

FRED AND KAREN NORMAN – ENJOYING RETIREMENT

Even though I retired from a job that involved working with fish and fish environments, I still have an interest in finding out all I can about that subject.

I bought an underwater camera and monitor for my boat. With this equipment, which works in both fresh and salt water, I enjoy “researching” my favorite Washington state fishing areas, learning how fish react to colors and lure movement. (This should keep me busy through each spring and summer. It could take a long time to complete my research. Heck of a good excuse for us to go boating and fishing.)

The photo below was taken while fishing on American Lake early on a cloudy morning.



Karen and I also both love yard work and the rewards of our flower garden (see photo below).



Aside from our WA fishing trips and gardening work, our retirement plans include spending much of our time at home with family and friends. We love to watch and cheer for Karen’s granddaughters when they play soccer, basketball, and fastpitch baseball games during various seasons.

I've enjoyed working at the Puyallup Fair since 1986 (about 300 shows as of 2003). In the past, Karen worked for the Fair's promotion department, but now would rather just "do the fair" and see the shows with friends. Even in retirement, I'll probably continue my involvement with the Fair. In 2004, I worked the Puyallup Fair as their backstage manager for the concert series. Along with the rodeo, we did 14 shows in 17 days. The 2004 concert performers ranged from Bill Cosby to Weird Al Yankovic to Brad Paisley.

A good web site about the Fair (including current concert info) is <http://www.thefair.com> The photo at the left below shows the grandstand set up with seats for concerts. The right photo shows the rodeo preparation.



The photo below shows only the northern third part of the fairgrounds, but it does show the grandstand.



As for travel, our retirement plans include visiting other family and friends in Oregon and California. Some time will be spent at Long Beach and Ilwaco with my 13 cousins and their families who gather together for reunion campouts and salmon fishing trips.

Other summer or fall travel plans include attending as many reunions as we can – not only my BHS-57 reunions (and Karen’s BHS-60 reunions) held every five years, but also the reunions of the USS Toledo (CA 133) crew.

The first USS Toledo (CA 133) crew reunion was held in San Diego in 1986. As the reunions got established, it was decided to hold them every two years alternating locations across the country. The 10th reunion (2004) was held in Charleston, South Carolina and brought people together from all over the country; it was a great time in a beautiful city with a great bunch of people.

The heavy cruiser (shown in the photo below) was commissioned in 1946 and retired in 1960. I was aboard her for two years (1958 to 1960), working in the legal department as a legal yeoman (court reporter). If anyone is interested, visit <http://www.usstoledoca133.com> to see the ship’s web site.



On our way home from the USS Toledo (CA 133) reunions in South Carolina, we visit Karen’s cousin in Florida and go fishing there. After that, we enjoy a leisurely drive home across the southern part of the U.S.

So, retirement is good for us. It offers a nice mix of home time working in the gardens, travel time, visiting with old friends and family at home and at reunions, a chance to enjoy the Fairs - and (don’t forget) a lot of fishing!

Fred Norman