



Tall Tales from the Editor

Jan's flyer or I can't thank you enough

I never know what I might find in the mailbox besides bills. It was no different 20 years ago when I walked out to our mailbox thinking, "Will there be a court summons, hate mail from one of the many jilted fiancées (before my bride Sioux), or a political announcement from yet another politician informing me that if I vote for them my life will be perfect?"

What I found that day was a flyer announcing that there was to be a 7 pm meeting in a couple of days at the Ruch Library (at that time, it was located in the basement of the Sunshine Plaza) about some Bureau of Land Management (BLM) timber sales. I remember one of them was called Misty Rocks—such a pretty name for a clear-cut.

Now don't get your panties all knotted up. I'm not antilogging. Why, we live in a 95-year-old log house and burn wood for heat. My guitars are made of wood. My shop teacher from the rumored unaccredited Avon High School, Mr. Moore, had a wooden left leg.

Indiana's greatest rock 'n' roll drummer, Marty "Chickslayer" Wilson, practiced his short-lived craft of wood-

lathe art on Mr. Moore's wooden leg when he found it in the shop room closet. For some unknown reason, Mr. Moore was rather ticked off when he saw the lathe work on his leg. Luckily for Chickslayer, Mr. Moore never discovered the identity of our Leonardo da Vinci of the wood lathe, but hey, a drummer needs drumsticks.

Like Chickslayer, I like wood products, but not these large clear-cuts that were being proposed. So I went to the meeting.

The library was standing room only. Leading this meeting was Jan Perttu, who had distributed the flyer. She presented everyone with an overview of the proposed timber sales, which sounded to me like eventually most everything would become a clear-cut here in the Applegate.

Jan asked for volunteers to help her write a response to the BLM environmental assessment. I was among five or six folks who volunteered to meet with Jan after that meeting.

Right off the bat, I knew that Jan was going to be fun to work with. She had an infectious sense of humor, and over the years we shared some great laughs.

After a short while, we decided to form an official group called The Applegate Watershed Conservancy to advocate watershed restoration and a much lighter touch in logging. We put Jan at the helm—she was the perfect skipper with a questionable crew on deck.

A year or so later when the Applegate Partnership was formed, Jan was one of its organizers. It was also Jan who led the development of the Applegate River Watershed Council (ARWC) for the Applegate Partnership.

One of the many projects to come out of ARWC was a newspaper—you know it as the *Applegater*—and I became its editor. Now you know that you can blame it all on Jan's flyer. (Jan discovered that anything over four letters was a challenge for me, so she edited my responses to the BLM environmental assessments.)

Jan's flyer took this unknown rock star down a road he never would have traveled. Besides being editor of the *Applegater* for 18 years now, I served on the Jackson County Natural Resource Committee for seven or eight years. I've met governors, congressmen and senators. I was involved for awhile with the talk radio program, Southern Oregon Forestry Forum. My

columns from the *Applegater* have been published in a book, but, best of all, I've met so many wonderful folks from here in the Applegate that I probably wouldn't have otherwise. That would have been a huge loss for me.

As you can see, Jan's flyer altered my life in a very positive way, and I can never thank her enough.

Sadly, Jan Perttu died this past June at the young age of 62. After an almost decade-long struggle with Alzheimer's, her positive can-do spirit will be greatly missed.

She was a real person who always offered a hand. I never heard her say a

disparaging word about another individual, and it made no difference to her if she or someone else was recognized for the work done by the ARWC.

Jan, thank you for putting that flyer in my mailbox and opening the door that has taken me on countless great adventures.

Until our trails cross again...

Jan's flyer took this unknown rock star down a road he never would have traveled.



The Editor, J.D. Rogers
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