

# Aspen Miscellaneous

Community page by, for and of the people



COURTESY LINDA ISRAEL

## The Aspen Miscellaneous Best Bear Story competition winner is ...

Congratulations to Snowmass Village resident Ted Grenda, who wrote the best bear story of all 25 people who entered our competition. It's obvious, reading all of these stories, that this has been a busy summer in Aspen for human-bear interactions. For having the most entertaining story, Grenda wins a \$100 gift certificate to Jimmy's Restaurant in Aspen. We're also printing a couple of stories that deserve honorable mention — there's no prize, besides the sheer honor of getting published here on Aspen Miscellaneous. If you have any quirky stories or photos you'd like to share with the community, feel free to send them to Community Editor Naomi Havlen at [nhavlen@aspentimes.com](mailto:nhavlen@aspentimes.com), or drop them by our office — the purple building on Main Street next to the Hotel Jerome. We just might print them.

## The winning bear story

By Ted Grenda

My wife, Janet, has always loved wildlife and especially bears. Her only sight of a bear was in 1980 when we chanced upon a black bear in a small town in the Catskill region of New York state. On Aug. 14 of this year she was fated to have a closer and more intimate relationship with a bear cub in our Snowmass Village home.

We were both sleeping soundly on that date when I was awakened by a loud sound coming from our living room. I jumped out of bed, still in my birthday suit, and walked into the living room to find a young bear cub on the window seat, desperately looking for an exit. I'm sure my bare-assed entrance made the cub more startled at my appearance than I was at its presence. I was, however, more concerned with the likelihood that the mother was nearby. I walked into the kitchen and found a broken window, broken glass, scattered food and the mother gone. Mom apparently had another cub outside and had exited the kitchen after supplying that cub with selected items from our refrigerator and pantry.

Given the absence of the mother, I turned my mind to the task of getting rid of the cub. I opened the door to our deck, which was to my right, and attempted to move the cub in the direction of the door only to have the wind blow the door closed. This happened three times. I then decided to prop the door open with a flower pot and as I did, the cub scooted to my left, into the hallway and into our bedroom. My wife was still asleep. My hope was that I could get the cub out without awakening her.

It was, however, obvious that the cub was even more anxious to get out than I was to have it leave. The most obvious exit from our bedroom was through a sliding door to a deck that was one story above ground. That was hardly an appropriate exit for our cub. Somehow I had to get the cub into the hallway and have him exit via the front door. I was fearful that the cub would cross the bed and frighten my wife. Instead I said, "Janet, wake up — there is a bear in the bedroom!" She awoke and sat up. This caused the cub to avoid the bed and to rush past me into the hall and find freedom.

Janet with great equanimity looked at me and said, "I wish I could have had a better look at the bear." I replied, "I will assure you that all future bear evacuations will become your responsibility."

## Honorable mention for a rhyming bear tale "Too much to bear"

By Bill Wiener

Out in the yard, it was right before dawn.  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a fawn.  
I was nestled at home, all snug in my bed,  
While visions of Aspen still danced in my head.

When out on the hill there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the blinds and cranked up the sash.

When, what to my sleepy old eyes should appear,  
But a scattering of trash, and a big fat black bear.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot;  
And appeared to be covered with heavy dark soot.

A bundle of trash he had flung on his back  
And looked like a peddler just toting his pack.  
The bag full of trash, he held tight in his teeth  
And the dust it encircled his head like a wreath.

He made not a sound, but went straight to his work;  
Attacking the Dumpster, which he pulled with a jerk.  
Defeated, he sat with his paw to his nose;  
This big ball of fur, in an awesome bear pose.

He sprang to his feet, and gave a big grunt;  
And away he flew, like the ball from a punt.  
But I heard him exclaim, as he ran out of sight,  
"So long my old friend, you might see me tonight."

## Honorable mention for an unbelievable story

By Bartlett

Early one morning in the West End, my little dog started a low growl at the window. I looked out and leaning against the fence was my neighbor's bike with a bear mounted on the seat, gripping the handlebars, with a very determined look on his face! He looked just like an escapee from the circus. Of course, my camera was in the car; but, when no one believed me, I inspected the seat and handlebar pads, and sure enough the claw marks are there still!

### Aspen Miscellaneous — by, for and of the people ...

We're looking for images and words that capture the spirit of Aspen and the Roaring Fork Valley. This can include kids' achievements and adult achievements, a recap or photo of an interesting event or project, a historical tale that has relevance now or even just a quirky tidbit that people might like to read. Drop off your photos, writings and other submissions to The Aspen Times (the purple building on Main Street) or e-mail [nhavlen@aspentimes.com](mailto:nhavlen@aspentimes.com)