

As a traveler you learn quickly that things are not the same as at home – not the food, culture, customs or even at the simplest level how street signs work. Traveling opens up your eyes to new ways and teaches you to be ready for anything.


When you go to a new place you need to stand back and observe to know the best step forward in your adventure. Many times when Mr. Blogger and I travel we talk about the many things we learn – with each new country or even new state we visit. One of my favorite “lists” of what we learned came on a trip to France, where we navigated on our own from city to city.

✖ It was really the simple things that caused us hiccups: like how to pay for your train tickets when you don’t speak the language, knowing that trains leave on time (whether you are on them or not!), the requirement to validate your ticket **before** getting on the train. You learn fast that what you assume is basic like bathrooms, transportation, hotels and restaurants operate quite differently in each country. As a result, with each new country you have to learn to navigate the basics.

Likewise, when you move someplace new you are learning a new culture, new customs and how things work. This week I thought I would share my “Things I have learned” list about living and working in Stillwaters: ✖


1. Neighbors who Care! Stillwaters is a small community of caring neighbors. When someone is sick, neighbors are there to check on them and help. This also means that not much goes unnoticed so if you leave your garage door open when you leave on vacation it will likely be closed by those caring neighbors.

2. **Staying Connected!** Stillwaters is connected neighborhood – newsletter, email, and blog all work to keep you connected and informed. With activities in Stillwaters and in Centralia, it's a nice way to stay informed.

3. **Put that rake down!** Literally, you need to get used to not needing to  worry about working in your yard. You can garden if you want but leave the rest to the Stillwaters yard maintenance crew. This can be hard to adjust to at first but after a while you figure out what it is you WANT to do, versus NEED to do.

4. **Who Needs Garbage?** You no longer need to remember to put your garbage cans out on garbage day. In my prior life I remember dragging it to the street in the pouring rain...at night! With garbage (and recycle) bins always available to residents it is just a matter of deciding when is the best time to go for a walk and drop off your garbage. Many people do this on their way to pick up their mail.

5. **The Perks!** As a resident you can request free mail pick up when you are on vacation, and free notary services in the office. Office staff also help troubleshoot issues (cable, phone, repairs) and make available referral information on local services. When you are new to the area this is a nice service to count on.

 6. **Help when you Need it!** Stillwaters Office staff are available for calls and visits from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. We have lots of resources and are great at troubleshooting issues. Sometimes these are things we can solve and sometimes we need to refer you to someone else. Please call if you need anything.


Quote of the Week:

Wherever you go, go with all your heart. – Confucius

Happenings this Week:

Saturday, February 18th: “Moon Over Buffalo”, 8 p.m., Evergreen Playhouse, 226 W. Center St., Centralia, adults \$10, students \$8, www.evergreenplayhouse.com

Saturday, February 18th: The Odd Couple (Female Version),” 7 p.m. Wickstrom Studio Theatre, Washington Hall, Centralia College, adults \$10, students/seniors \$8, tickets available at Washington Hall Box Office, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday-Friday, 360-623-8871

Thursday, February 23rd: Potluck night at Stillwaters Estates. Dinner is at 6 p.m. Bring your favorite main dish, salad or dessert to share. Bring your own plate and silverware & napkins provided. It’s a great way to meet new people and say hi to your neighbors as well. 

Weather: I have to mention the weather today because it is so beautiful outside! Sunny and warm (55 degrees). We will be back to rain in a day or two but we will face that when we have to! Go out and enjoy the rays.