

# TWIN PEAKS

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## ENCOUNTERS ALONG THE WAY

THERE WAS a time when I wondered why I was always running into someone I didn't like or getting into a situation that especially annoyed me. I found it frustrating and unexplainable that those things I hated most seemed to pursue me and to pop up at totally unexpected moments. It took me a long time to figure it out ... which does not speak well for my intelligence. Nevertheless, I finally saw the light.

I suspect that all of my learned friends will look askance if they read this, but the truth is that a percentage of us are slower to comprehend what is quickly obvious to others. I'm just glad to have some smart friends!

As a reasonably normal sixth grader, I did a bit of talking when I shouldn't; or tried to hide the fact that I was chewing gum in class; passing a note now and then—common activity. The one thing I had a horror of was being *paddled* by the teacher! It was proudly told of my brother that he never received a paddling in school; I dreaded the thought of not measuring up. It became a sort of obsession for me, although I wasn't smart enough to stop the forbidden activities—I thought my safety simply involved not getting caught. On a fateful afternoon when I least expected it, one of my classmates, Louis Cox, who sat two seats behind me across the aisle, whispered a question to me. I turned and shushed him quickly. From her desk in the front of the room, Mrs. Borum drew the dreaded paddle and announced loudly, "Louis and Hugh, step into the hallway, please." Oh Lord! Mrs. Borum's paddling did not rely on pain to be effective; it was the embarrassment that got her message across. I was thankful that I was never asked if I had ever been paddled in school—my parents went to their reward without knowing my shame.

Alas, in those early school days it didn't dawn on me why I always seemed to run into a certain bully whom I despised, and why I had to play so much softball, which I also didn't like.

After reading a ton of books on living versus existing, and after listening to lecture after lecture on what life is all about, the *reality* of why those people and situations that bugged me most kept popping up finally became clear: *I was attracting them to me!*

There is an old adage that says, "Be careful what you wish for, for you will surely get it." Well, I wasn't *wishing* for distasteful things, but I did keep a handy awareness of annoyances just beneath the surface of my conscious perception, and did, in fact, expect people to run red lights, for instance. In other words, I was *dwelling* on the things I hated, and by giving them attention I was attracting them to me. Wiser men than I am tell us that our lives will reflect what we expect to encounter. It took a long time, but I believe it. #

## COUSIN RUBY AND DILL PICKLES

By  
Delores Miller

Ruby Worm, 85, is my late mother's Klingbeil cousin. Frail and petite all her life; outlived her siblings and husband Lee; farmed north of New London on a hardscrabble rocky farm while raising four responsible children and a multitude of grandchildren.

Ruby worked hard; milked cows, raised ducks, geese and chickens and sent her children to church and Christian Day School. To get extra money she worked in the sauerkraut factory and cleaned houses and motels. Respected her elders, always visiting and bringing a fresh loaf of bread, a raw chicken, or garden produce.

Her father died after a runaway horse accident when Ruby was eleven years old. Helped clean the schoolhouse, scrubbing the floor with lye soap. A book of information in her head of who is related to whom; former neighbors; her children's in-laws; how to butcher, make soap and can fruits and vegetables. A large garden until the last few years when her children took over. Strawberries, raspberries, hickory nuts.

At a mutual friend's funeral, I sat and visited with Ruby and her son Billy. Frail as always, in a silk dress, cotton stockings and walking with a cane. Stayed for lunch of ham buns, baked beans, potato salad, jello, cake, cheese and dill pickles. Mentioned how good the pickles were and Ruby said, "Oh, I donated them; I always do for funerals, weddings, baptisms, showers, reunions, confirmations." I said, "Oh, can I have a couple quarts?" She said yes; I went over Sunday afternoon to collect them. Three of her children were there; what respect they have for their mother! I haven't made dill pickles in years; I hope Ruby lives forever so I can go once a year and collect my two quarts.