

# EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

February 6, 2020



**Last Week** President Rod pulled a fast one on me. The one day I show up 10 minutes late (not counting my Thursdays out of town) and the agenda has changed for the first time in 20+ years...leading with the speaker instead of our typical chaos.

**Amy Ouellette** was last week's program, with her classification talk.

"For longer than I can remember, travel has been part of my life." Amy started traveling with her mom, a stewardess (when they were still called that), at a very young age.

Amy's mom grew up in New York, her dad in Kansas. Both worked in the airline industry and met at a job interview.

They dated, married, had a child and move far away ... to Oregon. [isn't it funny how the things we anguish over in our lives can be retold in a single broken sentence?]

During summer months the family would visit extended family in New York, Kansas, California, and Colorado. By plane, train, car, motorhome, truck with camper. The truck and camper would later be augmented with a dog and then a boat.

Holidays were celebrated with three "orphan families," whose blood lived far away.

One of Amy's friend-cousins grew up speaking German and English, "that was so cool." So, as early as possible, Amy started studying foreign language.

She chose Spanish since that was one of two languages available in Aloha's Mt. View Junior High ... and she could already count to ten in Spanish.

For Spring Break one year, her teacher was organizing a week in Paris for her students. Of course Amy wanted to go (if a trip was being planned, she always wanted to go). She asked her parents but the answer as no, she was too young, they said.

The family moved to Newberg in 1977 where Amy started her sophomore year and continued with Spanish and picked up some college prep courses [I went to school with Jay and Amy ... overachievers were like unicorns to me. Mythical, incomprehensible]

Sophomore is OUR year and Amy heard about Rotary's Study Abroad program. Her parents again said no, too young, to what's now known as Youth Exchange. But both Amy and Jay were awarded scholarships by the Noon Club and attended a meeting with the late Ray Simonsen.

Amy has always enjoyed teaching children. She led a reading program in school, was a P.E. Assistant in junior high and did camp counseling in summer. She wanted to teach but couldn't decide between Spanish and math.

Her dad took her to OSU and UO to see which was a better fit. During that process Amy learned about speech language pathology. She wasn't sure what a Speech Path did, but the field sounded great. That there are never enough so you could work anywhere (here or abroad) for schools, hospitals, geriatrics and private practice.

At U of O she studied sign, pathology, audiology, and Spanish. And learned about a language immersion program in Spain. This time, mom and dad said yes.

For this adventure to work she would have to complete classes required for her degree, earn enough practicum hours for student teaching, take enough class hours to graduate, and finish it time to spend her final two terms in Sevilla, Spain.

She was the only one in her cohort to work two summers in Pendelton, do student teaching in the fall, and apply to grad school before leaving for Spain. She says school sounded better than work. [remember what I said about overachievers...]

Excited and exhausted when she arrived in Madrid, she quickly realized that Spain's sky was blue, its grass was green and people were still people. But with years of Spanish classes she had little conversational experience.



Unlike me, however, instead of speaking louder and with wilder hand gestures, she just speaks more slowly to give her listener time to parse what she's trying to say, since nuance is everything.

Amy and Jay met on the school bus when she was 15, they married in 1985.

In 1989 they bought property with a driveway, well, septic ... and a 1972 single-wide that they lived in for ten years. They paid off the property and began building in '96, moving in three years later to a home with no mortgage.

Eddie was 6 weeks old for the mobile home. Ely and Quinn were 8 and 6 years old when they moved in to the new home.

Now, after 20 years with Newberg School District, Amy now works a few days a week at a private speech clinic, does exercise class, visits their granddaughter and plays with the new puppy.

And they are now free to travel during the school year.

The picture above is just before the Blue Tape Award for shortest time in Rod's history for removing a New Member sticker.

And below are our two birthday kids. Last Sunday was Brian's 80th and Casey's 26th.

