smaller black bears. The black bears would get especially bold during the day, and sometimes we'd have to chase them away. I sold wrist rockets (very powerful slingshots) in the shop, and if you hit a black bear once or twice with a marble, it would usually go away. I remember one day the kids were out playing in the yard, and a black bear climbed a lodgepole pine right next to the yard. He just sat here watching them. There aren't many things that would make a parent more nervous, so I gave him a few rounds with the wrist rocket and he left. It wasn't a matter of hitting any vital part. You just sort of aimed for the bear.

A far more frightening incident occurred one night when Pat and I were working late in the old shop. It was a hundred feet or so from our little cabin, in an area the bears used as a highway all night long. We'd left the kids with a babysitter, who foolishly went outside to talk to her boyfriend. Somehow Mike, who was just an infant, got out of his crib, opened the back door, and crawled through the night all the way to the back door of the shop, where we heard him trying to get in. That babysitter had a short career with us.

I started the kids fishing when they were small, but I was careful not to start them too soon. If children aren't ready and don't have the patience, coordination, and enthusiasm needed to stick with fishing, you can ruin them forever by not waiting a year or two. They sense your frustration, and that can kill their interest.

I started them where my dad started me, on the Gallatin, with its quick little rainbows that weren't too choosy about lure or fly pattern. The most important thing for new fishermen of any age is action. You can show them the fine points any time, and if they're enthusiastic they'll pick them up themselves. But if they don't catch some fish and see the fun and excitement of it, all the lectures and instruction in the world won't help. At first the kids used spinning outfits because they're almost instantly easy, and they had a chance not only to catch fish, but to learn something about wading and reading the water. By the time they were ten or eleven they all switched to fly fishing and loved it and still do. It got easier with each new child, too, because Greg took on a lot of teaching himself, taking Mike and then Annette out fishing once he was old enough to go by himself.

When they were small I did a good deal of mule work, hauling one or two of them on my back across the water that was too deep for them. But very quickly they all had their own hip waders and were competent enough to get along. Annette was so small as a child, and only five feet two inches tall as an adult, that we had Marathon make a pair of waders for her. She wore them beautifully in our catalog. Waders often leak before you get them out of the box, but hers lasted forever.

It was also when the children were small that we started teaching them to release their fish. This was before such practice was popular, and their friends used to look at them like they were crazy, but it was a good thing to teach them early. It seems to be something that is somehow harder for older people to learn. Greg, Mike, and Annette of course passed along their enthusiasm for preserving the trout in the stream to thousands of customers and clients, and the shop became our little forum for discussing trout conservation with the public.

Meanwhile, Pat generally took care of the money, and she was largely responsible for our success. She worked with the accountant, kept track of all the receipts, paid all the bills, and supervised all the help. She was always taking advantage of discounts, which often boosted our profits. We called her the shift boss. She set up all the shift schedules and assigned duties to people, made sure the shelves were always stocked and inventories were all up-to-date, and made sure that *nobody* stood around while working. Anytime anyone stood still, she'd find something for them to do, even if it was just to make sure no dust settled anywhere.

That attitude kind of went against the old tradition of tackle shops, of course, which were usually somewhat gloomy little places where nobody would dream of dusting. There used to be a good-natured joke in the business that if you went to Dan Bailey's shop on a windy day, the dust would be so stirred up you couldn't even see Dan. Earlier generations of fishermen liked it that way, and there isn't anything like the atmosphere in an old tackle shop, but we saw that fly fishing was changing, and new kinds of people, including more and more women, were getting interested. We knew that although the Trout Shop needed atmosphere, it needed a fairly clear one.

It was Pat who kept things running. I didn't have the latitude to pay attention to all those things everyday because people pretty much expected me to be available just to answer questions. I became the focal point for all the information that came in from the guides, the clients, the other customers, and various friends, so I was also the main distribution center for that same information. The way I saw it, they'd just prop me up somewhere and keep feeding me people with questions.

It was an interesting division of labor, and I know it's happened with other shop owners who get well known. People just insist on talking to that certain person they've heard of. It's important for the business, too, because when the well-known person is in the shop, sales will often increase significantly. My family used to try to take the

see *Fly fishing*, page 27



# HENRY'S LAKE

Island Park, Idaho



**Henry's Lake** is the first attraction in Island Park for travelers along U.S. 20 from West Yellowstone, Yellowstone National Park, and Montana's Madison Valley. Henry's is trophy water for fly, bait, and spin anglers. Nearby are backcountry trails and roads into the Centennial Valley and Targhee National Forest. Ranch and forest land in this area of Island Park is home to antelope, moose, elk, bear, deer, fox, and many small species of animals. The area is a bird watcher's dream: bald and golden eagles, curlews, black-backed woodpeckers, sandhill cranes, numerous species of ducks, pelicans, hummingbirds, and colorful songbirds can be seen throughout the summer. Besides the Henry's Lake area businesses on this page, check out Staley Springs Lodge, Sunset Lodge, and Valley View Grocery Store & R.V. Park in the Eating, Sleeping, and Shopping Guide in this issue's centerfold.

For more information on this area, call any of these friendly businesses!

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Ask for Rich

## from Around, page 20

located at the east end of the Buffalo River campground on Highway 20, near the confluence of Elk Creek with the Buffalo River.

It is part of an on-going fisheries enhancement program, also, with efforts continuing to improve the habitat by planting shrubs and dumping large rocks to provide pools for fish.

## Labor Day bash

Island Park Mayor Sherrie Owens, with the help of the Island Park Chamber of Commerce, is organizing a Labor Day bash for all area residents and summer people at the Island Park Village Resort Saturday, September 5th, all day and into the night. Owens is already busy getting people to pledge side dishes and desserts to accompany the open pit barbecued beef her husband, Steve and local resident Jay Killmer will cook.

Let her know if you can help, and mark the day down on your calendar.

## Millions of trees planted nationwide Thousands in Idaho and Montana

Last year, nearly 2.6 million acres of trees were planted on rural land in the United States, according to David M. Spores, director of Timber, Cooperative Forestry, and Pest Management at the USDA Forest Service's Northern Region headquarters in Missoula, Montana.

Spores said this was the seventh highest total for any year in U.S. history. "The 1991 planting was a decrease of 11 percent from the 2.9 million planted in 1990 and down 25 percent from the high of 3.4 million acres in 1988," he said. He said the decrease can't be explained by any one factor, but a nationwide drought during the past few years is one reason not as many trees have been planted.

The one to three year old trees were planted in national forests, on U.S. Department of Interior lands, forest industry lands, non-industrial private lands, on state forests, and other land.

National Forests accounted for 12 percent of the total acreage planted last year, Spores said.

Forty-three percent of the total was planted on forest industry lands, 39 percent on non-industrial private lands, and all other ownerships contributed six percent of the total acreage planted.

In Idaho, 43,000 acres were planted to trees, 71 percent in national forests, three percent on non-industrial private lands, 18 percent on forest industry lands, seven percent on state forests, and one percent on all other lands.

In Montana, nearly 37,000 acres were planted, 66 percent in national forests, four percent on non-industrial private lands, 26 percent on forest industry lands, three percent on state forests, and one percent on lands of other ownerships.

Georgia led the nation in tree planting, with more than 331,000 acres, 31 percent of the national total.

Last year, 1.7 billion nursery tree seedlings were produced. The forest industry produced nearly half of these, state and local governments 29 percent, other industry 15 percent, and federal agencies eight percent.

## Idaho gets \$16 million for schools & roads

Idaho counties have received nearly \$16 million for schools and roads, according to Idaho Senator Larry Craig. The funds are a result of a law requiring 25 percent of the gross receipts from forest sales be set aside for schools and roads. This is to make up, in part, for the fact that federally-owned land is not taxable by local governments. Therefore, local governments lose property tax revenues normally used to pay for schools and roads.

Craig noted that declining timber sales will result in a decrease in these funds, so it is important to "fight for responsible forest management."

Craig said that only three states—Oregon, California, and Washington, will receive more funds for roads and schools than Idaho. These states received higher than normal revenues because of a law benefiting states whose forest sales were affected by decisions concerning the spotted owl.

## Business, club, & organization briefs

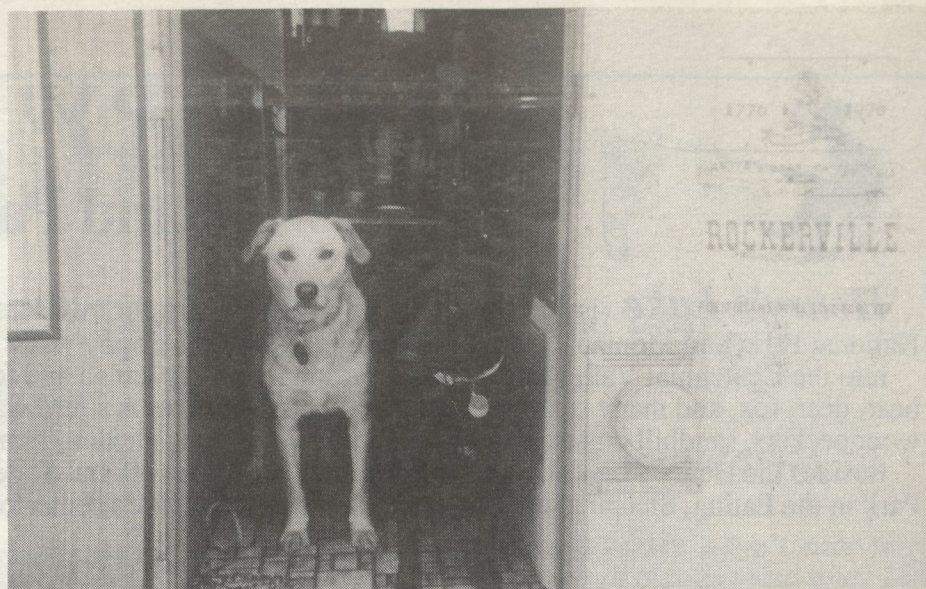
### Sergy speaks at first Historical Society meeting

History buff Sue Sergy, an Island Park resident, spoke at the first meeting of the newly formed Island Park Historical Society in June. The new organization is a non-profit Idaho corporation.

Sergy spoke about the life of Lillian Hackett Culver, a pioneer who lived in the Centennial Valley in the late 1800's and had many friends in the Henry's Lake and West Yellowstone area. Sergy has part of Culver's diary, which includes newspaper clippings of stories Culver, a news correspondent, wrote.

Sergy, also an avid gardener, spoke about domestic plants, including lilacs and honeysuckle bushes, that were planted by the area's pioneers and are still growing strong. Some of these plants were hand carried from the East, and, she said, look quite different from newer varieties.

The Society intends to preserve the history of Island Park, study the feasibility of acquiring and renovating the Sherwood Museum on Henry's Lake, and sponsor historical programs for the public.



Brandy, left, and Maxine, right stand in the doorway of their owner, Mike Usher's camper. Usher is living at the Valley View Grocery Store and R.V. Park this summer, doing R.V. repairs in the Yellowstone area. The dogs are relaxing. Photo by Mike Usher.

Officers are Mary McBroom, president, Sue McKenna, vice president, Marty Terrell, treasurer, and Kay Ridley, secretary. Directors are the officers and Brad and Elizabeth Bengtson, Jane Daniels, Dean Green, Della Smith, and Sherrie Owens.

The next meeting is Tuesday, July 7 at 7 p.m. in the Pond's Lodge pavilion.

## Big Sky Bugle a one woman show

Big Sky resident Suzanne M. Squires has launched a new weekly newspaper, the *Big Sky Bugle*, published every Wednesday during the summer and winter tourist seasons.

Squires does most of the writing, and the typesetting, layout, and distribution herself.

The *Bugle* contains news and features of the Big Sky area, and is given away at businesses in Big Sky, Bozeman, Gallatin Gateway, and West Yellowstone.

The *Bugle* is a welcomed publication in Big Sky, which is inadequately covered by the Bozeman Chronicle and only superficially dealt with by the *Lone Peak Lookout*, a weekly paper published by another Big Sky resident who has for years vocalized a policy of not printing any controversy or hard news, preferring to call his publication "recreation-oriented."

If you have trouble finding a *Bugle*, especially in Big Sky, where someone, apparently concerned it will give the *Lookout* a run for its money, has been spotted throwing it in trash cans (Funny—the same thing has happened to copies of the *Gateway Post!*), call Suzanne at 406-995-2163, and she will get you a copy.

## White Moose sale a bargain lovers dream

Bargain lovers from all over the Yellowstone area are getting ready to spend some money and have a great time at the annual White Moose Sale at Pond's Lodge, a fundraiser for the Island Park Quick Response Unit, Thursday, July 9.

The sale and dinner begin at 5 p.m., the auction at 7 p.m. The dinner, over which people can brag about their purchases, fortify themselves for the auction, and get reacquainted with their neighbors and the summer peo-

ple, costs only \$5.00 per person.

As usual, QRU volunteers have assembled an amazing array of auction and sale items. They have made it known that this is a serious fundraiser—the goal is to raise \$20,000 for needed equipment.

Some auction items include original artwork from well known regional artists, beautiful handmade jewelry, a Franklin wood stove, a wood splitter, an aluminum boat, a wood carving, an Indian blanket, electric ranges, a complete living room set, a typewriter, a trash compactor, Dutch oven dinners, sandblasting services, flower boxes with flowers planted by a professional gardener, 80 gallons of stain, firewood, a VCR, movies, a pass to the Island Park Village Resort clubhouse and golf course, a snowmobile package for two, and a rubber raft.

The Island Park QRU is a group of volunteer trained emergency medical technicians that provide emergency medical assistance to the sick and injured in the Island Park area, including West Yellowstone area residents when a mutual aid agreement is in effect. Funds from this event will help the QRU serve the community better.

## Swan has new owners

Steve Brewster of Pocatello, Idaho, has purchased Swan Cleaners in West Yellowstone. Brewster worked for D & S Electrical Supply for fifteen years.

Brewster and his wife Cheryl have two children and the family loves outdoor recreation.

## Golf in I.P.

The Island Park Men's Golf Club plays each Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. at the Island Park Village Resort golf course. Check in at 8:15.

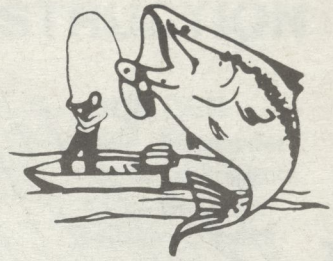
The Island Park Women's Golf Club plays at 9 a.m. on Thursdays, with an 8:45 check-in.

The clubs are open to all area folks, including West Yellowstone. Call golf pro Tom Webb for more information—208-558-7550, or 558-7267.

see Around, page 26

# High Country Comments

by

*Bill Schiess*

Have you ever had a friend who always caught the big ones, or always claimed to have hooked them? That is Wally, Red's best friend.

On Island Park Reservoir one fall morning several years ago the local guys were float tubing on the west end, along with Wally and Red. Wally was the man of the hour, landing fish after fish as the others looked on.

Finally Wally tied into a good rainbow, which ran straight toward him.

"Hey Red," he yelled, "I've got the fish *you've* been fishing for for the past nine years!"

"How big is it?" asked Red.

"At least ten pounds," replied Wally.

"You sure it ain't a sucker?" wondered Red.

"Do suckers jump?" was the response.

Wally continued fighting the fish. Finally, with a run straight at Wally, the fish forced the line to go slack. Wally, being the fine fisherman that he is, was able to catch up.

"I thought you'd lost it," teased Red.

"Would I ever lose a fish you wanted?" Wally teased back.

"You better keep the line tight then," advised Red.

As the fighting of the fish and accompanying bantering proceeded, a large group of fishermen moved in to observe both battles. Wally kept up the talk about the large fish as he fought it for another 20 minutes. The fish never surfaced to be seen by any of the observers.

Wally was using the short leader he and Red usually used while lake fishing and Red finally noticed a pattern in the fight.

Every time Wally would lean back and kick to keep the line tight, the fish would really fight, but when he was not kicking, the rod stayed in a rainbow arch.

Red worked close to Wally to see if he could be of assistance or see what the fish was doing. When he got close to Wally, he could see the Island Park Leech in Wally's fin.

"Break it off," whispered Red. He wanted Wally to save some face, at least.

"Hell, no, I won't break it off. It's the largest fish I've ever had on," shouted Wally.

"Break it off," whispered Red again.

"No, this one is going on *my* wall."

"Break it off," insisted Red. "Your fin is hooked."

"Bull crap, you just want to ...." Wally stopped short as he looked at the bright red fly in one of the fins Wally was wearing on his feet to navigate his tube.

"Oh, crap, why didn't you tell me?" he moaned.

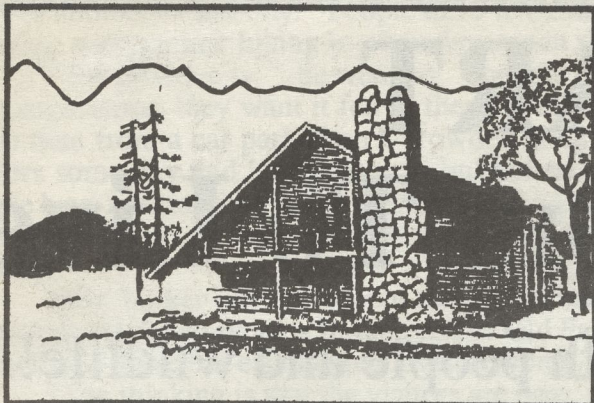
"I did."

Everybody went back to fishing, Wally trying to find a way to crawl out of his tube and drown, and Red staying as far away from his friend as he could as the snickers floated across the water.

*An expert angler and fly tier, Bill is the owner of B.S. Flies on U.S. 20 near Henry's Lake, Island Park Idaho.*

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# Mesa Falls

## Negotiating the rapids of development

by Pat Feldsien and Mary McBroom



This shack was built by John H. Hendricks to meet homestead requirements. Pictured are John H. Hendricks, Asa Hendricks and an unknown person. The foundation for this shack can be seen behind the old hotel at Mesa Falls. Photo courtesy U.S. Forest Service.

It's probably due to luck as much as anything else that the pristine beauty of Upper Mesa Falls on the Henry's Fork is still there for visitors to marvel at. Power companies have had their designs on it since the early 1900s, and only recently has the threat of development been permanently removed with the acquisition of the land around the falls by the U.S. Forest Service.

The land around Upper Mesa Falls was originally homesteaded in 1901 by John H. Hendricks of Marysville. Hendricks negotiated with Snake River Electric Light and Power Co. with the intent to construct a power dam on the site. The project did not materialize, but a hotel was built near the falls about 1907. This hotel, the Big Falls Inn, served tourists traveling to Yellowstone until 1932.

Meanwhile the Snake River Electric company became the

Mesa Power Co. which sold the property to Idaho Transmission Co. in 1935. In 1936 that company in turn sold out to Montana Power and Light Co., which used the old hotel as a company resort into the 1960s. Subsequently the building was used by the Boy Scouts and other groups for meetings and retreats.

In the 1970s Sunlight Development Company, a subsidiary of Montana Power, conducted a feasibility study of the development of the site as a power facility. The study recommended that Montana Power dispose of the property and talks were initiated with the U.S. Forest Service for an exchange in the Lolo National Forest in Montana. The exchange was not consummated because the properties were in two different states.

Finally, in 1986, the Targhee N.F. deeded to Montana Power developed special use areas at Macks Inn, Ponds Lodge and portions of the summer home areas at Flat Rock, Buffalo and North Fork along the Henry's Fork in exchange for the Mesa Falls property. Montana Power subsequently sold the properties to the various tenants.

The uniquely beautiful 114 foot falls, formed as the Henry's Fork drops over the rim of the Island Park Caldera and onto the Snake River Plain, is located along the old Yellowstone Highway between Ashton and Island Park. The road is now Idaho 47 and a Forest Service Scenic Byway. A recently upgraded gravel road leads from the paved road to the top of Upper Mesa Falls where viewers can see and hear the rush and roar of the river as it drops between the moss-covered canyon walls. It plunges another precipitous 65 feet over Lower Mesa Falls about a half-mile downstream.

The upper falls has been the site of several tragedies over the years when visitors have fallen from the sometimes slippery rocks overlooking the falls. Last summer a woman fell from the precipice, landing in the water instead of on the rocks. She clung to a rock in the strong current and was rescued by Fremont County Search and Rescue volunteers who rappelled down the cliff and hoisted her up in a basket. The year previously a mother and child were not so lucky as they posed for a photo on a slippery rock, fell off and were swept to their deaths in the swift current. Such events will be unlikely now as safety railings and walkways are being installed by the Forest Service this summer.

The Forest Service and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation currently have a cooperative program underway to install walkways and viewing platforms at the site to improve safety and provide interpretive signs.

Gene Eyraud, Harriman State Park Manager, said that there is a study underway to assess the possibility of restoring the old hotel as an information center. It is currently off-limits to visitors.

The scenic route turnoff to get to Mesa Falls is located on Highway 20 just north of the Osborne Bridge in Island Park, or through Ashton to Highway 47.

## HAVE A HEART

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### Tips for watching and photographing wildlife

- All of us share the responsibility for our own safety and for that of the animals when we observe and photograph them. It is the responsibility of all photographers to use the proper telephoto lens and to photograph animals, particularly bears, from a safe distance; preferably from the road, a vehicle or an observation area.
- Animals and especially bears, have the potential to respond to human behavior, voice, or stance in an aggressive, dangerous manner. They may interpret a few steps in their direction as threatening behavior and charge without warning to protect their area, food source, or young.
- When photographing or observing animals, always assume the unexpected. A lone bear should be thought of as a sow with cubs that are hidden. A cow moose feeding off the bottom of a pond has her new born calf hidden in the brush, maybe where you are standing. When going around a corner or a rise in a trail, always expect the unexpected. Make your presence known by clapping or talking.



This man and his truck are too close!

Chuck Bartlebaugh photo.

- Use telephoto lenses, spotting scopes, and binoculars. Distance equals safety.
- Observe and photograph from your vehicle, observation area or from established trails.
- Approaching or following animals is often interpreted by the animals as aggressive and threatening behavior.
- Think of the animals' safety as well as your own.

To learn more please contact the Center for Wildlife Information, P.O. Box 885, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303 313-338-2924

**Fly fishing from page twelve**

heat off me sometimes when people would start lining up to ask me questions, and eventually there were more and more people coming in to look for Greg, or Mike, or Annette specifically, but that took time. One day a fellow came in and waited very patiently while I worked my way through some other customers. It was late in the day, and I was just about worn out. Finally I got a minute so I could say, "I'm sorry, I'm just not going to be able to talk to you. Why don't you talk to my daughter?"

"Oh no, I have to talk to you; everybody said I have to talk to Bud Lilly, and I want to get the straight dope."

"But she can help you as well as I can."

"Well, okay, but I'd really rather talk to you than that little girl."

I got busy again and pretty soon he came over and tugged me on the arm, saying, "Gosh, I'm glad I talked to her. She knows a lot more than you do!" I don't know, maybe she did. Annette's disadvantage was that she always looked like she was about fourteen years old, so I had to insist sometimes that "Either you talk to her or you don't talk to anybody." Once they talked to her for a minute, they realized she really did know fly fishing. She was sharp, she listened well, she was a good fisherman, and she was always up-to-date on what was going on in the area fishing. It was a good education for customers, especially the crusty old types who had never taken advice from a woman in their lives. Eventually there were a lot of people who would come in and say, "Where's that little girl? I want to talk to her."

Greg started guiding when he was about sixteen, and at eighteen was doing full time guiding in the summer. In the fall I'd have to go back to Bozeman to teach at the high school, but we'd keep the shop open, with Pat and Greg pretty much running things. Mike was still in high school and Annette in junior high, but Greg was about to start his freshman year of college, so he was able to work later in the shop. I went up to West Yellowstone one weekend and Pat took me aside and said, "You know, Greg is getting awfully tired. He's been carrying a full load, and I think he's coming down with a cold. We'd better give him some time off."

So I found Greg and said, "Greg, you're going to have to take some time off. You've guided for twenty-six days straight without a day off."

"Well," he said, "I'll take a day off if I can go fishing." And that's what he did.

*Bud Lilly no longer owns the Trout Shop, but runs a popular, highly personalized guide service and lectures on fly fishing. He lives in Bozeman with his wife, Esther, a real estate Broker. A Trout's Best Friend is available from Bud; see the order form in this issue.*

**Limit visitors, from page one**

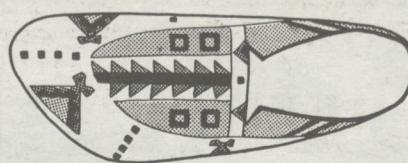
backpacking gear to see Yellowstone as a wilderness," said Iowan Loren Guy, who had just gotten off a backcountry trail after a five day hike, during which he saw only three other people and a grizzly bear. "The roads in Yellowstone lead to one experience—urbanity, and the trails to another—serenity. People have to realize this is true all over America, and get their hiking in when they are in shape."

"The problem is," he went on, "people don't want to work for their experience, they want it fed to them. Yellowstone is prettier in a video than from a car parked on a crowded road. Sure, they will limit visitors some day and I support that, but not so much so it will make people have a better time as for the fact that it will pressure the wild animals and wild plants less, and it is for them that the park should exist anyway."

New Yorker Harvey Brown said that allowing "large scale service-oriented developments in the park at Old Faithful, Canyon, Grant Village, and Lake has encouraged overcrowding."

"The thinking is that the visitors are here, so they need services, but that is why they come here," he asserted. "If they knew they couldn't buy film and gas and hot dogs and souvenirs in the park, they'd get them outside the park. Some would say forget it—that place is too wild, and go on to Vegas. What's wrong with that? And is it a crime to have all this stuff in there with bad roads and traffic jams?"

A major road reconstruction project throughout the park, long overdue because of budget problems, is underway in Yellowstone, and the National Park Service is studying the possibility of limiting the number of winter visitors.



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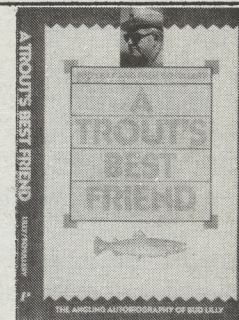
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# Beating Addictions

## Parents teach drinking

by Judy K.

My parents taught me how to drink. For as long as I can remember, they'd begin each evening with a "highball." It had a cherry in it, and crushed ice. It was served in a pretty colored glass, on hand crocheted coasters.

I loved watching Dad crush the ice in a bag with a hammer, and Mom usually gave me her cherry. When I was older, Dad bought an electric ice crusher and let me crush the ice. They drank wine at dinner out of beautiful, delicate glasses that I was not allowed to wash. Sometimes Mom served my milk or juice in such a glass so I could feel "big." My Mom stored all their drinking glasses in a beautiful china cabinet that I was not allowed to dust. She dusted it herself every week, and I can still smell the lemon polish she used on the wood.

After dinner, they had brandy in "snifters," which looked like gold fish bowls.

My parents became very involved with one another when they drank, and completely ignored me as the night went on. My Dad traveled often, and when he was gone my Mom skipped the highballs and brandy and fancy wine glasses and drank wine out of a regular glass.

My hands-on experiences with alcohol began when I was fifteen and my Mom gave me wine to drink with her when Dad was gone. She talked to me about her life, and I felt close to her. Still, she seemed to be talking more to the air than to me—she rarely looked at me or expected me to respond to her.

face, waiting for her to have shots, that pregnant women can have unhealthy children if they drink. I hadn't drunk during my pregnancy only because it made me sick. My doctor had asked me if I drank, and I had said no. He had told me that he was glad I didn't because it was not good for pregnant or nursing women to drink. Now I read the material on drinking mothers, and was relieved that I hadn't hurt my daughter. I felt guilty that I had stopped nursing her at six weeks because I wanted to drink—she cried often at night and my nerves were raw. When I stayed up late feeding her a bottle or rocking her back to sleep, I drank a beer or two.

As I read on, I learned that parents who drink have children who drink. I realized at that moment that my parents were alcoholics—they fit every one of the "criteria" described in the literature, and that my husband and I were alcoholics, too. And, if I didn't do something about this, my daughter would become a drinker. She was probably an alcoholic, but with parental and school guidance and knowledge about alcohol, she could learn what this means and never drink.

This information made me very uncomfortable, and I tried to forget about it. But after that, it seemed that everywhere I went I saw books and television programs and posters on alcoholism. I had realized I was an alcoholic, but I hadn't admitted it.

I never told my husband any of this. I sensed it would make him angry. I stopped drinking but did not tell him. I drank soda and

*They told me I was born nine months "to the minute" after Dad came home.  
I remember the day I realized what that implied.  
I was drunk with Mom on my sixteenth birthday.  
We had a great laugh over that.*

When Dad came home, they would get along for a few days, but then fight again. I can't remember what they fought about—I would leave for my room or a friend's house, and block them out when I was home with them.

Sometimes when they fought on weekends, my Dad would ask me to go to the hardware store with him, but we really drove all over town while he drank beer. When I was around sixteen, he gave me a beer on these excursions and started talking to me about his life, too. Like Mom, he didn't look at me much or seem to notice much if I was listening.

I did listen to some of their stories. They had a very romantic beginning, falling in love before Dad went overseas to fight World War II, Mom back home working in a factory. They always told me I was born nine months "to the minute" after Dad came home. I remember the day I realized what that implied—I was drunk with Mom on my sixteenth birthday. We had a great laugh over that. Shortly after that is when I started to listen more to their fights. They were more frequent, louder, and desperate. My Dad was accusing Mom of having an affair.

It turned out that she was, during the day with a neighbor when I was at school. Dad left. Mom and I lived alone for almost a year and she married the man she was having the affair with, right after he was divorced. He had four kids, and he drank like Mom did—skipped the highballs and brandy and drank wine or beer out of cheap glasses. His wife would drop the kids off at our house every Saturday morning. Mom tried to like them, but they were unruly brats. Mom started drinking as soon as they walked in the door. I thought—why not?

My parents had shown me that drinking makes pain and discomfort go away. I never questioned that—it did. I did not drink during the school week because I had no one to drink with, but on weekends, I hung out with a crowd of older kids from a different neighborhood, and we drank non-stop. My mother accepted this as "normal" teenage behavior, although she warned me that boys would "take advantage" of me if I didn't "hold" by liquor.

My life became like my parents'. I graduated high school and celebrated at a kegger. I went to college part time and worked full time for several years and drank constantly, barely getting the grades I needed to stay in school, and never graduating. I married a nice drinking boy I had met, like I had met all my other dates, in a bar. I drank and fought with him. After we were married six years, we had a baby girl. When she was three months old, I read in a brochure in her doctor's of-

water when he drank wine and beer. For three weeks, he didn't notice. As I became more sober, I began to dislike my husband. When he was drunk, which was every day, after four or five beers, he was repulsive to me—uninteresting, repetitive, boring, and abusive. He verbally abused me constantly, teasing me and bossing me around. When I was drunk, too, I, ignored it or did it back. Sober, I felt as if he was forcing me into being a fifteen year old brat. I wanted more than that. I realized that we had never spent a single day together sober—both of us.

I told him I was sober and wanted to stay that way. He went crazy. It was very threatening to him. I joined AA and AlAnon shortly after that—AA for my addiction and AlAnon because I was married to an alcoholic.

My husband stopped coming home after work. If I wouldn't be his drinking buddy, he'd find a new one. I rarely saw him and we hardly ever spoke. I am thankful for that, because we would have fought and it would have made things worse. I found a job and a new place to live and moved out. I left him a note.

That was 10 years ago. He lives 40 miles away, and we have no contact. He has never had an interest in our daughter. I have never encouraged it because I wouldn't want him to see her unless he was sober.

I have gone several months from time to time without attending an AA meeting, but I have found that it is best to go every week. I have no desire to drink, but often feel moody and depressed, and need the meetings to get back on a positive track.

Both my parents and my stepfather died of alcohol related illnesses. I find myself often sitting alone day dreaming about what it was like to grow up with them, watching them drink and carry on and ignore me. Their drunken, glazed, oblivious-to-reality eyes haunt me. I am terribly depressed at these times, but thankful that I am sober and healthy and able to interact with my daughter.

In AA and AlAnon, I have learned how deep the wounds of alcoholism go, how they never seem to really heal. Thinking that with my daughter, I may have halted a generational disease keeps me going. Even if she does drink, I know I have the knowledge to help her. And if she drinks anyway, I have the knowledge I will need to live with that, too. Life goes on. One day at a time.

Send your stories of struggles with addictions to The Yellowstone Gateway Post, HC 66, Box 67A, Island Park, Idaho 83429.