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as long as possible. As we age, we all encounter challenges. At some point those challenges exceed our diminishing resources, and we become vulnerable. Fortunately, for most a support system can be established to extend the time they can continue to occupy a place they can call home. With their float, SCAN was honoring the 41 million Americans who help provide home care for some of the elderly.

Jerry and Judy farm up Cherry Valley near West Lima and help Judy's mother,

With their float, SCAN was honoring the 41 million Americans who help provide home care for some of the elderly.

June Prucha, as she negotiates her 90s in her farmhouse home. The Crotsenbergs had their house built 100 yards away and help June with daily and occasional needs. By inviting the Crotsenbergs to participate in the float, SCAN was honoring those distinct rural needs associated with not being able to routinely order in a meal or call a taxi.

The float was of a castle. It represented the concept so important to many aging people: "My home is my castle." A badge on the front of the float read, "Hope's Heroes." That, along with the representatives riding on and walking beside the float, honored those 41 million caregivers.

A problem with floats is they don't float until they're fashioned. Rose Bowl floats are mind-boggling creations. An underlying structure is entirely covered with natural materials. You guessed it—roses are an important component. But there is more. You probably didn't think of strings of small white onions. Then small dark beans form the narrow edges of castle walls and other lines. Fine

Roses

Beyond the Bucket List

By Al Cornell

Before Judy Crotsenberg retired, she told Jerry that upon retirement she wanted to complete a bucket list item. She wanted to go to Pasadena, California, for a Rose Bowl parade. Accordingly, they vacationed in California visiting sites and family members, and taking in the parade.

The thought never crossed their minds that they might return the next year and not be able to watch the parade because they would be in it. It was not until August of 2019 that the idea was

unexpectedly presented to them.

A nephew of Jerry's, who they had visited in Los Angeles, worked for The SCAN Foundation. SCAN was going to have a float in the parade and needed people to represent rural America and the baby boomer generation. With the invitation to be a part of the parade came a mix of excitement and a bit of anxiety. Shortly thereafter, the Crotsenbergs committed to the adventure.

The SCAN Foundation is dedicated to encouraging a society where the oldest generation can continue to occupy their homes comfortably and safely for

silvery leaves cover the badge, and other natural materials compose the script on it. Most of the roses are taken apart, and individual petals are placed to cover areas of the float. Various shades of petals are carefully arranged to fashion what appears to be huge roses.

Glue. Gallons of glue. “Pass the glue, please.” Every bean, every petal, and everything else is glued in place. While Judy was working on another part of the float, Jerry glued thousands of little silvery leaves to the badge. The Crotsenbergs were among hundreds of volunteers who worked in a huge warehouse to construct 20 of the 30-some floats in the parade. Individual volunteers and groups from various community service organizations and churches filled the busy warehouse for a few days.

The Crotsenbergs had a couple days

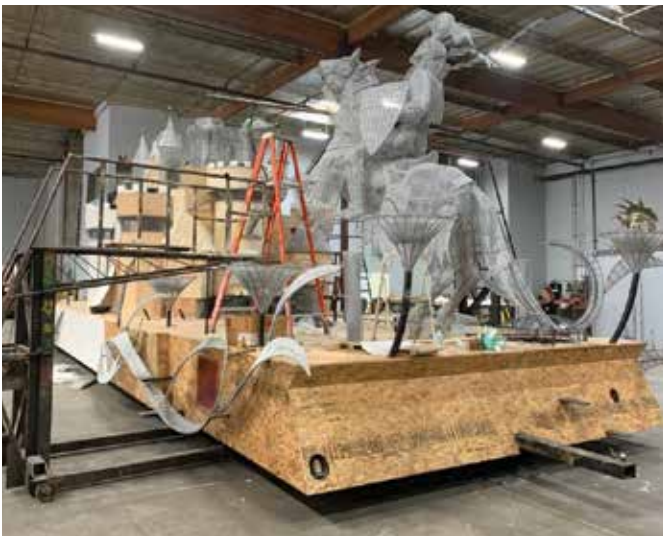
to visit some sites in the area and to experience the frustration of negotiating six-lane metropolitan roadways. But remember, many of those people who race through urban highways every day completely lose it when they experience the tree-canopy covered gravel roads winding through the hill country.

Rising at 3:30 on the morning of January 1, the Crotsenbergs began their preparations for the two-and-a-half-hour ride on the castle float. Then it was smile. Wave. Howler, “Happy New Year!” Jerry enjoyed holding up the thumbs and index fingers to form a W and exposing his Wisconsin T-shirt to the sections of the crowd dressed in red. Those people were very encouraging, responding in kind and adding adrenaline to the joyful venture. When the crowd was mostly Oregon green, many

folks responded by using their hands to form an O. Jerry stressed that it was all good-natured fun, and everyone appeared to be captivated by the parade.

That festive joy flowed over to the game, and though a few players got testy toward the end, neither Judy nor Jerry witnessed anything but jubilation among the fans. They felt that our whole country could benefit from a good dose of the camaraderie and amiable rivalry that was expressed.

When Jerry and Judy had committed themselves to be a part of the float, they had no clue that many others from Wisconsin would be going to the Bowl. Months later, the Rose Bowl teams were selected and the urgency to secure airplane tickets became a reality. There were direct flights from Madison that helped on that front.



The Hope's Heroes float under construction: All natural materials are placed over an underlying structure. Coffee beans provided the detailing on the rose. At right, Jerry and Judy Crotsenberg take their place on the completed float.



When it was over, they flew to Madison and drove home. Nothing else was as comforting about the whole process as paralleling the REC lines up Cherry Valley. Home. Home, a place where we can become very attached and entertain the hope of being able to stay there for a long while. 🏡



Above left: The float along the parade route. Pictures in the badge on the float (left) were made with petals and leaves. Above: Jerry and Judy Crotsenberg back home with Angel.

MY CO-OP

April is National Safe Digging Month

5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Always call 8-1-1 first, because you never know what's below. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:

Source: call811.com

1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before you start.



2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for a response to your request. Affected utilities will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.



3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded by comparing the markers to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. They are your guide for the duration of your project.



5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project.





SPRING BREAKUP

After a long, cold winter, we looked forward to those first warm days in March, when the snow became mushy and little trickles of melt water oozed out from the bottom of the snow piles, indicating that spring was on its way.

The 20-acre field at the northeast corner of our farm had a small gully cut into the side of one of its several hills. Into this gully we dumped stones that we picked from the field over the years. Pa's hope was that the stones would prevent or at least slow down soil erosion on this side hill. And it mostly worked.

The gully was one of my favorite places to visit on a warm late-March day when the snow was melting. As the melt water ran over and around the stones, it made the most wonderful music, a subtle tinkling. It was the music of spring, a sound of joy, as if the entire landscape was celebrating the end of winter.

Spring breakup presented challenges as well. In 1949 we'd had a very snowy winter, and in mid-March the temperature soared into the 70s for a couple days, rapidly melting the snow. And then it rained. The frost had not yet gone out of the ground, so the melt water and rainwater accumulated in all the low places, flooding several of the well-traveled roads. On one section of County Highway A, our main route to Wild Rose, the water was three feet deep—too deep for most cars, but not so deep that it prevented the milk truck from making its daily rounds to pick up farmers' milk. The school bus that toted me to the high school in Wild Rose couldn't make it through the water, though the high school remained open. I didn't want to miss school, so I walked the four and a half miles to Wild Rose.

I had to get up a bit earlier in the morning to make sure my barn chores were done before heading off to school for about an hour's walk.

After several days of warm, rainy weather, winter once more returned, coating all the newly formed ponds with ice and making road travel even more difficult. My Uncle Wilbur was certain his new Ford milk truck had the power to travel through these ice-coated ponds. When he drove onto the ice-covered County A, the ice broke and his truck settled to the bottom of the pond, smashing the grille. Such was the plight of milk haulers in those days.

Warm temperatures finally returned, and the ice melted, the ponds blocking the roadways disappeared, the frost went out of the ground, and the school buses and milk trucks once more made their daily rounds.

Water, whether in the form of snow, ice, or liquid, is not always predictable. And thus spring in the country is never boring. Feelings of joy and despair can be mighty close together during a country spring. [Excerpted from *Never Curse the Rain*, Wisconsin Historical Society Press.]



Go to www.jerryapps.com to learn more about Jerry's work.

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