

# *A Kid Again*

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A day at the beach is guaranteed to bring out the kid in everyone regardless of age. On any summer day at our beaches, a smile comes to my face just watching the fun and frivolity: digging in the sand, catching Frisbees, running and jumping in the waves. And that's just the dogs! The real people are flying kites, building sandcastles, eating a sandy sandwich or trying to keep their cabana from blowing away.

Participating in the antics of my six and seven-year old grandsons both on and off the beach over the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend was a thrill only grandparents whose time is limited with their grandkids can appreciate. The scavenger hunt their aunt and I planned for weeks was a huge success and took them over an hour to follow the clues and find the buried treasure. They told us last year to make it really hard, so we did. They needed a compass, a key, a shovel and a willingness to get into the creek as well as dig in the compost pile for their clues, but they rose to the challenge. The nature hunt was a success too, and I loved seeing them tear around the yard looking for pinecones, maple leaves, dandelions and roly-poly bugs. Better yet was their idea later in the day to create a nature hunt for the adults and their enjoyment watching us skitter around the woods to find our stuff before time was up. They even created their own prizes to offer the winner and runner-up. We got our choice of a speed paper airplane or a dodge paper airplane, both of which were hand created on the spot especially for us.

When there was a lull from parades and picnics, fireworks and figuring out how to make the ice cream maker work, and after a trip to Astoria to take in the 3-D Shark film at the Columbia Maritime Museum, the boys settled down to build things--things like kites out of a thin plastic garbage sack, twigs and string. "Nana, do you have "duck" tape?" they asked. "Of course," I said, handing them a big roll from which they proceeded to braid together a "duck" tape rope to climb a tree. Yes, it actually worked as they so aptly demonstrated shinning up a tree in our yard. Maybe they're encouraged by their favorite television show Myth Busters. Next, they made an airplane out of plastic water bottles, an empty cardboard carton and a lot more "duck" tape.

Speaking of fun and frivolity, as summer moves on, the Tillamook County Fair, just around the corner, is not to be missed. It runs from August 7-10 and has something for everyone. Their theme this year is "Got a Good Thing Growing." The Tillamook County Fair is one of the top ten fairs in the nation. It has

more dairy animals on display than any other county fair in the state and showcases a Master Gardener demonstration garden, built in the late 1980's on what was once a gravel parking lot. The 4-H and FFA exhibits of everything from clothing, foods and livestock displays to art, photography and science projects are an inspiring example of kids doing great things. The Huckleberry Health Fair provides free health screenings on certain days, and the Fair Acres Learning Center gives you the chance to experience being farmer for a day. Add in courtyard entertainment, Brad's World Reptiles, horse racing and the world famous Pig-N-Ford Races plus free grandstand shows in the evening, the carnival and Demolition Derby, and it spells SUMMER FUN!

Last year, I won blue ribbons at the Fair for a number of my flower specimens, and a first place ribbon for my pool ball zucchini, a plant start I got from Alder Creek farm in Nehalem. The Fair has become a family tradition for us and we wouldn't think of missing it. Besides, where can you get your blood pressure checked after riding the Ferris wheel and eating a Pronto Pup and curly fries!