



Village Life

HDV Member Profile - Leila Thompson

As a kid in California, Leila took skiing lessons through the local parks department. The parks crew would pack ice on a hillside with an ocean view. The budding skiers would trudge to the top, then head down hill, focusing first on just turning left; the next run down, on turning right. At the end of the term, the kids traveled to a real ski resort where they could turn left or right willy-nilly.

My bet is none of the other youngsters went on to embrace the great outdoors to the extent Leila has. For the past 40 years she has mastered skiing, rock climbing, white-water rafting, hiking and most recently, pickleball. But by "mastering," do not think sideline "dabbling." She's made a career of it. Leila has been a ski instructor and ski patroller, white-water river guide, mountaineer and hiking guide. Early on she focused on corporate team building in challenging outdoor pursuits. Frosting the cake, somehow along the way, she also became a registered cardiac nurse.

In 1989 Leila stopped in Bend while moving from the East Coast back to Oregon. She never left. In the early 1990s she started leading trips for Wilderness Travel to Nepal, India, Tibet, Republic of Georgia, Canada and Europe. Two artificial knee replacements later, she's still going strong and now also leads trips for her own company, High Routes. Hiking aficionados know the term "high routes" doesn't refer to ambling along the Deschutes River Trail.

The COVID lockdown gave Leila and her husband Sean Morrissey, who travels as much as she does thanks to his roles as both an outdoor adventure guide and a film industry rigger, a chance to relish each other's company for 18 quiet months. But now they're both back at it. This year Leila will rack up five guide trips: three to the Dolomites, one to Sardinia and a fifth, a solar eclipse cruise in Antarctica.

Asked about her most favorite place, Leila doesn't hesitate to answer: "It's where I am. I'm happy wherever I am." Read the reviews of her guided adventures and you'll be impressed by her physical prowess, cultural awareness and sense of adventure but even more so by how this affable woman exudes positive energy and fun. She shares: "One of the most wonderful things about guiding for me is starting a trip with a group of strangers and finishing with a group of friends."

Deb Goodall

My Oh My, It's a Pie!

It is the season for HDV members to enjoy pies. Thank you Irene Nuzzo and the Good Time Team for making it possible with generous support from Big Ed's Bakery. And, to the Driver Team for delivering the pies to your front doors.



For Me?

Tom and Deb Goodall loading pies for delivery into the back of their car, much to the delight of their dog, Finn. We can only assume that the pies made it intact to the HDV members on their list.

Exploring the World

Many HDV members are well traveled and have passport stamps that attest to their far-flung adventures. The Covid pandemic has all but eliminated international travel.

We can, however, visit the far corners of the world via the Internet. Here is a visit to rural Azerbaijan and a middle-aged couple living mostly off the grid. They grow or raise most of what they eat on their farm.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is located at the boundary of Eastern Europe and Western Asia. It is a part of the South Caucasus region, and is bounded by the Caspian Sea to the east, Russia to the north, Georgia to the northwest, Armenia and Turkey to the west, and Iran to the south.

In this video they prepare a meal from scratch, outdoors during the winter. She does all of the cooking while he is in charge of cutting wood, starting cooking fires, and brewing exotic tea. There is some irony that they live a traditional and simple life while at the same time sharing that experience with the world via video blogs on line. Enjoy this glimpse into an Azerbaijani country life experience.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gq1DFcl67x4>

Music Corner



This month's musical selection from Georgia keeps us in the same region of the world. Here are three delightful young ladies that perform as Trio Mandili. Unless you understand Georgian, you will have to be content enjoying their singing and infectious personalities.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD5_I-IS6uk

From the President's Desk - Taking Pride in Our Village

Although the impact of COVID on our village has been undeniable, many members have been very active and fulfilling our mission. We haven't been able to interact in large groups but there are many things to be proud of as a member of High Desert Village.

- The **Com-Tech Team** is actively assisting members with technology needs over the phone and on Zoom. The team has diligently worked on our website, our platform and plans for the future.
- The **Drivers Team** is preparing to safely resume driving tasks and were happy to deliver our holiday celebration pies last week.
- The **Good Time Team** creatively planned for procurement of our holiday pies and other treats, supporting three local businesses in the process. The GT Team also coordinates TED talk discussions and zoom meetings for our members.
- The **Handyman Team** continues to respond to service requests within COVID guidelines and is awaiting member requests.
- Members continue to compile and publish our monthly newsletter.
- The **Health Advocacy Team** has been very active with multiple members, problem solving issues and coordinating service needs. A grateful member said "HDV shines in this area."
- Dispatch continues to monitor the HDV phone 24/7 and sends requests to the appropriate teams.
- Behind the scenes we have two members who are consultants to the board, a member who produces our stationary cards and another who writes and mails the cards.
- The **Helping Hands Team** has continued preparing and delivering meals on a regular basis to members with needs. The team is providing companionship and problem-solving household needs during this restrictive time.
- Our board ensures we are compliant with our requirements as a nonprofit, guides us on fulfilling our mission and connects us with the national organization as needed.

If you are new and want more engagement in the Village, please contact me. Get to know your fellow villagers at the Village zoom gatherings. The next one is Monday, November 22 at 5 PM. See the HDV calendar online to register. It'll be fun. Know that when we can resume gathering in person and fully open all of our service teams High Desert Village is ready to rock.

Pam DiDente

To Your Health

Benefits of Gratitude

We hear a lot about gratitude, especially in November with the Thanksgiving holiday. Being thankful is an accessible and extremely beneficial practice for our health and well-being.

The research on gratitude is extensive. For example, gratitude has been shown to strengthen our immune system and protect our cardiovascular system. It can also help us recover from loss and trauma. When one is thankful, our perception of the world becomes broader and we are often able to see positive opportunities in the present and the future. When maintaining a thankful attitude we appreciate what we have instead of reaching for something new in the hopes that it will make us happier. By expressing gratitude through writing or mentally creating a short list of blessings we can create an inner sense of peacefulness. Doing this type of gratitude practice at night can support a restful sleep as well.

How can we cultivate gratitude when we are overwhelmed with personal or world suffering? One simple way to identify our blessings is to connect to our senses. Take pleasure in a beautiful sight, savor a special food, sip a refreshing glass of water, smell a wonderful soup, touch a soft material, or enjoy the movement of your own body. Maybe you can reflect on some special memories like seeing a child's smile, hearing a friend's laughter, recalling a poem that you love, or enjoying a book you are reading.

Give yourself permission to fully absorb gratitude. Say your thankfulness out loud. Close your eyes and embody the full experience of being thankful. The practice of gratitude helps us to hold our burdens more lightly. We can have more balance to our lives. Practice gratitude every day and indeed you will be blessed.

Wendy Howard

TED Talk Changes to Strengthen HDV Community

HDV wants to make our community experiences as popular, connecting and relevant as possible. In that spirit we are altering the format of our **TED Talk discussions with Alan Hilles**. It will be a more inclusive opportunity to connect with each other and promote community spirit through strengthening our bond. We will get to know each other better by sharing our unique strengths and experiences.

Recently I came across a presentation that stated, "Home is not necessarily a place or a what, but more powerfully a who." We are a group of "who's" who can combine our talents and compassion with each other in order to form a HDV home.

We hope you will join us for our next ZOOM group meeting on **November 22nd at 5 p.m.** Come with a glass of wine, or beer, or coffee to celebrate and toast to our community "home".

Please join us by registering at the HDV website either under the Events section or the Calendar section. See you soon!

Alan Hilles

High Desert Village Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 16 - 4 p.m.
Via Zoom