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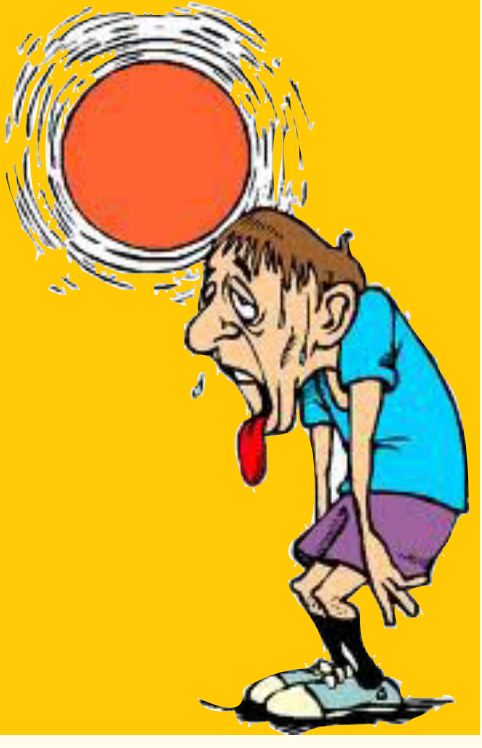

# EDITOR'S NOTE BY DEAN REA

Contributions by two members of my family appear in this issue of *Author's Bazaar.*

A grandaughter, Kelsey, wrote about her experience teaching English in the Republic of Georgia. Later, she toured Europe and spent time with her boyfriend in Kuwait, where daytime summer temperatures top out in the 130-degree range.

Fayetteville, Arkansas, where my brother lives, has been hot — but not that hot. He's a retired University of Arkansas speech professor who goes by the first name of Richard. I knew him as Gail before he went off to the Navy, and everyone began calling him by his first name. To me, however, he's still Gail.

Harold Rantzburg joins us for the first time, telling about his boyhood farm experience with horses. He is related to a couple of our regular contributors, Russell and Delores Miller, retired Wisconsin dairy farmers.

Lee Kirk entertains us with a book collector's yarn, and Sheryl Nelms shares another poem.

Greg McKelvey tops off the cake with another photo essay that recounts a summer trek to several national parks with a grandson.


# Until we meet again

**By Kelsey Rea**

When I arrived at the Tbilisi airport, I was optimistic and freezing in a country that was experiencing one of its coldest winters. What was I doing in the Republic of Georgia, a tiny country squished between Turkey and Russia? I knew that I was going to be an English teacher. I did not know whether I would be in a city or a village, or if I would work with older or younger students.

Now, five months later, I know a lot about this complex and unique country. I guess I'm supposed to say time flies, but really, I feel like my arrival in Georgia was a lifetime

ago. I'm dragging the same heavy bags as when I arrived, but somehow everything feels different.

Georgia was a good experience. A lot of the time it was not an enjoyable experience, but in the end it was good for me. I learned a lot of things and met some interesting people. I have always been more interested in quality than quantity, and the quality of some of the friends I made is truly amazing.

But why, you may ask, did I choose Georgia? The simple answer: I was looking for inspiration. If I had not come to Georgia, I may never have realized that teaching elementary school was the perfect job for me. I have become inspired to travel more and have learned my limits and ways to expand them.

When I left my home, I was halfway through my junior year at the University of Oregon. My life was busy as I took full course loads and worked part-time in the Knight Library and as an English tutor for the American English Institute. Leaving these jobs was easy because I knew I could continue my education, and my employers told me I could return to my jobs.

The more difficult things to leave behind were my loved ones. I would be leaving family, friends and entering into a long-distance relationship with the most amazing man

I have met. I knew that my world would change and that I would be 6,000 miles away changing in totally different ways.

I was heading toward a world of pit toilets and cows. When I arrived at my host family's home, I was sick with food poisoning. I had spent most of the day hanging my head out of a bus window and wondering if the long ride from the capital to the village would ever end.

Weak and shaky, I was given a short tour and then was led through the dark back yard to the outhouse. I then faced the most terrifying toilet I had ever seen. It was simply a hole in the ground with spiders and other insects scurrying away from my flashlight. Lucky for me, I was too sick to care. Later, I adjusted quiet well to a Turkish toilet. I even learned how to shower successfully under a temperamental faucet.

The highlight of my adventures on the homestead occurred when I got to milk a cow. I know this sounds silly, but for me it was a lot of fun and a lot harder than I thought it would be. I lacked the speed for the job. I believe the cow was grateful that my clumsy and inexperienced hands only milked her once.

The language I had to learn is called Georgian. Yes, it is difficult, and no I am not fluent. I learned enough of

the language to get by and enough to be able to tell when people were talking about me. This proved to be useful because I could use key phrases to interrupt the conversation and make people believe that I understood everything they were saying.

I had a twelfth grade student who called me "babiya," which means "grandma." He thought he was clever and could get a laugh from his friends until I grinned and said "Ki babua?" which means "yes grandpa?" The English teacher got the last laugh on this occasion.

I also could eavesdrop on curious people I walked past in the cities. They would say things in their language like "She's Russian" or "She's Turkish," because of my headscarf. I would sometimes grin and reply in Georgian, "No, American."

I loved the transportation system. It was not always comfortable and, thanks to the fast and furious style driving, rarely safe. But it was inexpensive, and I could travel almost anywhere. I also loved that a vast majority of people were willing to stop and go out of their way to help the poor, lost, strangely dressed girl. As a result, I was able to see a fair amount of the major sights in the country.

The thing I loved most about Georgia was the interaction with my students. When I arrived, I did not have a lot

Kelsey Rea appears third from left in the back row with students she taught 6,000 miles from her home in Springfield, Oregon.

of experience with children. I had been a baby sitter for one family whose children were almost always polite, and I had been a camp counselor for a few summers. But when it came to teaching in a classroom, my experience was limited to tutoring college students.

In no way was I prepared for what I faced in Georgia. Before I begin this part of the story, please remember that I only taught in one school in one village. Not all Georgian schools or Georgian teachers are like those that I met. So, do not use my story as a way to generalize about Georgians. Use it as an example of why positive reinforcement and patience work.

I was stationed in the Imereti region of Georgia. The

children at my school were well behaved at first. But over time the low self-esteem, lack of positive encouragement and high level of violence began to show itself in my classroom. I knew something had to be done when I spent more time breaking up fights inside the classroom and in the hallways between classes than I spent teaching. I realized that I would have to do something because the other teachers appeared not to care and the few who did get involved usually ending up hitting the students.

I came to Georgia believing that I would be teaching verbs and nouns and the correct way to form a sentence, but in reality I had a much bigger and more important job to do. I started using methods of positive reinforcement with the students, and within a few weeks I was breaking up one or two fights a week rather than one or two fights an hour.

It was amazing to see how compliments, encouragement and being kind and forgiving when the students made mistakes helped them bloom and grow. The children felt invisible and insignificant most of the time. They needed to feel important and heard. When they experienced this, teaching them was easier, and they retained a lot more of what I was teaching.

If you had asked me a few months ago if I loved Georgia,

I would have avoided the question or, if you were a close friend, would have said "no." Now, the country is like a person with whom you occasionally disagree and may not wish to spend a lot of time together, but still consider as a friend.

My students taught me a lot, and each one touched my heart. They were such impressive individuals and had such a large ability to learn and love. I do not know if the lessons I taught will sink in, but I hope that as the students grow up they will realize that they are important and that what they have to say matters.

God has really taken care of me. I wanted to leave Georgia at times, but I was given the strength to press on. Now, as I leave this country, I am not running from something. Rather, I am completing one chapter and running toward the future, which looks quite bright and exciting.

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# A Bookseller's Confession

**By Lee Kirk**
The Prints & The Paper

My husband Gary is an asset to my book business in more ways than one. He calls himself the "official fetcher and toter" (he is described as "Gofer" on my business card) and is indispensable for such chores as loading and unloading cartons of books, building shelves. Sometimes he even picks up office supplies while he is out and about. He's

also learning how to spot good items in the many shops and selling venues we visit.

He actually enjoys prowling through shops as much as I do although he sometimes grows impatient when he believes I'm spending too much time on an apparent lost cause. This can have its advantages, too.

One day — with my mom also along for the ride — we stopped at a shabby shop on a backcountry road. The old wooden building sagged and leaned, the floors squeaked underfoot and threatened to collapse with each step and the odors of dry rot and mildew permeated the premises. The inventory was obviously the result of many bids on storage units and auction bulk-lot sales. There was a lot of old office furniture, some fixtures, various pieces of used junk hopefully labeled "collectible" and a nook with books and boxes of old paper. The books lay canted and tumbled on shelves, the volumes in such disrepair that you could hear them crying, "help me, help me!" A quick perusal confirmed that nothing of resale value was lurking in the moldering jumble.

Gary and Mom had completed a cursory tour of the rest of the store and had stepped outside, ready to resume our journey.

Gary stuck his head back into the shop and called, "Are

you ready to go?"

But I had found an interesting box of paper stuff on the floor, crammed against the wall under a shelf amidst cartons of old office paper remnants. It consisted of piles of pages torn from old architecture magazines along with some complete trade journals and promotional pieces from construction and supply companies of the 1920s and '30s. Obviously, it had at one time been an architect's reference stash.

Some of it looked interesting, and I started to pull out various journals and brochures. The shop owner looked hopeful.

Gary popped back in and stood at my elbow. "What in the world are you finding in that box of junk?" he asked. "Your mom is ready to leave."

The shop owner looked anxious.

I begged indulgence and continued to dig. Within a few minutes, Gary was back. "Aren't you ready to go, yet?"

I sighed, turned to the shop owner, a bulky woman with gray hair and tired eyes, who now was trembling with nervous desperation.

"What would you take for this whole boxful?" I asked. "I could look through it at home."

Joy warred with appraisal across her features. Finally,

"Ten dollars?" she suggested.

"Fine," I said, scooping the lot back into the carton. Gary snatched it up and staggered a bit (it really was quite full) as he carried it to the car, while I forked over the cash.

Driving down the road once more, Gary asked, "What could possibly be in that box to make it worthwhile dragging home?"

So, I told him a little story.

A psychologist was studying pessimism and optimism as personality characteristics. He had for subjects two young boys, one of whom he had identified as an optimist, the other as a pessimist. He set up a little experiment to test his theory.

He sent the boy he had identified as a pessimist into a room filled with wonderful toys and told the child that he would return for him in an hour. He did the same with the second boy, except that his room was full of horse manure.

When the hour was up, the psychologist checked the first room. The boy sat in the middle of it, the toys untouched.

"Why are you just sitting there?" he asked. "Why haven't you played with these toys?"

"Oh, what's the use!" the boy whined. "They'd probably just break if I played with them."

Then the psychologist opened the door to the room full

of manure. He discovered the second boy madly digging through the mess.

"What are you doing?" the doctor cried.

"Well," said the child, "there must be a pony in here somewhere!"

"So," I told my befuddled husband, "I figure there's a pony in that box."

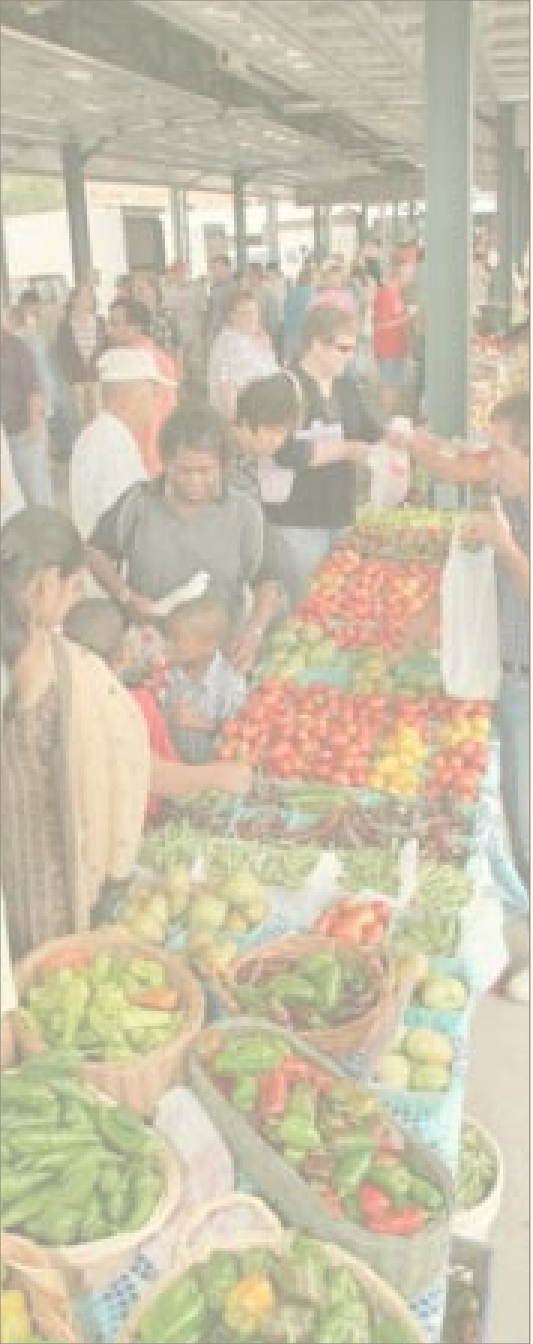
This story has generated a useful signal that we now use on our shopping outings. When Gary sees me looking through an apparently worthless pile of junk he asks, "Looking for the pony?" and if I nod in the affirmative, he wanders off to occupy himself until I'm satisfied.

Was there a pony in the box of paper stuff? It took some research and creative marketing, but over the years I have sold hundreds of dollars worth of stuff from it.

Whenever my spouse gets a little apprehensive about my purchases, I just say, "Remember The Box?" and he whimpers, "I'll never hear the end of The Box, will I?"

Not so long as they have ponies in them, he won't.

Lee Kirk's web site:
**www.tomfolio.com/shop/leekirk**



# Dallas Farmer's Market

By Sheryl L. Nelms

**bulges with mangos**
**and papaya**

**and yellow-meated watermelon**

**surrounded by the florescent**
**froth of**
**pink**

**azaleas**

**bumble bees**
**blitz into**
**the**

**purple**
**perfume**

**of wisteria**

**draped**
**around**

**Rush Hour**

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# Growing up with horses

**by Harold Ratzburg**

I was thinking the other day about how lucky kids are today in being assigned their first chores around the house to help out their parents. Probably that amounts to taking out the garbage or something like that. The chores were a bit different when I was a boy.

My career as a farm kid started back in the 1930s. I was born in 1929 (yeah, I know, that makes me an old geezer of 83 now) and my farm chores began with horses. Dad gave me the job of watering them while he and the hired man did the milking.

That section of the barn where the horse stalls were located did not have water running to it from a water tank in the hay barn above like it did in the cow stall part. So, twice a day someone had to untie the horses from their stalls and lead them to a water tank. In the winter the tank was in the cow barn where Dad cooled the milk after milking the cows, and in the summer, I took them outside to drink from the tank in the barn yard.

What with present day regulations from the government, I believe that my Dad would have been in violation of some child labor law to have this little kid, about eight or nine years old, leading these two big plow horses around in the barn or out side to the water tank. They were big, but gentle, horses named Barney and Colonel, and I never felt afraid of them. I had to learn how to tie the special knot that Dad used to tie them to the manger.

At that time in my life with a kid's imagination, I was determined to make my living as a cowboy someday. In my kid's imagination, they were cowboy ponies. I would sit on

top of Barney in the stall, because he was the gentlest, and pretend that I was out on the range, herding them longhorns on a trail drive to Abilene or Dodge City.

One time I put a piece of leather belt around Barney's body to make an imaginary saddle and forgot to take it off when I finished playing. I sure caught heck for that because the belt had slipped to where it was really tight and constricting around the horse's body.

Somewhere along nine or ten, I was given the chore of feeding the horses by forking the hay into the mangers. This was in addition to feeding and watering the chickens by hauling the feed and water up a hill in buckets to feed them and to fill their water can fountains. As I remember, I didn't really mind because I felt kind of proud that Dad would trust me with such an important job — feeding the horses, NOT the chickens. It was a hard job, and I was less than an ambitious kid as most kids are.

The next move up my farm corporate ladder of success occurred when I had grown bigger and stronger. I was promoted to the position of cleaning the horse barn, which meant removing the horse manure. This job meant forking or shoveling the manure into a wheelbarrow, which was home made by my Grandpa, with a narrow iron wheel, and pushing it out to dump on a pile in the barnyard by

the straw stack. That narrow iron wheel made it difficult to push in the soft barnyard and on the pile. So, we always had to put a board out there so the wheel wouldn't sink into the soft stuff. Doesn't that sound like fun?

Dad used the job of cleaning the horse barn to teach me a valuable life's lesson without saying a word. It was a job that I tended to keep putting off till tomorrow. I remember that one time I kept procrastinating and putting the job off from day to day, and the hind legs of the horses kept getting higher and higher than their front legs. Dad never said a word, until it finally occurred to me that I had better clean the horse barn. What a BIG job it was then and what a pain in the neck. (You will notice that I did not say pain in the "ass," cause this is a family type publication. But I did get the job done and I never let my procrastination cause such a build up again. The lesson learned for a lifetime was to do things now and not keep putting them off.

At that time most all the heavy pulling work on the farm was done by the horses. Dad had an old 1926 Fordson tractor with steel wheels, but as I remember, it was used mostly for powering a pulley that powered the fire wood sawing rig and the silo filler.

The old Fordson was banned on Co. Hwy G going past our farm after the county paved the road sometime in

the 1930s. The steel cleats on the wheels would have torn up the new blacktop roadway. So, traveling with it on the road was a no-no. That left the horses to pull anything that needed hauling to or from distant fields along the road.

The horses pulled the plow, the drag, the hay wagon, the cultivator, the mower, the stone boat and the manure spreader in the summertime and a big sled when the snow was too deep for wheeled equipment. That meant that all the manure from the cows and horses would be loaded on the sled and hauled out to a field and unloaded by hand onto a pile.

It also meant that come springtime, that pile of crap needed to be loaded into the manure spreader by hand to spread on the fields for fertilizer. I missed most of the fun of that job ‘cause I was just too little, and by the time I was big enough to really fork that manure, we got the Ford-Ferguson rubber tired tractor in 1942. The new tractor could handle most everything, even the manure spreader in the snow.

I've got to brag a little because I got pretty good at handling a team of horses by the time the new tractor came along. I started by watering the team in the barn, then by driving them to pull the rope that operated the system that unloaded a load of hay into the haymow with the use of the hay fork that stuck in the pile of hay on the wagon and pulled it up into the hay mow by a system of pulleys and a track under the roof of the barn. (Sounds pretty complicated, doesn't it? It really wasn't, but it is hard to explain on paper.)

I was also a pretty good teamster when it came to handling the horses pulling a wagon or the big sled in the winter. In the summer the team was used to pull a wagon to haul hay or to pick up the grain bundles to haul to the threshing machine with all the loading being done by muscle power of my Dad and hired man or the threshing crew that came along with the threshing machine. (The threshing machine was pulled and powered by a big steel wheeled, wood fired, steam engine, which chugged down the road at a very slow speed. It was fascinating and impressive to a little kid my age.)

In the winter, the team and the big sled would haul manure when necessary and wood branches and logs from the woods on the hill. The branches were piled near the

house area and later cut up for firewood by a wood sawing crew with the old saw rig and then hauled to the woodshed. From the woodshed, the firewood got to the porch and into the house by kid-power and the use of a hand-pulled sled.

The logs acted like a cash crop when Dad sold them off to a saw mill, which then sent a truck to haul them away.

And so folks, such was this little kid's life on the farm powered by horses. All in all, it was good to be a kid when I was a kid. I wonder what kids of today are going to think of their childhood 70 and 80 years from now.

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# Exercise

**By Richard Rea**

Life is such a paradox. During our early life, parents were anxious for us to move around and became excited when we first rolled over, began to crawl and to take our first steps. It does not take long, however, until we hear the "don't" word in connection with these activities. "Don't touch that, don't hit your sister/brother, don't go out in the street." These and other restrictions are directed toward our physical activities.

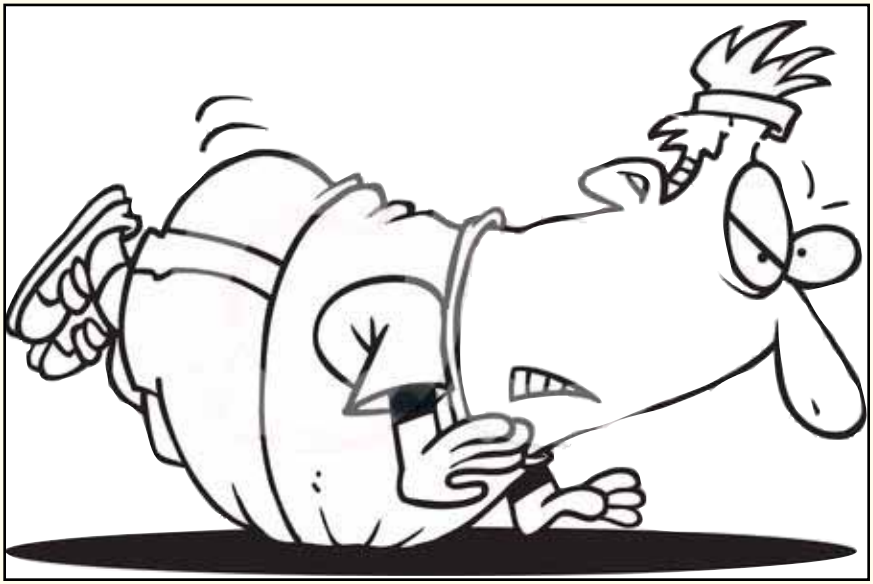
My introduction to school was a continuation of "don't." I wanted to run, jump and do all kinds of crazy physical activities. But, "no," that was not allowed, except at designated times, and then only certain activities were allowed. It seems one's young life is controlled to do certain physical acts at a particular time regardless of what we want or are capable of doing. Oh, how sad.

Now, in my 80s it is just the reverse. I am a real good sit-

ter, my resting skills deserve top grades and my " just doing nothing" would be graded in the top one percent. I read all kinds of materials about why I need to exercise.

For more than 19 years I have worked out about one hour daily at a center whose mission statement reads: "Empower your commitment to a healthier and more productive life." This is good advice and "Gym Etiquette" is published for those who were not taught how to behave early in life.

Etiquette includes wearing appropriate clothing (Never wear tight, too-short shorts or revealing clothes that must



include all spandex materials), avoid excess makeup, don't socialize on the gym floor or equipment (If someone is standing near, they're probably waiting or they're lost) and don't stand between a person and the mirror.

A person should be considerate of others and, if they appear to be camping out near you while you are using a machine, share the machine with them. Do not hog the equipment. I had an opportunity the other day to share a machine with a person, but she did not want to sit on my lap. In any event, she was violating the appropriate clothing concept by wearing ripped spandex short shorts.

I asked some of my exercise companions why they come to exercise. I got a variety of answers, but I believe I can sum them up in five categories: 1. It gives me a reason to get up; 2. My doctor said I should; 3. It makes me feel good; 4. It gives me someone to talk to; and 5. "Use it or lose it."

I can relate to the first reason. Since I retired and have become a widower, it is a reason to get up. Of course there are a lot of other reasons to get up, like I am: hungry, need my coffee, want to go fishing or get involved in some other activity. But to go exercise? Well, that is a way down on my list.

My doctor told me to get more exercise so I can live longer. It seems to me I needed to start exercising a long

time ago when everyone was telling me to sit down and be quiet. Okay. Get up, exercise and live longer — maybe until tomorrow

Exercise will make me feel better. Now, this may be true for some people, but I could not find the words "exercise and feel better" in any non-biased publication. With all the "tis" I have accrued (bursitis, tendonitus, arthritis) and a bout of rheumatism, it makes no sense to believe that hurting one's self by doing pull-ups, sit-ups, bike peddling, walking or any other exercise will make me feel better. (Working out on modified mid-evil dungeon racks and pulleys may make a person feel better mentally, but it has a long way to go over a nice soft feather bed.)

Now we come to the fourth reason to exercise: Gives me someone to talk to. With a little bit of intelligence anyone can go to a cafe, buy a cup of coffee and donuts and strike up a conversation. Of course you may have to put up with subjects such a politics or religion, but you can have selective listening and can answer any of the conversations with subjects you want to talk about — such as sports. I will admit, however, that I have seen exercise colleagues with very active and well-defined jaw muscles.

"Use it or loose it," is a phrase I often hear among those wanting me to join a special exercise program. This phrase

is just not true. When I sit around and do not use it, I do not loose it. IT just settles in my body — usually the middle or rear parts. Watching television is blamed for inactivity. However, in my exercise parlor you will find four very large televisions, each with a different channel trying to get me to buy pills, lawyers who will help me sue for taking defective pills and chefs demonstrating how to make cakes, pies and other fine foods to eat. Today, an anti-acid pill maker sponsored one of these programs.

Personal exercise is a fine thing to do. Most of my life I have been blessed with adequate physical abilities. I find, however, that we spend too much time promoting exercise during the wrong end of a person's life.

I have a solution to the "weight dilemma." We should concentrate on encouraging "heavy" people to grow taller rather than urging them to lose weight to match their height.

Ponder that proposal the next time you do push-ups, pull-ups and sit-ups while excising at the gym.

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# Bring your own shade

**Story and photos by G.E. "Greg" McKelvey**

Each summer, we try to do something with our grandson. This year we combined a visit to Santa Rosa, sandwiched between exploring several national parks. Sally's mom, now 103, resides in Spring Lake Village, not far from where she lived as a girl. Aging, a sometimes cruel process, knits family generations together with stitches of wisdom and youth.

No visit to Santa Rosa is complete without a side trip to Snoopy's Home ice and the Shultz museum. Visiting mom in the morning and afternoon gave us comfort and wonderful memories. Taking 14-year-old Logan to see the museum housing the memories of Charley Brown, Lucy and the Peanuts gang proved to me how timeless these characters are. Sally and I grew up with Peanuts, yet grandson

seems to know as much as we about Shultz and his wisdom/magic.

To get to Santa Rosa, we first spent three nights in Sequoia National Park exploring the easy access to Kings Canyon and Sequoia. The centerpieces are the massive Sequoia trees, one of which is the largest tree on the planet. Not the tallest, which is a Northern California Redwood, but the largest by mass.

General Sherman tree

Trees named Sherman, Grant and a number of Civil War generals offer a glimpse into the history of the park first managed by the U.S. Army. These trees are massive, yet they grow in a wet area but without much soil. The root systems are lateral, not deep.

We scaled the steep steps to Mora rock, browsed the wild flower slopes of Beatle Rock and craned our necks back to

see the tops of these massive trees. Logan, with one of my cameras, learned the art of a tripod and waterfall photography and experimented with super wide-angle lenses and manual settings.

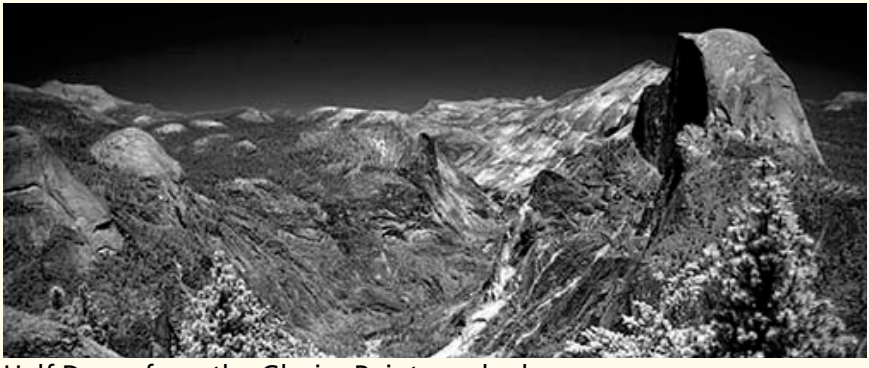
Crystal cave gave us the chance to crawl underground among the stalactites and mites. While we did not see any bear, we did snap the portraits of a few deer, marmots and squirrels. The end of June, hot in the great valley, proved cloudless in the cool mountains. We made plans not to be in the parks on the weekends, hoping the crowds would be somewhat less. We never felt pressured, but make no mistake, there are families from all over the world visiting, hiking, fishing, climbing, camping and driving the national parks during the summer.


California mule deer

Following our emotional visit to Santa Rosa,

we headed back toward Arizona. First stop, three nights/four days in Yosemite. The park has nearly four million visitors a year, and it seemed to me that half of them were there the same time we were. The bus system and well-conceived. We took walks with a photographer from the Ansel Adams gallery to places where he took several of his famous photos. Logan, by this time, is applying his natural talents with his creative eye. The tour guide, a gifted photographer in her own right, found young Logan listening and hanging on her every word.

We gazed over the map during one photo stop at Tenaya Lake to muse where we might end up that night. Our homebound route took us over the pass to pay a quick visit to Mono Lake, California. The tufa formations, fossil evidence of fresh water springs into a saltwater lake, are a unique geologic feature I just had to see.



Half Dome from the Glacier Point overlook

Death Valley sand dunes

Logan noticed that we could go back via Death Valley, the lowest place in North America. Our day took us from nearly 10,000 feet elevation to 282 feet below sea level, from 59 degrees to 119 and from a crowded park to one with few visitors. None spoke English as their first language.

We arrived mid afternoon, not a cloud in the sky and the temperature near 119 degrees. We get to the sand dunes area at Stove Pipe Wells, check in with the ranger in her cool office and start a few quick visits in the park. To be fair, Death Valley has exceptional scenery and unique geologic features; just might be better to see in the spring. The only

Badwater, 282 feet below sea level

shade: our hats.

The truck odometer has registered 2,000 more miles on this trip. We visited four national parks, took thousands of photos, visited Mom, played countless Appletters games, and best of all, spent quality time with our grandson.

Priceless.

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