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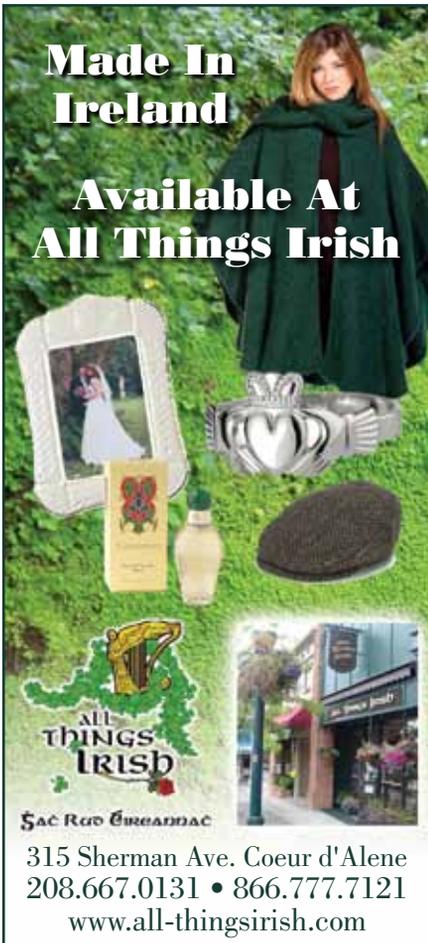
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Editor's Letter



Road Trips and Moths

SOME OF MY BEST MEMORIES from growing up were summer vacations. Not the kind planned by a travel agent, booked at five star hotels in exotic locations and reached via first-class tickets on an airplane. Nope, I'm talking about the good ol' fashioned family vacation in the car.

Meals were packed in a cooler, and my mom would dole out snacks from the front seat. In a quest to be fair and avoid fighting, she would hand them out one at a time. "One Wheat Thin for you, one for you and one for you. Two for you, two for you, two for you. Three..." It annoyed us, and to this day, we still mock (with great love) her attempts to keep us from fighting, insisting if she gave us each a handful of Wheat Thins we would not have protested if one of us got more.

One summer we made our vacation a camping trip, hitting several KOA campgrounds between Spokane and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. We were traveling in a big green and white Chevrolet van with a double bed in the back. My parents stayed in our dome tent, pitched not far from the van, with one of the three of us kids alternating into the tent each night, while the other two slept on the bed in the van.

It was in Deadwood, South Dakota, that there was a bobcat fight under the van. My parents and I were in the tent that night, gently sawing logs under the stars, while my two sisters clung to each other in terror as the van rocked back and forth to the chorus of hissing, screeching and peals of fury from the two bobcats that were attacking each other under the van.

In the morning, large clumps of bobcat fur decorated the ground by the van, the only visible sign of the night's terror. The story became legendary.

On another night of camping, as we prepared for bed, the doors of the van were open, letting in the cool summer breeze, along with several moths that were drawn to the van's overhead light. Giddy with excitement that it was my night to sleep on the bed in the van, I was talking a mile a minute to my sister, Shannon. She was listening patiently to my nonstop chatter when, as I opened my mouth and took a breath, in flew a moth. I was so taken aback, I gasped, and in the process, swallowed the moth. It is a legendary story that gets retold every summer when we are all gathered round a patio table on a warm evening. "Remember when Blythe swallowed the moth?!" is usually followed by rounds of laughter and then by several other stories of summer vacations of yesteryear.

It wasn't so much the places we went on those vacations or the sights we saw; what stands out to me from summer vacations are the memories that were made in the small things: time spent together, camping under the stars, staying up late, laughing and talking.

If you are chomping at the bit to recapture some of the fun of summers-gone-by, there are lots of ways to do so around Spokane and Coeur d'Alene. We have come up with a list of some of our favorite local activities for summer fun on page 68. You will surely find something new to add to your summer repertoire.

For those of you who long for your own summer road trip, one around our great state of Washington may be the perfect way to combine summer fun with a local twist. One person who spends a great deal of time on the road is our Food Editor, Kevin Finch. He takes the idea of a summer road trip and gives it a twist, creating a gastronomic tour of the state, by dishing on some great places to visit and to eat at, starting on page 152.

Whatever you dig into this summer, whether it is a fun new activity, a road trip, discovering someplace new, or getting out to eat across the state, may you take a big, delicious bite out of this summer—and avoid swallowing any moths.

Happy reading!

Blythe