



# Seldovia Gazette

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### Jim & Happy Schneider: The Last Hurrah *by Charity Winters*



Jim and Happy Schneider's only regret about moving to Seldovia is that they didn't find it soon enough. Even if it is far away from their children and grandchildren in California and Oregon, the Schneiders insist that this is their "last hurrah" and they are going to enjoy it for all its worth. At a point in life when the years are no longer stretching endlessly ahead, Jim and Happy are content to spend as much time as they can in Alaska and revel in one last "adventure" as their children call it.

Born and raised in California, Jim and Happy met in the Sacramento area through some acquaintances of Happy's roommate. Happy was fresh out of high school and Jim was in the military. The two were married in October of 1958. This year will mark their 49th year of marriage together. The Schneiders remained in the Sacramento area for several years and raised their

Then one day Happy suggested they talk to Peni about The Buzz, which had been up for sale for a short while. Before they knew it they decided to buy the Buzz and sold their home in Oregon, making Seldovia their year-round home. "We were mostly drawn to the view," said Happy. "After all, we had always lived on the water: oceanfront, a river, and now we're trying the harbor!"

The Schneiders have spent the last few years remodeling and expanding the small upstairs apartment to suite their living needs. Another interesting challenge that comes along with the building is its location as a commercial business property. That meant that they would have to open some sort of business eventually in order to comply with the city regulations about commercial property. This summer 2006, Happy was able to get the first half of their business up and running by creating the "Harbor Connection". It

two children. In 1960, Jim had been offered a chance to work on the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line. The DEW Line was a system of radar stations in the Arctic set up to detect incoming Soviet bombers and missiles during the Cold War. The prospect was tempting as the pay was good, but the young couple would have had to separate in order to make it work. Even today Happy and Jim speak of the missed opportunity with a twinge of regret in their voice, but understanding that they were doing the best for their family. Since then, Jim has worked for 35 years as a civilian for the air force. Happy spent her time managing a finance company. For the last 10 years before retirement she worked for the government giving seminars on topics like team building and process improvement.

Once they were retired, Jim and Happy moved to Oregon for 12 years and decided to spend some time traveling. Since they had always wanted to see the Inside Passage they bought a motorhome in 1998 and took the ferry from Bellingham, WA to Haines, AK. From there they drove on to Homer. They liked Alaska so much they came back for the next few summers. Finally in 2000, they decided to take the Rainbow Connection to Seldovia. "As soon as the Rainbow pulled in, I fell in love," said Happy as she described her first impressions. The next summer they met Everett Boscacci and he sold them a small house on the hill behind the new SVT office building. It worked as a wonderful little summer home for a few years.

is a quaint little gift shop tucked in the back of the building and offers mainly a variety of decorative artwork along with some antiques and quilts. Much of the painted pieces are Happy's and all other items are there on consignment. There are several hand-carved items, stained glass ornaments, gift cards and other similar gift-like items. All has a very quaint and homey style to it - "girl stuff" as Happy calls it. Business has been slow so far but Happy is sure it will improve once an official sign is posted and she begins to be able to determine what attracts the tourists. In the future, Jim hopes to open a bait and tackle shop in the remainder of the ground floor. But that will come after the work on the house is completed.

In the meantime, Happy and Jim are looking forward to a quiet winter so they can finish their home and make plans for next summer. Happy talks of making her shop into a winter workshop for other artists to come and work together. All in all, the Schneiders are happy to be in Seldovia and are looking forward to spending many years here.





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