

Didn't Make it to Wallace

After a few beers at Shakey's Pizza Parlour in Moscow, Idaho, five of us decided to make the trek to Wallace, Idaho, which had legal brothels. Fritz Rennebom was driving the car and we were on a remote road in northern Idaho. It was in the winter, with snowy conditions.

I was in the middle in the back seat and my friend, David Norley, was on the left, next to the door. I may have fallen asleep. The car went off the road and rolled over and I came to, looking down at the creek, where David Norley lay on his back. I looked down and thought, "Gee, there's been an accident. I should help these people"; not realizing that I had been in the accident.

I had a gash on my head that required six stitches when I got back to Pullman. A passing car stopped and an ambulance was called and the three of us were holding David up out of the water in the creek.

Somehow, I got back to Pullman to get my head stitched up. David was taken to Spokane where it was determined that he had a spinal fracture and the loss of the use of his legs. The next week, I visited him at the hospital and we agreed that we were lucky to still be alive.

David eventually came back to Pullman in a wheelchair and finished the last year and a half of his civil engineering degree. That's the last time I saw him.

Curious to know what happened to him after a trip from Edmonton to Seattle, almost thirty years later, my wife and I stopped for gas in Soap Lake, Washington, which was where David was from and I asked the gas attendant if he knew about the Norleys. He brought us a phone book and we called the number and talked to his dad, who invited us up to the family home.

We were greeted by a little guy in his eighties, who welcomed us in for a coffee and a visit. It was a tidy bungalow and he informed us that his wife had passed away eight years ago. He was retired from his business as a refrigeration specialist and was busy carving wonderful wooden kaleidoscopes which decorated the house. He gave us a miniscule carved rooster, which we have today.

He said that David had taken a job with the Bureau of Land Management in Nevada and had married a woman with two children.

As we were having coffee, my wife, Carol, was amazed at the huge cougar pelt (complete with head), looking at us from the top of the couch. Carol exclaimed, "That's the biggest cougar I've ever seen!" He said, "I was out hunting a while back, with one bullet in my rifle, when I felt something was following me. I turned around and saw this cougar hunkered down behind a log and ready to spring. I shot him right through the forehead." It was a delightful afternoon visit.