

THE VILLAGE VOICE

Rocky Mountain Village Estates • September 2021

Meet Tom and Mary Kay Barnes

Tom and Mary Kay Barnes walked down the aisle together twice – first in 1977 when they met at his brother’s wedding – she was a bridesmaid and he a groomsman. They married a year later, making the walk a second time, and they’ve been together ever since.

They spent much of their lives in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan before relocating to Evergreen eight years ago. Marquette, on Lake Superior, presented them with lots of opportunities for outdoor activities as they raised their two daughters. And they’ve continued to enjoy the out-of-doors here in Colorado, frequently camping. “It makes it easy to walk out the door,” Mary Kay said of their one-bedroom condo in Genesee. “Actually, we love living in a small place,” about one-third the space they had previously.

The couple had always camped with their kids, generally with a boat, canoe, or kayak as part of the package. “We had a real tent on the ground until January – now we have a car tent with a mattress,” they explained. “Every place we go here is wonderful – a different kind of wonderful than the UP.”

Since January they’ve been to seven states, camping on BLM (Bureau of Land Management) lands. “Everything runs on solar-charged battery – the kitchen, shower, bathroom,” they say of the modern conveniences that have made camping more comfortable over the years. Their longest stint at camping is three months, often enjoying wildlife preserves where they’d not see people for days. “We could get the radio if the wind was blowing the right direction.” Generally, there’s no



cell phone reception. “We love to bike, snow bike, and mountain bike.”

As a Registered Nurse, Mary Kay worked in obstetrics at the health center in Marquette, proud of having delivered 11 babies over the years while working nights. “All 11 were rapid-finish babies,” she pointed out. Being home while raising children held a high priority, but her training came in handy as she served as Camp Nurse when the girls attended multiple camps. “The kids, dog, and cat got to go with me,” she added. During that period she taught childbirth classes and volunteered for many years at the crisis pregnancy center in Marquette as both a nurse and a counselor. Nowadays, she’s involved in an ecumenical pregnancy crisis center in Denver.

Tom, who’d been born in the UP but had grown up in Pontiac, about 35 miles from Detroit, worked on the assembly line for General Motors for five years before becoming part of the sheet metals union and starting the roofing business he had for 25 years. He would wind up coaching track and field as a volunteer at a Catholic school and later taking a paid position coaching cross country skiing and Nordic skiing for the women’s division of Northern Michigan University.

As with most athletic teams, coaches set goals for their teams each year. But Tom’s goals were a bit different from most. Instead of aiming for placement in the top three or setting a certain number of records, Tom set goals based on a list of virtues, starting with “kindness.”

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There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.

-- Albert Einstein

Memo from the Manager

The regular Board meeting previously scheduled for September 16 has been rescheduled for Thursday, September 23rd at 2:00 pm in Bergen.

Fireplace cleanings are not yet scheduled but usually happen in September, so watch the bulletin boards for the sign-up sheets.

-- Kathy

New crosswalk across CR 65 to be funded by grant money

The crosswalk connecting Center for the Arts Evergreen and Rocky Village Drive to the park and RTD lot across County Road 65 — as a project of the Evergreen Local Improvement District — should be in place before the snow flies.

Letters of support from the RMVE Board of Directors played a significant part in securing a grant for \$80,000 from special funds made possible through the Colorado Department of Transportation as a result of COVID.

-- Linda Kirkpatrick

Masks....

Jefferson County Public Health is strongly recommending that all residents aged 2 and older — regardless of vaccination status — return to wearing a mask in indoor public spaces to minimize risk and maximize protection from COVID-19, including the highly infectious Delta variant.

Tom and Mary Kay Barnes continued

Responsibility, perseverance, trust, determination, patience, and simplicity were some of the virtues to follow as goals annually. "It resulted in a lot of feedback from the community about how nice the team members were," he added brimming with pride.

The ski program would become one of the best ski programs in the country, and the grade-point averages of the athletes would make them Academic All Americans. And, surprisingly, the students would help Tom earn his bachelor's degree 36 years after he started college, coaching him in computer classes and Excel.

Eight years ago when Tom and Mary Kay first began looking at places to live in Evergreen, they met Jeri and Duff Dufford, who offered to show them their place. They ended up buying a condo in Genesee and settling in at Christ the King Catholic Church for their spiritual home. "Back then we were called 'the kids,' " because they were among the youngest in the building Mary Kay said, adding, "now we're blending in." They enjoy being close to family and grandchildren in Evergreen, and their kids who live in Illinois love traveling to Colorado to visit.

"I don't think there are better neighbors than people who have lived a long time," they say. "They have more wisdom than we have. And Evergreen is the best!"

With values such as those taught to the athletes in Marquette, we're proud to call Tom and Mary Kay neighbors as well!

Profile and photo by Linda Kirkpatrick

WELCOME!

Ruth and Jack Salter - 314•B