

Shelter Bay couple use travel trailer as a family time machine

By Bill Reynolds

A modern trend is the vehicle helping drive a Shelter Bay couple's deeply rooted interest in genealogy.

Garry and Zayna Cline, who formerly owned The Seabird Shop candy and ice cream store on First Street, are again living the sweet life, having joined the growing ranks of recreational vehicle enthusiasts traveling America's highways and back roads, often while on the trail of clues related to their family histories.

The Clines, longtime RVers, recently purchased a Jayco travel trailer they use while visiting museums, libraries and locales where their forebears once lived, most recently while touring scenic southwest Montana.

In a way, their RV sojourns represent a Back to the Future lifestyle in retirement.

Prior to moving to the La Conner area in the mid-1980s, Garry Cline worked 14 years at the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum in Maryland. He later served as curator and director at the Anacortes Museum and as executive director of the La Conner Quilt & Textile Museum.

Zayna Cline, like her husband, a University of Maryland alumna, is a career librarian and college student credit evaluator.

Their current road trips meld the Clines' professional training and love of travel.

"It's so interesting," Zayna Cline told the Weekly News, "to see where our ancestors have lived in the past and to be able to visit museums, libraries and sometimes archives to seek out bits and pieces of information regarding our ancestors."

"Plus, besides visiting where ancestors have lived, through DNA testing and sharing fam-

ily research on some of the genealogy websites," she added, "we have gotten acquainted with several living second to distant cousins who have now become friends. So, when we can, we include visits with them on some of our trips and we share information back and forth."

"That has been a very special bonus to the genealogy research," she said.

A special part of the Clines' own history was their time as La Conner merchants. After their arrival here, they purchased One Moore Store from Bud and Lynn Moore, then settled into nearby Shelter Bay.

"We could probably write a book on that," Zayna Cline said of the couple's experience as downtown business owners. "It was a pretty fun time, but literally the hardest work I ever did in my life. It was, overall, such a happy, busy place full of good smells, lots of colors, mostly happy people coming in and out to purchase a treat or restock their supply of favorite candies."

Their customers ranged from a loyal year-round core of locals to summertime tourists hailing from all parts of the world.

After selling the store, the Clines resumed careers related to their pre-Seabird Shop days. Garry Cline returned to museum work. Zayna Cline spent a decade at Everett Community College helping students transfer college and work-related credits to meet their respective academic goals.

Eventually they found time to travel. The Clines started with a Eurovan camper, which allowed them to make two cross-country trips as well as ventures into British Columbia and the Yukon.

Later they bought the Jayco trailer, which is equipped with a bathroom, fridge, microwave and

stove. "Though compact," said Zayna Cline, "it is quite comfortable and convenient for our travel needs."

"We bought the trailer and a vehicle that could pull it," she said. "Thus began a whole new adventure in learning how to safely hook up, drive and maneuver a trailer."

Garry Cline has appreciated how RV life has made possible visits to parks, waterways and hiking areas. He and Zayna are especially fond of Big Sky country.

"My favorite trips," she stressed, "have been to Montana to explore the territory where Garry's ancestors lived. It's a beautiful state and since I've worked on the family genealogy for at least a dozen years now, it's very fascinating to visit these places in person."

She said another highlight has been visits to the Midwest, where relatives on both sides of their family have resided.

"When we finally had the time to do some extended travel," said Zayna Cline, "it definitely allowed us to expand on our interest in history and for me, as a former librarian and information gatherer, it was the perfect extension of my interests."

"We both enjoy family history and exploring the puzzles and connections made through DNA testing," she said. "I love photographing whatever catches my eye locally and actually wherever I go via my trusty digital camera."

While they relish RVing into history, the Clines always look forward to their time back in La Conner.

"Garry and I feel fortunate to live here," Zayna Cline said, "and are especially grateful to the Swinomish Tribe to be able to live in a place like Shelter Bay. You just can't beat La Conner."

Baby, parents, find special meaning in World Heart Day

By Bill Reynolds

The beat goes on – thankfully – for young Nani Luna after surgeons at Seattle Children's Hospital successfully completed a lengthy procedure on the two-month-old baby's aortic valve Sept. 29.

Their timing couldn't have been better.

It was World Heart Day, which each year draws attention to heart illness and its range of associated issues.

On that day doctors closed baby Nani's chest, about 48 hours after she had undergone the Ross Procedure to replace her aortic valve, the main outflow valve between the heart and the body.

Other surgeries loom ahead for Nani, though each is anticipated to be less complex than the Ross Procedure, says her mom, Nakiya Luna.

"We were told Nani will have to go through three more surgeries in her lifetime," she told the Weekly News, "but that number could change depending on how her body reacts to her new heart valve."

Nani was born the afternoon of Aug. 1 at Skagit Valley Hospital, weighing 6 lbs., 11 oz. and measuring 19 inches in the length, the first child of La Conner alumni Nakiya and Budda Luna.

It was shortly after her birth that hospital staff discovered something amiss.

"They heard a murmur in her heart when they were doing vital checks when she was born," said Nakiya Luna. "So, they kept a close

eye on her through the night."

The next morning Nani underwent an echocardiogram, which checks how well the heart's chambers and valves pump blood and it was determined she suffered from severe aortic stenosis.

"In other words," her mom said, "they saw that her aortic valve was small and deformed."

Nani was immediately transferred to Children's Hospital.

"We were there from Aug. 2-5 and during that stay they did a balloon catheter to stretch her aortic valve so they could postpone the Ross Procedure," Nakiya Luna said. "She got the Ross Procedure done on Sept. 27 and they closed her chest on Sept. 29."

The Lunas have been advised that Nani's prognosis is very good.

"The doctors told us that their goal is to allow her to run, play and live as normal of a life as possible while growing up," said Nakiya Luna, who like her husband, was a standout athlete in high school and college.

The couple has further been bolstered by how the local community has rallied around them and Nani. Several thousand dollars have been raised to help with expenses incurred since Nani's birth.

"The community support," said Nakiya Luna, who works at the Swinomish Fitness Center, "has been completely amazing."

"We couldn't be more thankful," she stressed, "that so many people came together to help us through this hard time. We are very blessed."

Skagit County Flood Awareness Week is now

Skagit County's Flood Awareness Week runs through Oct. 15. The county has highlighted flood awareness and prepared for the upcoming flood season in October since the 1970s.

"Skagit Valley is one of the most picturesque and fertile watersheds in Washington," said Commissioner Janicki, chair of the board of commissioners. "But rivers flood. Each year, it's important we connect with the community, and relevant statewide partners, to prepare for the upcoming flood season. That's why we recognize, and host, Flood Awareness Week each year."

Commissioner Ron Wesen said, "Flood Awareness Week brings together the community and its stakeholders to discuss current conditions and get prepared for the flood-fight ahead. In addition to helping our community get prepared each year, official recognition of Flood Awareness Week allows us to keep our FEMA flood insurance rates discounted by 25 percent for Skagit County residents."

Now is the time to get prepared for flood season!

Opportunities for community members to get involved and learn about flood preparedness include two free webinars:

Flood Awareness with the Department of Emergency Management, 6 p.m. Oct. 13. Join via zoom: <https://bit.ly/3uqlmde>

NOAA Weather Spotter Training 6 p.m. Oct. 14. Join via Zoom here: <https://bit.ly/3uE569d>

Puget Sound Energy, Seattle City Light and the National Weather Service have online presentations at skagitcounty.net/flood.

The county's Flood Awareness Week booklet is in this issue of the La Conner Weekly News and the Skagit Valley Herald.

Skagit County offers a variety of alert tools for residents. Sign up for CodeRed Alerts, follow @SkagitGov on Twitter or sign up for news releases to receive key emergency information before, during and after an event.

Information about flooding in Skagit County, and flood preparation resources are at www.skagitcounty.net/flood or 360-416-1400.

Source: Skagit County government



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