



Carolyn Hax
Struggling parents don't have to tough it out alone **B3**

STOPPING BY



Top: **Sue Kinion holds a precious souvenir she brought back to McMinnville from the medical mission: A tapa cloth, made from mulberry leaves that are beaten and dried, then painted with traditional Fijian designs.**

Marcus Larson/
News-Register

Right: **Kinion poses with Tom, one of the Fijians she met at the Natuvu Creek Mission. He made the tapa for her to thank her for her kindness.**

Submitted photo

By **STARLA POINTER**
Of the News-Register

On some vacations, Sue Kinion has enjoyed the kind of travel that takes her to a resort catering to her every whim. This year, though, she has jumped at the chance to take a very different kind of trip, one in which she did the work as well as reaping the rewards associated with helping others.

"When I first got there, I thought, 'What am I doing here?'" said the McMinnville woman, who spent a week helping at an isolated medical clinic in Fiji.

She's not a medical professional. She's retired from a 22-year career as a bookkeeper at McMinnville High School.

She's good with people, though, and was willing to do whatever the doctors and nurses asked.

Experiencing the gratitude of the natives, and witnessing the way treatment improved their health, she soon realized the importance of her volunteer work.

"I've done the tourist thing; I've enjoyed it, and I'm sure I'll do it again," Kinion said. "But this was different. This was serving. This was amazing."

She's hoping to return to the same clinic in 2017. And she's anticipating traveling with some of the same people who went on this trip, including her daughter and granddaughter, Jennifer and Ashley Jacobs of Klamath Falls.

"I can't wait to go back," she said.

Kinion, who grew up here, has always loved to travel. Over the years, she's been to many places — Belize, Nepal, the Dominican Republic, Mexico half a dozen times, and Dubai several times, as that's where her sister, Carol, lives.

One summer, she and friend Debbie Winkler, another Mac High employee, set off on a "Thelma and Louise" style road trip across the West. "We just took off," she recalled happily.

See **MISSION**, B2

No resort, just reward

Mission to Fiji a heartwarming experience



GALLERY PLAY

OOO-'Oklahoma!' to open Friday

By **STARLA POINTER**
Of the News-Register

Rodgers & Hammerstein's classic musical, "Oklahoma!," will open Friday, Sept. 4, at Gallery Theater, Second and Ford streets in downtown McMinnville.

Featuring tunes such as "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'," "People Will Say We're in Love," "I'm Just a Gal Who Can't Say No" along with the title song, the show will play at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays through Sept. 26.

Tickets are \$17 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors. On the first Saturday only, tickets will be sold on a two-for-one basis.

Kelly Janssen is directing "Oklahoma!," which tells the story of hardy farmers and cowboys in the Oklahoma Territory in the early 1900s, just before statehood.

"I want audiences to walk away with a smile, having escaped the modern

world," said Janssen, who previously directed "Kaleidoscope" one-acts and Gallery kids' camp productions.

She added, "I want them to revel in the love stories, to appreciate the simple life of hard work and being self-sufficient, and to be proud of where our country came from."

Based on the play "Green Grow the Lilacs," the musical focuses on two would-be couples, **Curly (Lance Nuttman)**, a cowboy who falls for **Laurey (Karen Kumley)**, a farm girl; and **Ado Annie (Ashley Benham-Bertolini)** and **Will Parker (Robert Salberg)**.

Other main characters include Aunt Eller (Pam Harris), the matriach who can command the attention even of the cowboys; and **Jud (Webb Thomas)**, whose nature is as dark as an approaching tornado.

Janssen, a counselor at Grandhaven Elementary School, was in a production



Rockne Roll/News-Register

Curly (Lance Nuttman) and Laurey (Karen Kumley) share a flirtatious moment in "Oklahoma!"

of "Oklahoma!" when she was a high school freshman. She played a dance hall girl in the dream ballet sequence.

It was her first musical. "I fell for Curly and for musical theater," she said.

Janssen's husband, school music teacher **Brian Janssen**, is the vocal director for the show. He also

first encountered "Oklahoma!" in high school, playing in the orchestra for a production.

They've since watched the movie version of "Oklahoma!" multiple times.

"I have an affinity for

See **PLAY**, B4

GREENS & BEANS

Again with the zucchini

OK, I know my last two or three or possibly 50 columns have all been about what to do with all this #!#\$ zucchini, and that you, my poor, lone remaining reader, are probably more than ready for a change of subject.

But I am still up to my ears in zucchini — and now, tomatoes — so, prepare to suffer.

Or to make supper, if you, too, are afflicted, I mean blessed, with cucurbitic abundance.

The menu is zucchini rice casserole, a name that fails to convey the deliciousness of the dish. Naming things is not my strong suit.

But never mind that; just start looking for the rice. This dish is gluten-free, and good for taking to potlucks. Also for using up zucchini. It calls for two cups of raw rice, but I've never been sorry about the amount it makes; usually, I wish it was more.

About the rice seasoning: I use a homemade type of bouillon, called verdure, which is minced vegetables and herbs with salt. However, you could just as well use actual bouillon, or flavorful broth, or just saute some minced onions and other vegetables with the rice, whatever is convenient. Precision cooking is not my thing, either.

Lately in fact, I've been trying to think like my peasant forebears; one cooks with what one has, and if that means modifying recipes to suit the ingredients, so be it.



Nicole Montesano is a vegetarian who likes to eat, cook and garden.

See **ZUCCHINI**, B4



Submitted photos
 Left: Sue Kinion, fifth from left, traveled to the Fijian mission with her daughter Jennifer, granddaughter Ashley and 15 other medical professionals and their offspring.
 Above: Acting as the triage "nurse," Sue Kinion listens to a Fijian woman describe her medical history.

Mission

Continued from B1

She's always encouraged her four daughters to travel as well. In addition to Jennifer, they are Kelly, a nurse at Providence Newberg Medical Center; Kari, a supervisor at A-dec; and Katie, a floral designer at Pollination Flowers. The latter three live in McMinnville.

Jennifer is a critical care nurse who called last year to say she was planning a medical mission to Fiji with other medical professionals from the Northwest.

"Wonderful!" Kinion responded. "It will be the trip of a lifetime."

The mission was spearheaded by Dr. David Panossian, a pulmonary internist from Klamath Falls. A Seventh-day Adventist, Panossian had heard about a need for help at an Adventist clinic in the South Pacific. He asked Jacobs to help coordinate the trip.

Jacobs, 1991 graduate of Mac High, decided to take her daughter Ashley along and let her celebrate her 15th birthday abroad.

Many of the other medical personnel — including a urologist, an ophthalmologist, some general practitioners and several nurses — also brought their children. Like Ashley, most were old enough to be of assistance in some way.

Then, after months of planning, Jacobs called Kinion again.

"We leave in two weeks and there's one slot open," she told her mother. "Do you want to go?"

Kinion didn't hesitate. "Well, yeah!" she said, launching a whirlwind round of packing and preparation.

Like the other travelers, she covered the cost of her airfare, food and essentials. It wasn't cheap, she said, but was worth every dime.

"Very heartwarming," she said. Not only was the volunteer work rewarding, she said, but Fiji was truly beautiful.

Tropical breezes kept the temperature comfortable. Wherever you looked, there were palm trees, volcanic ridges and expanses of clear, blue-green water. Tropical flowers brightened the lush greenery.

The people were wonderful as well, she said. Although they had little, they were happy.

And they were extremely generous with what they did have. In fact, she was warned not to compliment a patient's clothing, because he might literally give her the shirt off his back.

"I just loved the children," Kinion said. "Their innocent eyes, and how brave they were at the clinic."

"They have nothing, and they don't expect to get things. It's really the simple life, and a great life."

The Republic of Fiji lies in a remote part of the South Pacific, 10 hours by air southwest of Los Angeles and three to four hours northeast of New Zealand and Australia. It's made up of two large islands and more than 300 smaller ones.

Kinion and her group flew into Suva, the capital, located on the south coast of the largest island. Then the 14

Northwesterners — another family of four traveled separately — squeezed into a small commuter plane headed north to the island of Taveuni.

Next, they boarded a small boat for a one-hour trip across a large bay. A van took them to their final destination, the Natuvu Creek Mission clinic, founded in 2006 by an ophthalmologist and dentist, Americans Tom and Marta Tooma.

"Bula! Bula!" their hosts called as they emerged from the van.

That means "hello" in Fijian. Since b's in Fijian are pronounced as if they are preceded by "m," it sounds like "Mbula!"

Fijians typically speak English and Hindustani as well, so Kinion said she found it easy to communicate with the people she met.

The Americans arrived at Natuvu Creek Mission on a Saturday.

Adventists consider Saturday the Sabbath, a day of rest and communing with God. That gave them time to relax in their simple, but clean dorm on the second floor of the clinic building before the work began in earnest downstairs.

On Sunday, after the daily church service, they unloaded the supplies and equipment they had brought from the U.S.

Weeks earlier, the group had filled a shipping container with CPR dummies, musical instruments and medical equipment. The shipment was delayed by the longshoreman's union strike on the West Coast, so hadn't arrived yet.

Still, there was plenty to unload. Each of the travelers had lugged along two 70-pound bags with medical equipment, medical supplies and clothing and necessities for clients.

Kinion had brought mostly small toys, craft supplies and items such as combs and toothbrushes. Her dentist donated 400 of the latter.

"One lady told me, 'I'll now be able to see my grandchild.'"

She expected to have time to lead craft activities for the children in the area, but ended up being too busy.

Instead, she donated the craft items to a school she visited on Kioa Island. Each of the 165 students shook her hand and said, "Vinaka!" — "Thank you."

When Kinion and her group opened the clinic Monday morning, patients were lined up outside.

They were dressed for the occasion in their finest clothes. Some had traveled by van, others by motorboat or canoe, and still others by bicycle or foot. Some had been walking for hours or even days.

The Fijians didn't mind waiting, she said, as any alternative medical care would be even farther away.

Kinion was one of the first people the patients met. She was assigned to triage, directing them to the correct waiting rooms and taking blood pressure, weight and other basic information.

She also did glucose tests to check for signs of diabetes. If blood sugar levels seemed high, she said, she sent the patients for additional tests.

She and other volunteers also helped people sort through bins of donated eye glasses, looking for lenses of the right strength.

While she's not a nurse or doctor, Kinion did have some medical knowledge before going on the mission trip. She was starting to study nursing before she took the Mac High job. And, of course, she had two daughters who pursued nursing.

Kinion also has an advantage not shared by everyone. "I'm not squeamish," she said.

Accordingly, a highlight of her trip was watching a cataract surgery, one of several performed that week.

It was miraculous how the simple surgery made patients' vision clear, she said. "One lady told me, 'I'll now be able to see my grandchild,'" she recalled.

The volunteer medical team also dealt with eye lesions and growths called pterygium; many respiratory and urinary problems; skin issues; and an assortment of other ills, such as chickenpox and scabies. The urologist performed two vasectomies, as well.

Over the course of the week, the team treated almost 350 people, from infants in arms to senior citizens.

They rose at 6 a.m., held a morning church service, then opened the clinic's doors. The only breaks were for meals, which included hot soups, freshly caught fish, lentils and tropical fruits.

Coconut was served in multiple forms — salad, cake, roasted, stirred into cookies. Bread was baked fresh daily in the clinic's wood-fired oven.

After lunch, it was back to work.

"We were supposed to finish at 4 in the afternoon, but it usually was 5," she said. "We never turned anyone away," she said, expressing admiration for the nurses, doctors and other volunteers.

There was some free time in the evenings, she said, but most of the people in her group just rested, rather than using the clinic pool or doing anything strenuous.

"We were really tired," she said. "Those were big days." They were emotionally tiring as well as physically taxing, she said.

After a week working in the clinic, Kinion, her daughter, her granddaughter and other travelers remained for a couple days of sight-seeing and snorkeling. They also

stopped for photos at a sign marking the International Date Line.

Back in Oregon, Kinion spent several weeks at her favorite summer job: Driving a combine for the grass seed operation owned by her brother, Alan Sektan.

She started helping with the

harvest four years ago and quickly fell in love with the work.

Buckled into an air-conditioned cab, with the radio on, she loves trolling up and down the fields, watching the wildlife and the ever-changing scenes of nature. It's about as far away, and different from volunteering in a medical clinic in Fiji, but she said both endeavors add to her life.

"You know, I'm really blessed," she said.

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