



KEVIN AND HIS GIRLS ALL SMILE WHEN THE FISHING IS GOOD

A Day at the Lake With Donna G. Paul

July 16, 2012

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: BOOK & FAMILY NEWS

Everyone's all smiles

Cottage and Cabin Happenings

Reservations for Granger Cottage and Carter Cabin have kept me busy this summer. I always enjoy meeting our guests and hearing about their time at Lake O' the Pines. Many come to relive times spent here in their youth; others come for the first time to create memories for their children.

Guestbook Remarks

(Somehow Vegas ends up in most entries)

- ✚ *What a way to unwind from our busy schedules!. We had a wonderful time swimming, playing games & just talking.-*
- ✚ *Just the perfect blend of "cozy, warm & comfortable!" It would not have been the same without our wonderful hostess Vegas. We were instant friends! We'll be back soon and look forward to meeting you next time.*
- ✚ *I loved this stay here and I want to come back soon. But I want to come back to see Vegas...I'm hugging her right now while I write this. I'll miss*

Sadie too. Don't forget me Vegas and Sadie. I loved it when Vegas spent the night...

- ✚ *Your cottage is a slice of heaven.*
- ✚ *We had an unforgettable time at Granger Cottage. Vegas and Danny were very welcoming and our dog had a great time chasing them along the shore. We enjoyed our long walks on the beach and sitting on the deck at night listening to the wind through the treetops. ...it is here that we got engaged!*
- ✚ *Vegas greeted us when we arrived – slept next to our bed w/o moving all night, alerted us to deer passing by, and was the best hostess ever. Thank you Donna for sharing your story.*



Danny, Vegas and Alice

This column continued on page two



Donna's Book

With much appreciation for those who encouraged me, after six years of learning how to put my story in a book, *A Song in Every Silence* arrived from my publisher.

www.donnagpaul.com

What's in the Works?

I moved from sharing office space with my sweetie to a beautiful new office. Neighbors Dave and Michael added a wall, door, new windows, cabinets, and shelves to our screened porch. Martha Stewart provided a color scheme, God provided a view, and my imagination provides the rest.

Family Ties

From the delivery room to a race for the White House, it's been a busy, wondrous 2012 for this family.

Smiles, cont'd.

It's a Pleasure

This is our eighth summer of rentals! What a joy it's been to have such wonderful renters. I've made lots of new friends and love it when guests return for the second, third (and in some cases, the fifth and sixth) times. Although Vegas is now staying home most of the time, she still greets everyone who comes to our house with a 'lick and a promise' to be their very own Lake Lab. Sadie took Danny's place as the official barking alarm (4 yrs later, she still barks at me), but leans comfortably against anyone's leg while they stand still to visit. Both dogs are now ten and like me, have a few more creaks, groans and limps. My cat, Alice follows me to the Cottage or Cabin when I visit, chases deer out of 'her' yard and tolerates most 4-legged guests.

Booking now for fall

There are a few slots left on our booking calendars before summer ends. Fall at the lake is one of my favorite things in life. As the weather cools in September, the trees outside my office window rapidly change colors. No one minds that red, orange, yellow and burgundy leaves litter our streets. The green of towering pines seems even more brilliant against fall's powder-blue skies. I spend more time outside, walking and planting fall flowers, vegetables and new trees.

www.grangercottage.com



June 2nd Brunch launches Donna's Book:

A Song in Every Silence

I knew very little about book publishing except that the industry had undergone massive changes. Little 'houses' were gobbled up by huge conglomerates until few traditional publishing companies remained afloat. As a result of my diverse focus during the years and years it took me to learn how to write, I lost what most authors crave and cherish – my agent. I will always be grateful, though, to Marly Rusoff of Rusoff Literary Agency. She shared her immense depth of insight after reading my manuscript. Her words of encouragement ("I have three staff members crying in front of their monitors as they read your story") and enthusiasm let me know I did have a story to share.

In the long run, I visited and went with a self-publishing company in Mustang, OK. Tate Publishing not only accepted my manuscript (they accept less than 10% of those submitted), every staff member from Dr. Tate on worked in a professional, timely manner and offered useful tips and information at each step. Although I begged to push my project through at an accelerated rate (self-published books take a year to produce; traditional, two years), they didn't disappoint. I am forever grateful to everyone, but especially Stacy, James, Joel, and Terry.

I had my first book signing at the Camp County Public Library in Pittsburg, TX on June 1st, then had a fabulous time hosting a brunch the next day. Many friends from the area showed up, angels helped with the cooking and serving and

everyone seemed to have a great time. I know I did! My house was even clean for a change...

Wayne introduced me as his 'forever friend' and I made a short announcement about how pleased I was to have so many friends support me. After assuring guests it was our pleasure to have them come and enjoy the brunch, but that they were not expected to buy a book, I read a little excerpt and answered a few questions. When someone asked one that might give away too much of the story, Wayne (the ultimate treasurer) gave the best response ever...

"You'll have to read the book!"



From my writing cubby hole

Writing is definitely not a nine-to-five job. Having an ever-changing view of the lake in front of me is a huge help. I know (and love) writers who pay plenty to write from a quiet place in the woods.

Now that I have a beautiful space in which to write I find myself saddled with every author's (yes, even successful ones') conundrum—a measured amount of time in a day in which to market a just-released book, seek reviews and book signing opportunities, fulfill orders, respond to readers' queries, research, plot, and develop characters to write the next one, keep my websites high on the search engine lists via content & social media, hone my platform for speaking engagements, create useful, interesting blogs or articles, and always, always, improve my writing skills through critique & writing groups and conferences.

Oh, and did I mention husband and family time, church activities, grocery and supply shopping when you live 35 miles from everywhere, running two vacation rentals & a small services company, and preparing meals?

Well, anyway, the next book, tentatively titled, is a humorous self-help with a realistic approach to staying at home and independent as long as possible.

My experiences as both a registered nurse and as an assisted living administrator with 110 parents, including two mothers-in-law, (hey, that could be another whole book in itself!), and moving my mother half-way across the country to live with us provided me with tremendous insights, from a parent's, an adult child's, grandchild's, and a spouse's perspective. Much to my surprise, I LOVED working with seniors. I sang every day.

Getting old isn't for sissies for sure. I never met anyone who volunteered for a nursing home, so the book will give practical tips and suggestions for not only seniors, but anyone who is concerned about their own well-being or another's.

If you ever had the pleasure of knowing my mother, in all yellow at right, you'll recognize many of her witticisms in this book.



Perfect visitors in front of my office – quiet and polite – and never outstay their welcome.



The Next Book

Research for the next book has already proven interesting. Based on a true story set in the early nineteen hundreds, this fiction has a tentative title of:

Have You Seen My Sister?

A pretty, young child is taken to the New Jersey shore on a summer vacation by wealthy next-door neighbors. Her parents lament they cannot provide such luxury for their other children, and look forward to their little girl returning with stories of the beach and ocean.

With no telephone, automobile, or real knowledge of their location, how do they search when ***their neighbors never return?***

P.S. I'd love to hear from you! About your stay at Granger Cottage or Carter Cabin, reading my book, thoughts about this quarterly newsletter, or what's happening in your life.

Please write to me at

donna@donnagpaul.com

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