

Bluelight ... to Pucker Huddle

Klickitat writers tell stories years in the making about the county they love

By Jeanie Senior

There is an appreciative audience for the volume that is, first and foremost, Klickitat County's very own book.

"Bluelight to Pucker Huddle, Discovering Klickitat County" was released December 9.

Most of the first 1,000 copies printed were sold within a month.

"Which just amazed me," says retired librarian Teddy Cole, one of those involved with the book from conception through publication, and the project coordinator.

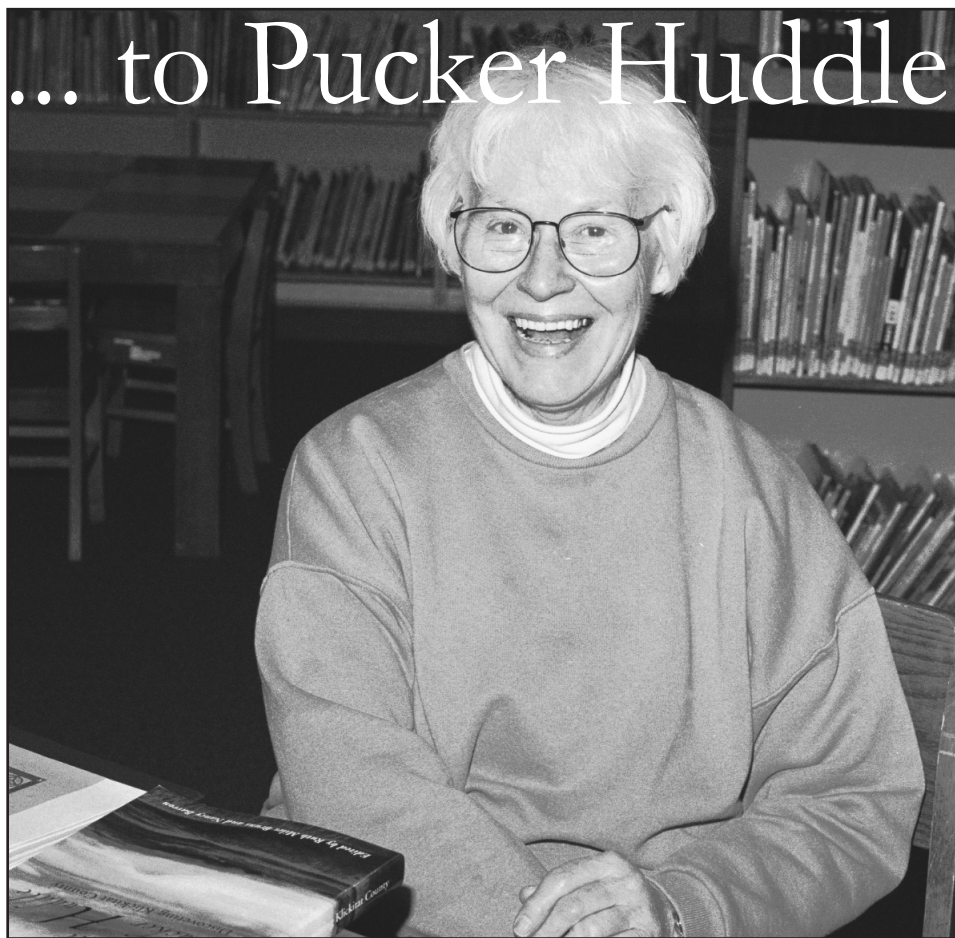
"We were going to order 1,500 copies to begin with, but we didn't have enough money to pay for the order," she says.

Now, those 500 additional copies have been delivered, and about two-thirds are sold.

It is not a profit-making venture.

Teddy says if the Friends of the Goldendale Community Library "can make back what we already paid out, certainly we can do another printing. But we're not doing it to make money. This is just a labor of love."

More than 100 writers and artists contributed to "Bluelight." Some of



Above, Teddy Cole has coordinated the Klickitat County book from conception to publication. Below left, book and story contributors Joan Wilkins Stone, Barbara Patterson and Kathleen Goode celebrate release of the book during a party at the library community room. Below right, Patricia Beaman is pleased to hold the first book sold. Photos below are courtesy of Mary Jean Lord.

them attended one or more of the six writing workshops held at the library last year.

"I was really surprised at some of the people who sat down and wrote a story and sent it in," Teddy says. "They were little gems that I hadn't known anything about."

Edited by Ruth Miles Bruns and Nancy Barron, the book is dedicated to Wilma Segraves Olsen. Wilma, who died in 1997 at the age of 84, was a Wishram native and long-time Goldendale resident whose bequest to the library provided partial funding for the book.

"Her love, generosity and concern for her adopted community have benefited all who live here," the dedication says.

The 355-page volume offers a wide-ranging look at the county—

its people, history, geology, geography, flora and fauna.

The day after the first 500 volumes were fetched from the printer in Bend on December 8, "we had a party so people who had pre-ordered could get their books," Teddy says. "We had a fine time—readings, signings, impromptu piano playing."



The gathering held at the community room at the library “was just a real party, with cake and what have you.”

At one point, Teddy says, Mary Jean Lord looked around the room and said, “Look, everyone’s got their nose in a book!”

Although Teddy says she would have liked to see more stories out of the west end of the county, there are pieces about Trout Lake and Husum, in addition to White Salmon and Bingen.

White Salmon-based historian Keith McCoy, who submitted several stories, “was just wonderful at inspiring people to contribute,” she says. “I’m just sorry he didn’t live to see the final product.”

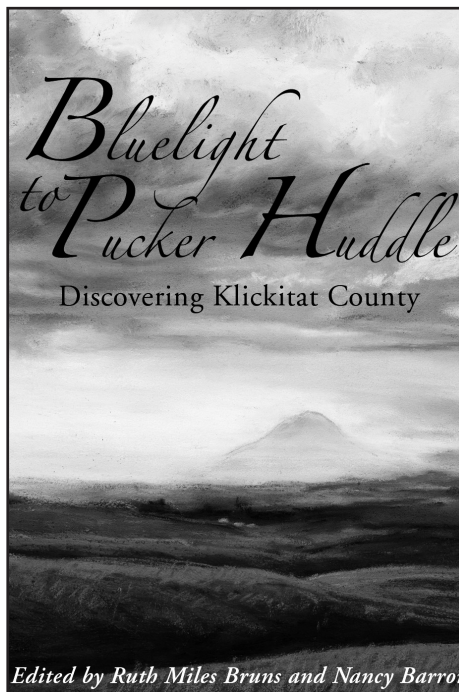
Ponderosa Park co-founder Meg Letterman died shortly after submitting an article about the planned community north of Goldendale.

Mary Jean, a former Klickitat PUD employee, has several pieces in the book, including entries about Bluelight—a long-gone community near Bickleton—and Pucker Huddle, a town west of White Salmon.

Teddy says she was pleased when Mary Anne Enyeart and Joan Wilkins Stone got involved to offer the perspective of “somebody who really knows the area from the roots up.”

Cheryl Williams-Cosner, a Klickitat County native who lives in Eastern Oregon, contributed the pastel painting of the Goldendale valley, which serves as the book’s cover.

“It’s very evocative,” says Teddy,



Writing Workshop and Book Purchasing Information

Wendy Warren, who taught five of the six writing workshops held as the book was in progress, will offer another workshop on how writers can sell their work. It is set for Saturday, March 18, from 9 a.m. to noon, in the library community room.

Bluelight to Pucker Huddle is available by mail for \$12.95, plus \$2.75 for shipping.

Call Teddy Cole at (509) 773-5441 or e-mail her at teddy@-gorge.net. Orders also can be sent to KCAZ c/o Friends of the Goldendale Library, P.O. Box 1009, Goldendale, WA 98620.

The book is available for \$12.95 at the following area locations:

- KC Pharmacy and Clark’s Floral in Goldendale.
- Collage of the Gorge in White Salmon.
- Dickey Farms’ fruit stand in Bingen.
- The Discovery Center and Klindt’s Booksellers in The Dalles. ■

who from the first thought Cheryl should do the cover.

The book is alphabetized—from “Alfalfa Hay in Klickitat Valley” by Mary Anne to “Yellow Bells” by Kathleen Goode to “Zebra—On a Sighting Near Murdock” by Teddy.

The book is intended for browsing, inviting a reader to pick it up and find—for example—Barbara

Patterson’s piece on Sunday drives, including maps; Gladys Hodge’s essay on Klickitat County’s mud and good neighbors; Buzz Ramsey on fishing the Klickitat River Canyon; Sara Wu on Peacock and Hen; and Rachel Gunkel on the historic Meadow Lark Inn at Maryhill.

Teddy moved to Goldendale from Seattle in 1975. She spent 13 years as librarian at Goldendale High School, then as community librarian from 1988 to 1997.

She says overseeing the book “was all that I did for two years. That just consumed all of my time.”

In Teddy’s introduction to “Bluelight,” she writes, “This book holds only a sampling of the stories to be told. For each one published here, a hundred more are waiting to be told. I implore you to write your stories, however lacking in skill you may think you are, however unimportant your stories may seem. You will create an immeasurable legacy. Besides, if we don’t each tell our own story, someone else may—and they might get it all wrong!”

Teddy says the book’s wide margins are there for a purpose.

“Make notes for the revised edition, which will surely be forthcoming whenever an enthusiastic, curious, energetic group gets together and says, ‘We should write a book about Klickitat County,’ ” she says.

“Then you can come forward with this tattered tome in your hand and say, ‘Yes, and I know what you need to put in it!’ ” ■