

The Coffee Break

\$1.00

Volume 3, Issue 12

Every last cent goes to the Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire Co.!

Who's Who—"Linda Cunningham" by Bob Cunningham

The last issue! Wow! Time has sure gone quickly over the last three years. Ye Olde Editor would really like to keep going, but she needs a break from "The



Linda Cunningham

Coffee Break"! Now is the time for me to speak up and get even with her by snatching away her anonymity, and making her the feature interview. I hope you'll enjoy reading this, half as much as I have enjoyed, and been privileged, to live part of the story with her.

Linda was born August 24, 1947, in the Adirondack Mountains of New York. Her mom was Jody Lynn from South Dakota, who was married to Roy Beattie, of the Adirondacks. The young couple met in San Diego during the war, where Roy trained as a Marine paratrooper. Soon the young couple married. Linda was born after the war.

Her dad had been in on the fiercest fighting at Iwo Jima, and, although he survived, he was wounded and badly shell shocked. Roy slowly recovered over the next couple of years, while working for the railroad in New York and Vermont. The couple lived near Lake George, NY.

When Linda was two years old, her dad was diagnosed as having malignant melanoma, a type of skin cancer that was invariably fatal at that time. The young family had no money, but Roy was accepted for treatment at Roswell Memorial Hospital, in Buffalo, New York.

Jody and Linda lived close to the hospital in a very small and very humble apartment. It was there that Roy succumbed to his cancer, when Linda was two and a half, leaving Jody and Linda to their own devices, with lots of debts.

Fortunately a young actor, James Whitmore, learned of their plight. He performed in a benefit, organized by local citizens, and raised enough to get them off the hook for the moment. The Salvation Army and students from the local university also helped out.

The two years following her father's death were tumultuous. Linda was bounced between her two sets of grandparents in South Dakota and the Adirondacks, as her mother struggled to survive.

When she was four, her mom resumed contact with her old high school sweetheart, Ken Lienhart. Ken had returned from the war, where he flew B-17's for the Army Air Corps. He had left the service, tried civilian life, and decided he liked the variety and experience that he could find in the military. He re-enlisted, even though he had lost his commission upon discharge. Ken and Jody fell in love again, married, and the new family was off to New Mexico, and then Texas.

Linda really gave her new dad a work out as she adjusted to her new life as an Air Force Brat. Between duty stations in New Mexico and Texas she moved 6 times in only 2 years necessitating many school changes. Just when she figured out how to get to one school the family moved, and she had to learn new directions. Today she can't find her

way out of a paper bag, and feels she owes it all to her military past!

As if moving wasn't enough, a sister and brother were soon added to the family, and Linda was no longer the star attraction.

Linda remembers very fondly, her extended visits to San Diego, where she would spend long periods of time with her grandparents and extended family. She and her cousin would roam the canyons around her grandparent's home, where they built forts, conquered tigers on safari, and visited neighboring planets on home made space ships. They spent a lot of time at the San Diego Zoo, where Linda developed an enduring interest in, and love of, all animals, birds, and plants. She also learned to love wild places, and spent as much time in the canyons, deserts, and mountains around San Diego as possible. This was a passion that she would come back to over and over as she grew and matured.

Throughout all of this time, Linda's mom juggled three kids, several homes in succession, and pursued a degree that she had started fresh out of high school at the University of Nebraska. Jody finally completed her BS in Psychology a few years later in Florida.

Balancing all of this would be enough for anybody. For Jody, it was a special accomplishment, because she suffered continuously throughout Linda's life, from periodic debilitating bouts of mental illness that would have stopped a lesser person dead in her tracks. For Jody the degree was only the beginning. She finally completed her Ph.D. in psy-

chology in San Diego, managed her own successful private counseling practice, and authored and presented several papers in the field.

When Linda was in 5th grade, her family was stationed to Ken's new air base in Japan and then Okinawa. The family spent three and a half years in these two locations. Ken and Jody always preferred to live off base in "local neighborhoods", so that they and their kids could soak up as much local culture and language as possible. It was during their time on Okinawa that Linda discovered boys!

Linda enjoyed living in a real Okinawan neighborhood. She taught the very ambitious local Okinawan kids English, while she learned Japanese from them. At one time she was very good with Japanese. From time to time she will run into Japanese speaking people, and enjoys dusting off her very rusty language skills. She was the hit of the local sushi bar in Orange Co. one Christmas Eve, when she started singing carols in Japanese, and had all of the sushi men joining in bewildered surprise!

When Linda was in 8th grade, the family moved to Victorville, CA on the high Mojave Desert for two years, where Ken served at George AFB. Linda continued a good start in the Girl Scouts that she began as a Brownie in Texas. She also established herself as an excellent student, and began to show real promise as a writer and a public speaker. Always athletic, she focused on competitive swimming for her high school swim team. Throughout all of this time her interest in and love for wildlife and the outdoors continued to grow.

Linda's dad's final assignment was at Homestead Air Force Base in Florida. Linda continued to be a good student, and was very popular. She earned her "Curved Bar", Girl Scouting's highest award at the time. By this time she had become a serious naturalist. She experienced her first real crush at Homestead, with a guy that she says "looked just like Elvis".

Just as she thought she would finish high school there, it was off again, this time to San Diego. Ken had an opportunity to retire, and he took it. Linda's mom went back to San Diego ahead of the family to find a home and start a new job. Ken and the kids followed shortly in the family station wagon, this time with Linda sharing in the driving.

This began a very difficult period of time for Linda. It is never easy to transfer schools in one's junior or senior year, especially clear across the country, away from the military community that she knew, and a boyfriend that looked like Elvis. Jody wanted to give the kids every opportunity, so she picked a home in a very nice neighborhood, where the kids would attend very good local schools. With the exception of one girl in Linda's class, no one had been raised in the military community. Despite Linda's broad experience in a number of places, she was lost!

Linda finished her senior year at Grossmont High as an honor student. She worked in the school cafeteria and helped her grandmother in a neighborhood shop. She continued to pursue her interest in animals and the outdoors and plan for college.

In the fall of '66 she began school at UCLA with a major in psychology. Again, Jody was so anxious for her daughter to succeed that she picked the school, and her daughter's major. Linda didn't like UCLA. She decided to transfer to a college

back in San Diego, and take general education courses, while she figured out what she really wanted to study.

She soon met Bob Eichorn, a young Navy ensign, who was flying F8's, and attending Top Gun school at Miramar. The two soon were married in San Diego. When Bob finished at Miramar they moved to Jacksonville, FL, where Bob joined VF-13 fighter squadron, attached to the carrier USS Shangri La. Linda followed Bob's ship to southern Europe, where she lived and traveled in Italy for several months while Bob completed his first cruise. She learned that she was expecting her son, Bobby, during this cruise.

Linda returned to San Diego, where Bobby was born before her husband returned from sea. Soon the young family relocated to Maryland. During the next few years, Bob was at sea more than he was home. Linda did substitute teaching in Maryland. They then moved to Monterey, CA, where Bob attended the Navy Postgraduate School. While in Monterey, they spent a lot of time together for the first time. The only problem was that as they spent more time together, Linda realized that the marriage wasn't working. She moved back to San Diego, where she enrolled at San Diego State University, and decided to work toward a degree in psychology, after all.

She soon met me. We dated long distance for a year, while she continued to study at State. I was then working for a chemical company in Cleveland, Ohio, better known as the "mistake on the lake". At the end of the year I spent Christmas in San Diego with Linda and Bobby, and I convinced her to move back to Ohio, and marry me! Our friends said that this either proved that I was the world's best salesman, or that she was deaf, dumb, and blind. We still wonder which it was!

We eventually moved to Mission Viejo, CA, where I worked for several chemical companies. Linda managed to raise our son and me, buy, fix up, and sell a series of houses, and managed to complete her BS and her MS degree in psychology at Cal State Fullerton, all while working at a boy's ranch run by the Orange County Probation Department. After she finished her internship, she received her license as a Marriage, Family, and Child Therapist. She started a private practice in Orange County, helping people work out relationship problems, and helping parents with troubled kids.

In her spare time, Linda helped me start the small chemical company that we still run today, and she volunteered with two different wildlife rehabilitation groups, rescuing sick and injured animals and birds, healing them, and releasing them back to the wild. During this time she had several articles published in a wildlife magazine. She also served as the "restraint specialist" for "Friends of the Sea Lions", in charge of restraining baby elephant seals while they received treatment. It seems that she was the only one there who was just the right height that she could sit on the critters to restrain them long enough to medicate them, and then release them just by standing on her tip toes, and letting the 150# creatures scamper out from under her. This practice ended one afternoon when she was bit on the knee by a teen-aged elephant seal.

One afternoon, Linda invited me to join her during a pelican rescue at Dana Point Harbor. The pelicans frequently became fouled with hooks and fish line. The object of the rescue was to zip around the harbor in a small raft, run up along side one



of the line fouled birds, and jump over-board, capturing a double arm load of squawking, flapping, snapping pelican, and wrestling it into a cage for the veterinarian. On this particular afternoon she had company. It seems that Mamie Van Doren (a 1960's celebrity), who lived in Newport, agreed to help the organization publicize the plight of the pelicans by participating in "the great pelican chase". You never saw two dirtier, more disheveled beauties in your life! The two of them wrestled and flopped around in the water, and over the rocks around the break-water, slipping in what pelicans leave behind when frightened and chased by crazy women in wet suits. Mamie's husband caught the entire fracas on video tape for the world to see!

Bobby and I spent many years wondering what sort of beast or fowl would greet us when we walked into the house at night. We lived with young crows getting flight lessons in our kitchen; baby blue jays being fed in the kitchen by their parents, who flew in and out of our windows; and very large great blue herons, vomiting up freshly eaten squid on our entry way tile floor.

When we moved to Mission Viejo it was still a fairly small town, isolated from the rest of Orange County by orange groves and strawberry fields. There were no traffic lights yet, and there were only two story buildings. Despite the fact that it wasn't as crowded as the L.A Basin itself, we still longed for wide open spaces. We spent as much time as possible in the mountains east of San Diego, where Ken and Jody lived in a cabin. We wanted to find somewhere that was still truly natural and beautiful, and where people still behaved like human beings, instead of like rats crowded too tightly in a small cage.

We found Trinity County by accident! A friend sent us to Shasta Lake on vacation. There was a huge drought, and the major lakes were almost dried up. A kindly ranger at a Forest Service information center sent us to Lewiston Lake. One look, and we began a romance with the area that was to result in our eventually buying property in 1992, abandoning the asphalt jungle, and moving here permanently in 1994.

It was Linda's 54th move and, she says, the final one! Since then Linda has continued to work along with me, for our small business. In this capacity she has learned more than she ever wanted about accounting, finance, and personnel management. She runs our office, deals with our customers, works with our accountants, manages the company investments, and over the years she has been the primary personnel manager.

She enjoys hiking in the local mountains any time she can get away. She has been very active in the local fire company as a fire fighter, as an EMT, and as a Firefly. She also likes to bird watch, observe wildlife, and garden in her "spare time", and she has just completed three great years as the founder and editor of this little paper.

When asked what people would be surprised to know about her, she answered, "I was once a surfer girl with a 9 foot board."

On the easy chair in our living room there is a throw pillow with an inscription that pretty well sums it up. "I am a fisherman, and I live here with the catch of my life".

Editors note: Oh, gee, golly!



Ye Olde Editor Working the Phones

Sixty Years!



Lee and Dolly Travers in 1946

Lee and Dolly Travers celebrated 60 years of marriage in October. They met each other when they were both just 16 years old and married when they were 18. Three months after they were married Lee was drafted. The above picture was taken in 1946 on the day Lee arrived home after serving three years in the Army, two of which were served in Europe during WWII. Congratulations Lee and Dolly!



Times Past
"THE BOMBER IN BEAR BASIN"
By Steve Milovich

High up in the Trinity Alps Wilderness, nine miles west of Trinity Center, as the crow flies, lies Bear Basin. It's a beautiful, remote mountain valley, carved out during the glacial periods. Meadows and timber stands dominate the valley floor while craggy rock peaks and ridges tower over the valley like silent sentinels. It's a majestic and serene place to visit. For some it is also a place of infinite sorrow and tragedy.

On the west slope of the basin, near the back end, lie the remains of a U. S. Navy PBJ-1 twin engine bomber. This is the same plane that Jimmy Doolittle flew off the carrier, Hornet, for America's first strike back at Japan. The crash most likely occurred in a storm, sometime during the winter of 1943, 44. PBJ-1, is the Navy designation for the famed Air Force B-25 of World War II.



A crew of five Marines manned the bomber. They were flying in zero visibility conditions. When they flew south into Bear Basin they were doomed, for there would be no escape. The first warning the crew had that they were in imminent danger was when the starboard wing began clipping off tree-tops. The pilots tried to bank away, but it was too late. The bomber pancaked onto the slope, bounced back into the air, then hit again, bouncing into the air a second time. The third time the plane came down, it struck a boulder field and disintegrated, instantly killing the crew. The winter snows soon covered the debris of the PBJ-1, and its crew. When the bomber did not arrive at its destination, the Navy initiated a search of the western mountains, from Washington to California, but never found their lost plane. The months rolled by with no word of the fate of the bomber and its crew.

During the last week of June 1944, after the snow pack had melted, Loren Teitzel, of Trinity Center and Ben Wellock, of Lewiston, rode into Deer Creek Basin and delivered salt to the cattle herd they were tending. They decided to ride over the pass and out through Bear Basin. In Bear Basin they met Neut Owens, who worked for Trinity Farm and Cattle Com-

pany. Neut had ridden into Bear Basin to check the range conditions prior to bringing in their cattle. Neut told them "Junior" Baker (Loren's future brother-in-law) had just discovered the wreckage and was riding out to report the crash to the Forest Service. Loren, who was fourteen at the time, Ben Wellock, and Neut Owens, rode up the mountainside to explore the crash site.

The wreckage of the bomber was strewn across the mountainside. The engines and tires, and the tail section with the rear gunner's turret, were some of the larger parts still intact. Browning .50 caliber machine guns, link-belt ammunition, and personal effects were scattered throughout the wreckage. There was a more gruesome discovery too; the fragmented skeletal remains of the crew, scattered by the crash and later, by wild animals.

Soon thereafter, a Navy detail arrived to recover the marine's remains and the bomber's armament. The remains were placed in sealed aluminum boxes and packed out on a pack-string led by Ed Scott, of Scott's Ranch, which was located two and a half miles south of Old Trinity Center. Back then it was an eighteen mile, one way ride, to Bear Basin, as the trailhead was near Trinity Center. Sadly, the Navy did a very poor job of collecting the crew's remains. Sometime later Loren and "Junior" returned to explore the wreckage. "Junior" found a perfectly good pair of flight boots. He tried one boot on; it was a perfect fit. The other boot already had a "foot". Loren found a wallet that belonged to a marine lieutenant. He mailed the wallet to the lieutenant's widow who lived in South Carolina. For years afterwards he would receive a Christmas card from her every year. Several Trinity Center residents wrote letters of complaint to the Navy about the shoddy recovery of the crew's remains. Eventually the Marines sent a detail and they did a thorough recovery.

Over the years the bomber's wreckage lay scattered across the isolated mountain slope. Many local residents felt the wreckage was a memorial and tribute to the bomber's fallen crew. During the 1970's The Sierra Club, over the protests of several local residents, convinced the U. S. Forest Service the wreckage should be removed. Throughout the summer a camp party of seventy Sierra Club members, aided by a National Guard helicopter packed out all the wreckage that could be moved. Today, only the bomber's Wright-Cyclone 14 cylinder radial engines and a piece of wing remain at the crash site.

Several years ago I became interested in aviation archaeology and attempted to locate the accident reports for the bomber. Through the internet I investigated the records of every B-25 and PBJ-1 that crashed in California during World War II. Two aviation archaeologists assisted me over a period of several months. The crash still remains a mystery to us. The records have been misplaced or perhaps destroyed.

During September, 2000 Dick and Mary Hamilton, Kathy and I made an eighteen mile round trip ride to the crash site.



Dick recalled an engine identification plate with a serial number on one of the engines. Sadly, someone had removed the plate, no doubt for a souvenir. That serial number may have solved the mystery.

I don't really know how to describe it; while at the crash site I felt very strange, like I was standing on hallowed ground. I felt a sadness as I looked about and thought of what the final terrifying seconds must have been like for those five brave marines.



Dick and Mary Hamilton Visit the Crash Site

Town Crier



Christmas Luncheon

This year's Christmas Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, **December 18th** at the Sasquatch at noon. There will be drawings and entertainment by Judy Eaker and the school kids. Of course, Santa will make an appearance. If you've never been to this event, now's the time. It is truly one of the nicest affairs of the year. If you want more information call Wilma Villaloboz at 266-3628

Library Books

1. The Lotus and the Cross - Jesus talks to Buddha.
2. The Thief of Always - In this house of a thousand wishes, everything Harvey ever dreamed of is real.
3. I Spy - Year round challenger.
4. Hard Eight - A Stephanie Plumb mystery
5. Run Jane Run - A Jane Nicholas mystery
6. Red Rabbit - A Tom Clancy novel. He returns to Jack Ryan's early days.

Concealed Weapons Permit Class to be Offered

A class for persons renewing concealed weapons permits or applying for a new permit will take place on Friday, **January 17th 2003** at the Trinity Center Community Church from 6 to 10 PM.

California Penal Code sections 12050 - 12054 mandate that all persons applying for or renewing concealed weapons permits complete such a class. This class satisfies that requirement.

The class is good for a period of two years, which means that anyone whose permit expires between January 2003 and December 2004 can satisfy the legal requirement by taking this class.

There is no charge for the class and no advance registration required. There will be a roster circulated at the class which will go to the Sheriff's Department to serve as attendance documentation. The instructor is Roger Chatterton. He can be reached at 266-3677 after 10AM or via E-mail at trvrc@tds.net.

Do not bring firearms to class.



Fire Call

The Trinity Center Community Services Board held a fabulous dinner at the Sasquatch to recognize those involved with the Trinity Center and Coffee Creek Fire Departments. The food was amazing and everyone really appreciated the efforts of the TC Board and the Sasquatch to make this a really memorable evening



The Chiefs: Dick Hamilton (Trinity Center), Jesse Cox (Lewiston), and Steve Ratzlaff (Coffee Creek)



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Every last cent from the sale of this newsletter
goes to the Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire



A Coffee Creek Firefly
Publication



My Turn

Well folks, this is it. Ye olde editor is, well, old. While I've enjoyed "The Coffee Break" immensely, it's time to move on. Your support and enthusiasm have been just the best. I can't begin to thank those of you who have helped to put this newsletter together every month for the past 3 years.

Barbara Vasconcellos gamely took over the interview section when I'd reached an "interview desperation point". She also wrote a couple of spectacular "Times Past" sections. Speaking of "Times Past", Vi Karrer has contributed enormously to recording some of the history of the area. In this issue Steve Milovich contributes another exceptional effort. Wilma Villalobos has been my "Roving Reporter" in Trinity Center, keeping me in touch with the 14 mile distance between "Coffee Break Headquarters" and the big city. Bill DeWolfe, Roger Chatterton and others have contributed their unique take on life in Trinity County. Then there's the "Unknown Critic", who knows who they are-thanks.

The schools, churches, Lion's Club and so many others kept me informed. To all of you who allowed themselves to be revealed in the "Who's Who" section, you will never know how much I appreciate your candor and wit. Thank you to the "North Lake Loco" for your contributions to the "Did You Know" bubble. I still don't know who you are, but I have my suspicions! My husband has endured endless hours of proofreading, while I fretted over every detail. Despite our best efforts, it seemed that often I would spot some glaring error as the last copy was going through the machine and then agonize over the prospect of some very literate, studious person gasping as they pondered my ability to use the English language.

I am forever grateful to the Fireflies for their sleuthing to find every little tidbit. Then there's a special thanks to Laurene Wright who has handled every subscription since the beginning without complaint.

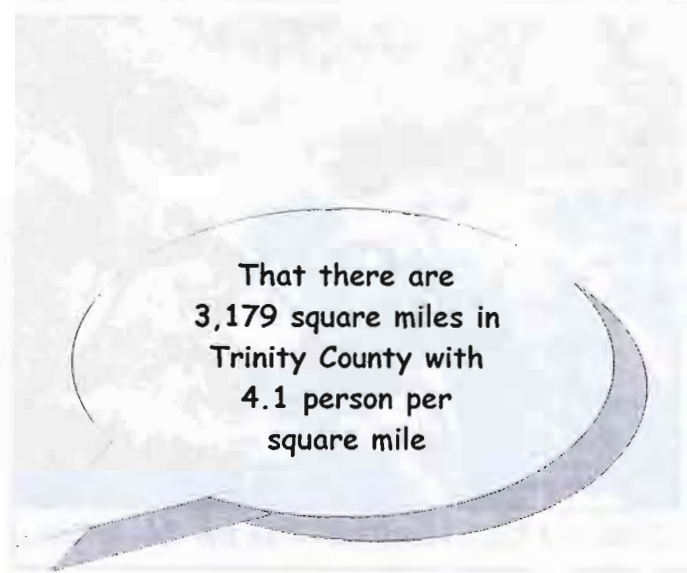
Many, many of you have heaved heavy sighs, as I, one more time, poked my camera in your face for yet another candid picture. Mary Hamilton was always at the ready with an interview suggestion or a nugget of history.

George and Annie Bauman never ceased to amaze me with their thoughtful donation of cases of paper. Thank you so much.

I know that as the last copy of this paper goes through my machine I will think of more of you that I should have mentioned, and I will be mortified that your name was not here. Please forgive me in advance, and know that I appreciate each and every effort many of you have given to help me produce this for our community.

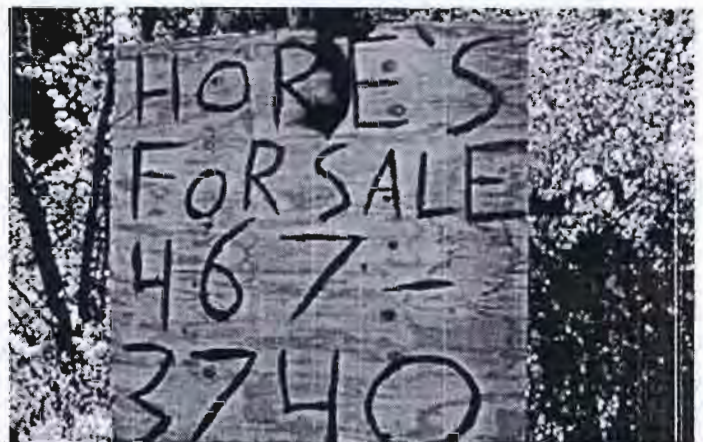
There are tentative plans to compile "Times Past" and interview material in booklets, which at some point will be made available with additional interviews and snatches of history added. Again, it's been a blast and an amazing experience. I'll see you all out and about.....

Ye olde editor



That there are
3,179 square miles in
Trinity County with
4.1 person per
square mile

Did You Know.....?



Sign Found "Over the Hill" in Scott Valley
(fortunately someone added the required "s")

