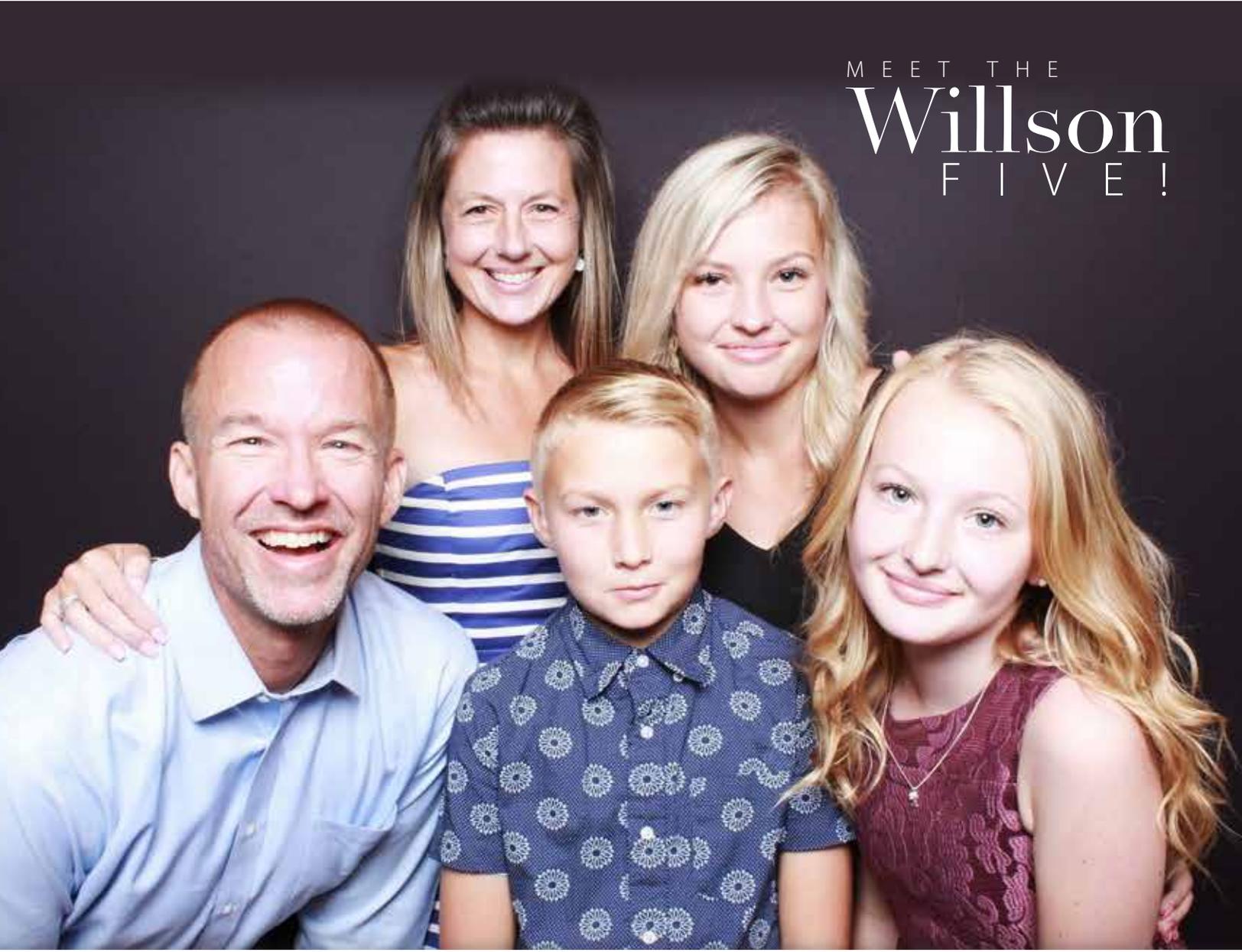


Life AT THE WOODS

APRIL 2020

A SOCIAL PUBLICATION EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE MCCORMICK WOODS COMMUNITY



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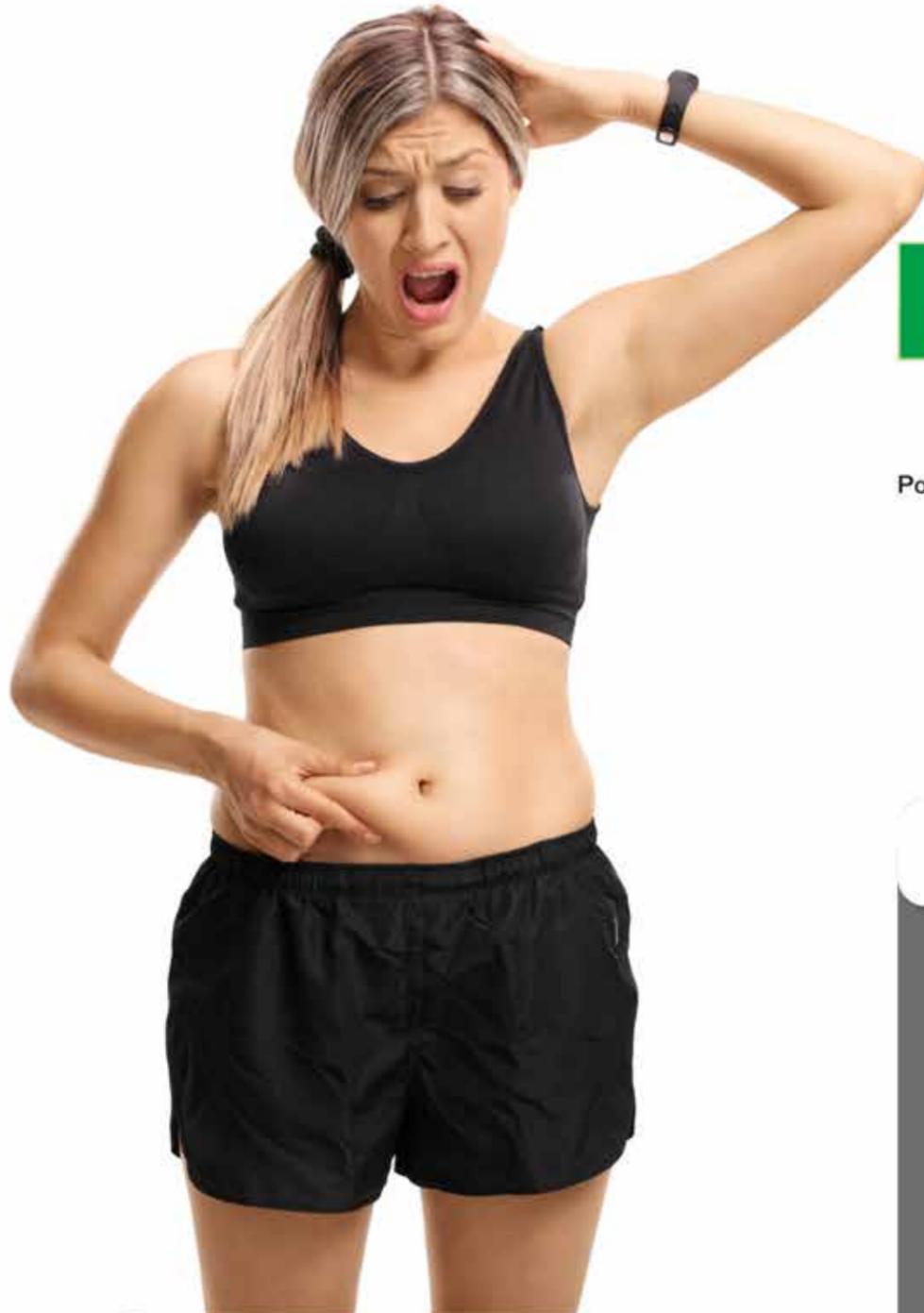


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- 5 cups berries (black and raspberry)
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(Dough)

- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup melted butter
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Mix berries, cornstarch, and sugar well in bowl. Add dough to top. Bake 20-25 minutes at 375, and enjoy!

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M E E T T H E Willson F A M I L Y

featured family

Meet the Willson Five! You may know the Willson family already. You might have seen Rusty, Courtney, and Piper out to get their early morning miles in, eagerly on the run. Maybe Quincy has ridden past you on his bike, eager to make new friends as he sees friendly faces on the roads. Perhaps, you've met Reese, as she walks one of the many dogs that she watches and walks. Whether they are new faces, names to faces, or old friends, we're excited to introduce the Willson family and share a little bit about their *Life At The Woods*.

Rusty and Courtney, South Kitsap alumni and Port Orchard natives, met 21 years ago at a job interview at Olalla Elementary School. The two had an immediate connection that autumn, and it wasn't even six months later they were married. Rusty and Courtney have spent their careers invested as teachers in the community. Courtney continues to teach at John Sedgwick, preparing the middle school students for their high school careers and leading them in their ASB journey. Rusty, however, is the principal at a middle school in CK School District, where he is grateful to lead the charge. The Willsons are invested in the youth of their community, encouraging their children, Piper, 16, Reese, 14, and Quincy, 11, to get involved, as well. Piper is avid in her DECA chapter and is starting her journey as a state officer this coming DECA season. Piper is also an ASB officer, a proud IB diploma candidate, and a member of the South Kitsap rowing team. Younger sister Reese shows promise as a ballerina and also takes the charge in her school as the ASB media and marketing coordinator, a WEB leader, and an honors student. Quincy, affectionately known as "the mayor" for his friendly disposition, is not afraid to try anything and participates in many sports. We can't wait to see what Quincy brings to the table as a South Kitsap athlete someday.

While the Willsons spend their days bustling and active in the community, they are true homebodies. Curling up with their kittens Gus and Moe, they love to spend their evenings watching *Yellowstone* or *The Office* or in Piper and Reese's case, *The Great British Baking Show*. The family of five prefers to eat in most nights, with mac and cheese, quesadillas, and Courtney's famous Southern chicken salad frequently on the menu. However, when on the road, whether having



spent the day hiking at Staircase, Lena Lake, or Mount Rainier, their favorite restaurant to stop at is none other than Starbucks. The Willson family opts for "stay-cations" during their spring breaks and winter breaks, as they wait for a Disney vacation! True "Dis-nerds," the Willsons are always planning a trip to Disneyland. Perhaps this is what inspired the Willson girls to aim for the Disney college program for their post-high school plans.



The Willsons might have only spent three years on Muirkirk Lane so far, but they are loving every second of it, soaking up the community atmosphere and enjoying the trails and running routes that have made the miles fly by. The active family of five is thankful for the energy that surges through McCormick Woods, rain or shine, helping them get out every day and do their best. The Willsons are also thankful for McCormick Woods serving as a gracious venue for the CF Hero 5k, which was coordinated by Piper, as she and many others pursue a cure for CF.

The next time that you see one of the Willsons while you are out walking your dogs, riding your bike, or on your way to work, be sure to say "hi"! The Willsons can't wait to meet you all and get to know their neighborhood better as they continue in their *Life At The Woods*!



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sponsor spotlight

by Kai Curry | Photos provided by Doug Miller

SOUTH KITSAP PROPERTIES DOUG MILLER



Buying or selling a home is one of the biggest life decisions a person can make, both financially and emotionally, which is why finding the right person to help you is so important. But how do you find that right person in today's fast-moving and even faster-evolving housing market? You start with an expert in your specific neighborhood. Doug Miller, owner and designated broker at South Kitsap Properties, has lived in McCormick Woods for over a decade and has built the strongest team in South Kitsap, with the knowledge and passion for the real estate industry that you need.

"My family and I have lived in McCormick Woods for over 14 years," Doug told us. "I've been extremely fortunate to grow such a strong business here in Port Orchard, and I couldn't have done it without the support of the McCormick Woods community. South Kitsap as a whole has really embraced our team. It's been an exciting few years."

Being local is a big differentiator for Doug and his team. "One of the great things about having my office here in Port Orchard," Doug explained, "is we are 100% local. If you look at South Kitsap Properties and our team, we've listed and sold more homes in Port Orchard and South Kitsap than any other team here – and

have for the last three years. Opening our own office, and having a better environment for our clients, was a great fit. Being able to have such a strong office in Port Orchard and in South Kitsap, where we do so much of our business and are so active already, was a win-win."

Doug and his team strive to provide the best possible service, which was another reason he chose to open his own office. Having his own office gave Doug the opportunity to ensure sure that all of his team members were trained by him personally, and that they had the right attitude and personality to fit his growing team. Doug believes that two things really differentiate South Kitsap Properties from other firms and agents in the area. "Two things that really stand out about our team are our communication and marketing. It's so important to have a team that you know is going to communicate with you throughout the process, not just the day you put a sign in your yard or go under contract. Beyond that, you want to know that you have someone that's dialed in to the area you're in, whether you're buying or selling, and a team that is innovative in how they're going to market your property. You won't find an agent in Kitsap County that offers the same services we do, 100% of the time."

A local agent knows the ins and outs of your neighborhood and can get you the best results. "Having someone that's active in the community that you're buying or selling in is incredibly important," Doug emphasizes, "Having someone that has strong relationships with other agents in the market can impact the number of showings and price you get for your home, and it could be the difference between you getting a home as a buyer if a house has multiple offers."

When discussing buying or selling a home, the most common question Doug gets is "How is the market?" "We're going on five years of continued growth in South Kitsap, and that's for prices and the number of homes sold in the area," Doug explained. "The housing market in South Kitsap is still extremely healthy and still growing!" When asked if it was a buyer's or a seller's market, Doug answered, "It's absolutely a seller's market right now. There were nearly half as many homes for sale in January than this time last year. So with 50% fewer homes, I'm seeing multiple offers and a slow but steady rise in prices." But Doug emphasized that doesn't mean it was a bad time to buy: "You would think that would mean it's a bad time to buy, but it's actually still a very good time to buy. Interest rates are still so low that the cost of borrowing money is extremely affordable. When you look at interest rates and how much lower our cost of living is on the Kitsap Peninsula, it's absolutely still a good time to buy, too... which is why the market is so healthy right now."

After hearing that, the next question always comes down to "When is the best time to buy or sell?" "What I've always said is the right time to buy or sell is when it's the right time for you. That may sound cliché, but the truth of the matter is that buyers and sellers follow a very similar curve. Are there more buyers in the summer? Absolutely. But there are also more sellers and more competition. It's the opposite in winter. Fewer buyers, but fewer homes to compete with. So at the end of the day, it's when it's the right time for you. But that said, you can never start gathering information too soon." When asked about how soon is too soon, Doug added, "You'd be surprised how many people reach out to me who aren't going to sell for three-six months or even longer. They just want to get information so they're prepared, and that's totally OK. I always say that if you're thinking about selling, even if it's down the road, give me a call. We can go through what the market looks like for your home today and walk your house for some ideas on the best way to get it ready. I do them all the time. You don't have to be selling now to want more information. I'm happy to help."



To contact Doug Miller and his team, visit www.SouthKitsapProperties.com. You can also reach Doug directly at Doug@SouthKitsapProperties.com or at (360) 801-0484.

Doug and his family moved to McCormick Woods because it had everything they were looking for: "What really brought us to McCormick Woods ultimately was the feel in the community," he said. "The fact that we felt safe, that we could walk, there were walking trails and just a lot of the nature around us. That's something we've really valued in McCormick Woods... We found that everything we wanted was here in South Kitsap and certainly in McCormick Woods." When asked about development in McCormick Woods, and specifically the front entrance, Doug is candid: "Part of why I moved to McCormick Woods was because of the feel of the neighborhood. The trails, the trees, the environment in here is something that *was* and *is* very special to me," Doug reiterated. "So, that said, I'm not a huge fan of developing the front entrance of McCormick Woods. There are certain areas in McCormick Woods that make sense to still be developed, those areas that were in the original development plan. I understand that those make sense to be developed over time. But my preference? My preference is that the main entrance be preserved because that's a feel that I really value here in McCormick Woods."

Doug has been a market expert in McCormick Woods for years and has worked with more buyers and sellers in McCormick Woods than any other agent for over three years. But Doug's team are also experts in South Kitsap as a whole. "All of our team either lives in Port Orchard or are from Port Orchard and South Kitsap," Doug assures. "We have that

area expertise. We've sold more homes in South Kitsap than any other team for over three years. We've been the top-rated real estate team in South Kitsap for six years. We're Better Business Bureau-accredited. There are so many things that really make us the go-to resource. We want to be that trusted local resource for real estate here in Port Orchard."

Doug stays active in the community in other ways, as well. He's a vocal advocate for the South Kitsap Helpline, as well as Coffee Oasis, a local business that is dedicated to helping youth struggling with homelessness. Beyond that, Doug started the South Kitsap Community Pride Scholarship in 2018 and is accepting applications for the third award through the end of April. The SK Pride Scholarship is a \$2,000 award that focuses on student impact and ideas for the community. Applications are being accepted now via www.SouthKitsapPride.com. "We are constantly looking for ways to continue to support and engage in the community," Doug said. "Being local matters, and supporting local businesses matter. That's something we've always tried to do here and hope to do here for the years to come."

MURPHY



precious pet

Murphy is a 7-year-old AKC-registered Samoyed. He was born at Falling Cedars Harm in Covington, WA. We moved to McCormick Woods from Gig Harbor one year ago into a new one-story house; we downsized.

Murphy can shake and sit and loves to be around all people and his family. He loves his walks and car rides. He also likes to lay around the yard, helping his dad work in the yard, and help his mom cook.

Food is a favorite thing with Murphy. He would be a chef or a sled dog if he had a job. He likes to play in the snow. He travels to the desert in the wintertime but prefers the cooler Northwest.

Murphy gets groomed once a month at the women's prison, Prison Pet Partnership. Murphy likes other nice dogs at the dog

park. It's one of his favorite places to visit. He also likes family gatherings. His favorite toys are balls and chew toys.



The funniest thing he did as a puppy was his first time in the snow. He took to it like a baby duck to water. He is a very sweet, gentle dog that loves attention and affection. Murphy likes to play with children.

Murphy is the third Samoyed in our family. We like the breed and their gentleness. Murphy was born the runt of the litter of five puppies. He has grown to be the largest at 95 pounds! He is considered large for his breed.

"Smiling Sammys" make wonderful family pets. Murphy doesn't bark; however, he likes to dig in the backyard. That's his only bad habit. Murphy is truly a great loving companion to our family.



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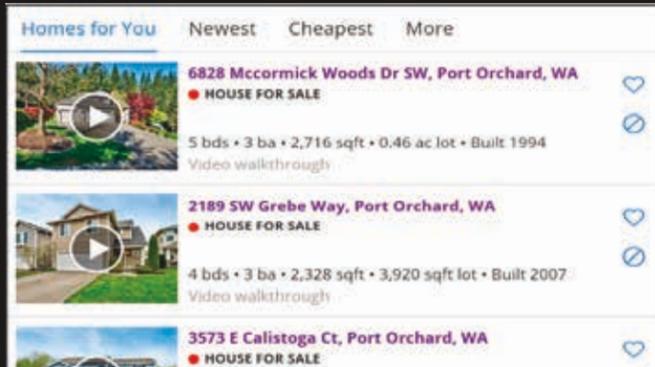
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SPAIN REVISITED

By Capt. John Moore, USN (Ret.)



Catalunya and walked the entire length of Las Ramblas — the pedestrian walkway — to the History Museum of Catalunya where we saw a fascinating photo exhibit of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) by Alec Wainman, who was 23 and an Englishman who served as a driver for a British medical unit — he took 1650 photos during the Civil War in Spain. We saw many artifacts from Catalan history from the 2nd through the 13th centuries.



On previous visits, we have always had lunch at the Hard Rock Café on the Plaza Catalunya, and this time was no different -- the menu now includes “American sliders,” which Peggy and I chose, and Joe had a very nice salad. We also went to a few Spanish restaurants in Mataro and three of our favorite coffee shops. We went to one we have visited often, as we know the brothers who operate the place — Xavier and Jordi. Peggy had tea, and I had café con leche and a delicious Spanish pastry.

Peggy went to a couple of the Cesca and Chloe’s basketball games — they have played basketball for a few years and really enjoy the sport. We also went with Joe and Azucena and the girls to the city of La Garriga to have a wonderful lunch with Azucena’s parents, Emilio and Asuncion aka Asun. Emilio served a very nice white wine from Galicia in northwest Spain, the location of the magnificent Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela that dates back to the 11th century and the terminus for El Camino, or “The Way.”

The night before we left for home, we all had dinner at a very nice Italian restaurant, La Tagliatella, which is in a large mall called Mataro Parc. We have been to this mall several times with Joe and his family, as there are a variety of nice stores, an excellent food court, and a very big supermarket.

We returned home on December 13, 2019. Joe and Azucena, Cesca and Chloe will all be visiting us this summer here in Dunraven.



Hola, amigos! On November 13, Peggy and I flew to Chicago and then on to Barcelona to visit our son Joe and his wife Azucena, Cesca (15), and Chloe (13), who live in the city of Mataro north of Barcelona on the Mediterranean.



Azucena met us at the airport, and we took a taxi to Mataro. There were ongoing Separatists protests in Barcelona, but our taxi driver knew which areas to avoid. Some teachers went on strike to participate in the protests, so Cesca and



Chloe missed a couple of days of school, which pleased them very much.

Joe arranged to have CNN available while we were there, so we weren’t out of touch with events in the U.S. and the rest of the world. One day Peggy, Joe and I took the train to Barcelona and went to the Plaza

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MACKENZIE SINCLAIR

How long have you lived in the neighborhood? I have lived in McCormick for 15 years out of 17.

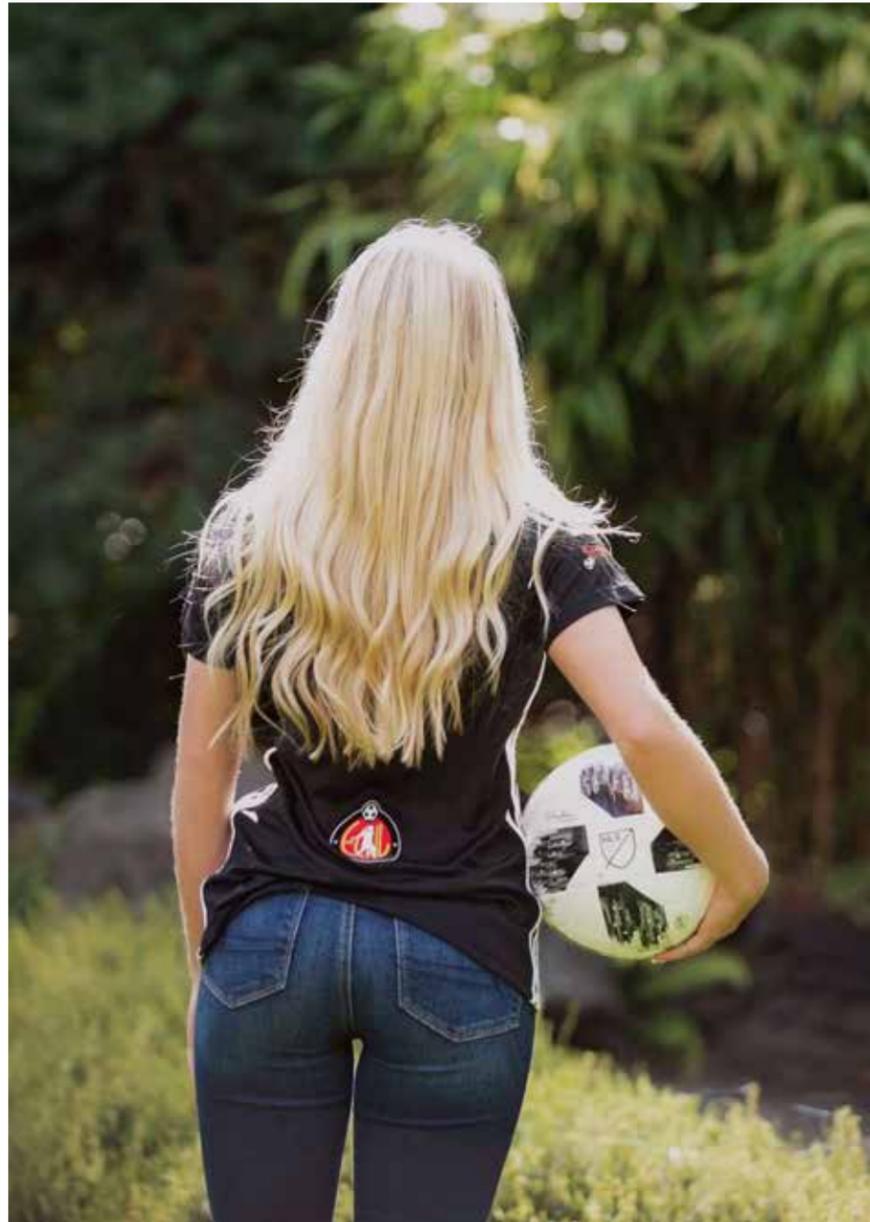
Who is in your family? My mom, Karen, my dad, Ken, and my two brothers, Trevor (25) and Chance (19)

What school do you attend? I go to South Kitsap High School, and I will be graduating this spring. However, I have spent my junior and senior years as an Olympic College Running Start student.

What are your plans after high school? After college, I plan to go to Idaho State, where I will play soccer. I have been committed to playing at Idaho State since November. At Idaho State, I plan to major in either communications or international business.

What sports and extracurricular activities do you participate in? I currently play soccer with Washington Premier ECNL. I have previously played for the South Kitsap Lady Wolves soccer team and Pac Northwest, as well. Soccer has always been my favorite activity and extracurricular.

How did you get started with your sport/activity? I started playing soccer when I was about 3. I honestly can't remember the first time I ever played soccer. It has always been a part of my life, and it's crazy to think about not playing. I just recently moved to WA Premier two years ago. I originally played with Pac Northwest in Seattle, but once I started



driving, my parents didn't want me driving all the way out there on my own. So then, I moved. I play on our travel team, which is seventh in America. We have a really strong team, and all of the graduating girls on our team are committed to a college.

What do you enjoy about your sport/activity? I love the competition, the intensity, and the team element. We depend on each other, and even if you think you can do it by yourself, you need your teammates' help. You are only as good as your weakest man, and so supporting one another and building upon each other. It gives me so many opportunities to grow and try new things. I don't know where I would be without soccer. I also love getting new cleats!

Tell us something you achieved or some highlights of your experience so far in your sport/activity? I recently committed to the University of Idaho, which was a huge achievement for me. I've always wanted to play soccer in college, and

so this is a dream come true. I also was given the opportunity to represent Washington in the ODP region tournament, when we beat Southern California in the final and I scored the winning penalty kick. At that time, it was like achieving my life goal. Not only have I gotten the opportunity to achieve my goals through soccer, but I have made great friends and met amazing people. I have made so many connections with not only friends but coaches, as well. I know that, later in life, these connections will benefit me greatly.

Is there something that makes you unique in this activity (a specific strength or quality you bring)? I bring strong leadership skills. When I play soccer, I'm intense. I do not want to lose. Even if it's just a scrimmage, my team is going to be the team working hard to win. Not only am I competitive and a strong player, but I also want to keep soccer fun. I have been playing since I was 3, and if it wasn't fun, I would've gotten burnt out a long time ago. I want to keep it fun and exciting so

that I will continue to enjoy playing and I will help my teammates stay excited.

How do you keep a balance between sports, school, and other activities in your life?

Self-discipline is the key. In high school, I have to make myself do a lot of homework and study instead of hanging out with friends or doing what sounds like more fun. And a lot of time you have to be contacting coaches in your spare time. It's really all about balance. I love my friends, but when friends would be hanging out, and I know I have homework, I have to say "no" and do what will benefit me more in the long run.

Name someone you admire. What makes them special and how have they motivated you?

I really, really admire my parents. They are two of the most hardworking individuals I know. They have worked so hard to make sure that I can take all the opportunities that I am given. They want to see me succeed, and it means so much to me. ●●●

•••

They have pushed me to work hard, and without them, I wouldn't be where I am today.

Two soccer players that I look up to are Morgan Weaver and Danny Leyva. Morgan Weaver played for Washington premier, and she graduated from WSU. She was awarded the best player in Pac 12. Because she started from the same position that I'm in, she really inspires me. Danny Leyva, who plays for the Seattle Sounders team -- he is only 16 years old, playing for a professional soccer team. Not only is he an extremely talented kid, but he is also hardworking and inspiring. Athletes like Morgan and Danny push me to work harder and reach past what I think my limits are.



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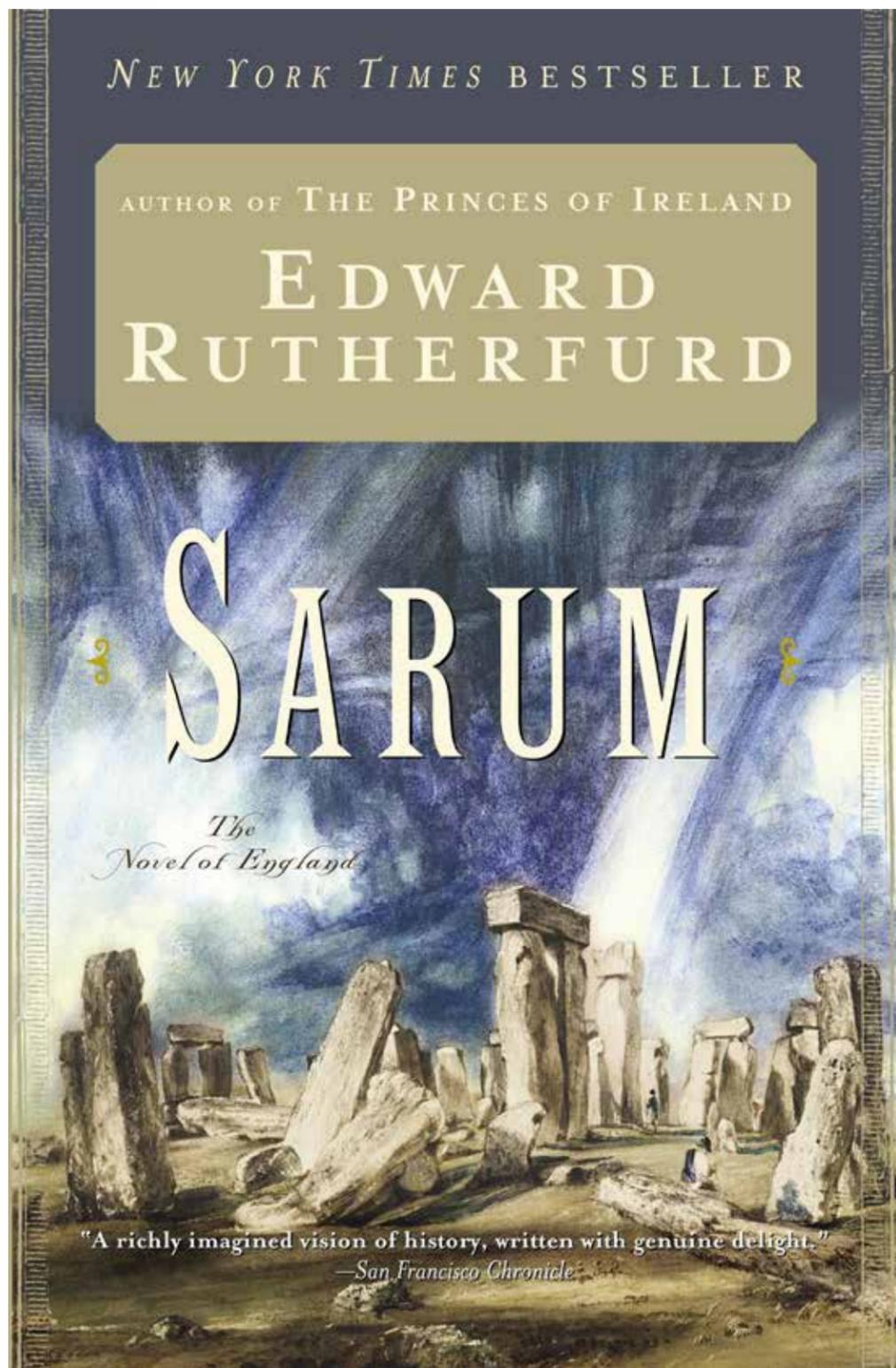
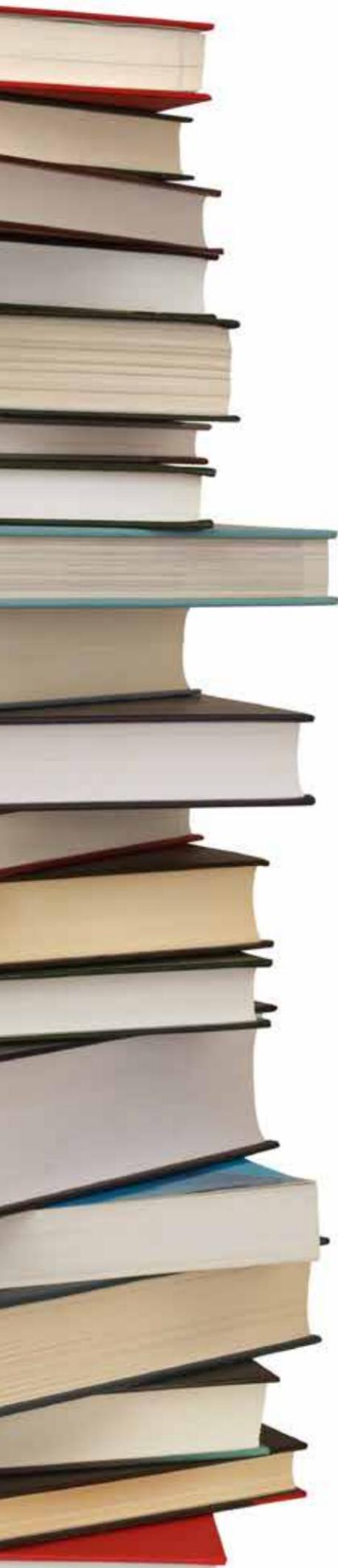
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SARUM: The Novel of England

resident book review | By Edward Rutherford. Review written by Helen PUNCHES.

I read this book 22 years ago, and it has stuck with me ever since. This is partly due to the fact that, three weeks after finishing it, I was standing in modern Salisbury, a lovely English town and the locale of this very long story. This was Edward Rutherford's first book, and he subsequently produced several more – all of similar heft and similar format, novelizing the history of a place and peopling it with fictional characters interacting with historical figures.

The story of Sarum (an old name for the area around Salisbury) begins as the last ice age is ending and follows the lives of five families through English history until 1985. The book is written almost as a series of novellas, each covering an important historical epoch and introducing some of the movers and shakers of that period along with the contemporary members of his five families. Some readers don't care for this technique of beginning a story in pre-historic times, but I love it. I often find the very early, primitive humans more interesting than the modern ones. And I'm pretty sure I've learned more history from this kind of novel than I did from the many history courses I sat through in my youth. I mention the novella format because

the sheer size of the book can be pretty daunting, but it's easier to contemplate reading it if you know you can take it in sections if you want to.

Rutherford covers the history of Britain – the native peoples, the early conquerors and their lasting imprints on the country, the succession of monarchies, the never-ending wars, the colonization of half the world, and the gradual dissolution of the empire. But the narrative always comes back to Sarum. He writes extensively about the creation of Stonehenge on the Salisbury Plain and the people who imagined and (incredibly) built it. There have been other theories of the purpose of Stonehenge put forward since the 1980s when he was writing his story, but there may be yet more theories in the future as archaeological methods become even more sophisticated.

The other main focuses of this story are the decades-long construction of the beautiful Salisbury Cathedral, which involved generations of the five families and some serious disagreements with the Anglican hierarchy over the height of the tower (the tallest in England), and the continuing thread of the Salisbury Market, which opened in 1227 and, except

for four years during World War II, has been open in the town square every Tuesday and Saturday since then! In its early days, it was just "the market," and everyone brought their livestock, produce and crafts to trade for what they needed. Now, like many local open-air markets, it is a popular tourist attraction.

Some reviewers thought the characters in the novel weren't as complex as they might be. While this may be true, it's important to remember that this is meant to be the history of a place, and the people are portrayed as the participants in, and sometimes the drivers of, that history.

If you like history, or stone construction, or family sagas, I think you'll like Sarum. And if you do read it, I'd like you to think of these things: the bluestone at Stonehenge was transported 240 miles before the wheel was invented; there are said to be ley lines converging at Stonehenge, and if you go there and you're lucky, you may find out for yourself; the slim green marble pillars holding up the tower of the Salisbury Cathedral really do have a slight bend in them.

Happy reading!



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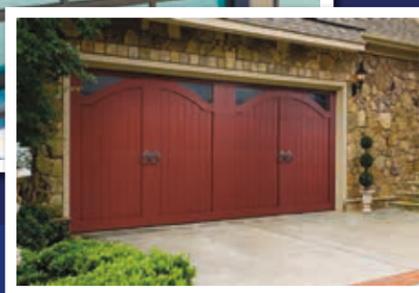


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