

The Greenway
by Liz Gibbons

In 1963 my husband was hired by Stromberg-Carlson in Rochester, New York. After about ten years we had had enough of their long winters and deep snows. We decided we could live any place in the United States. We chose Colorado Springs, although we knew no one there. In the summer of 1973 we arrived in Colorado Springs and rented a townhome. My husband opened a law practice, and I did substitute teaching. Our sons were ten and thirteen. We all loved the mountains and the recreational opportunities they provided.

The following spring, we begin to look for a house to buy. An area that attracted us was Village Seven, a subdivision that had a greenway running behind the houses. The streets were laid out in a circular and meandering way. The greenway connected not only the homes but also provided a safe walk to the elementary, junior high and high schools as well as to some small businesses on the outer borders of the area. The greenway beckoned you to come outside and go for a leisurely walk.

Last week I asked my younger son, Bob, who was visiting from California, if he had any funny memories of the greenway. He said he had a memory, but it was not funny. He had been very stupid. Our home was in a cul-de-sac two houses from the elementary school. Along one side of the property line of the school was a concrete ditch to collect rain water or melting snow. Over the ditch was a short wooden bridge. One weekend when Bob was in perhaps ninth grade, he and three friends were chatting together by the bridge. Bob observed that the bridge was just set over the ditch and not bolted down. The boys wondered if they could lift the bridge, which they proceeded to do, and they set it down on the grass beside the greenway. Our next-door neighbor saw them and came out shouting, "What are you boys doing? Put that bridge back," which they did. The other three boys ran away, but the neighbor escorted Bob to our house. My husband was home, and the neighbor told him what the boys had done. Bob said that was the only time he recalled Dad verbally disciplining him harshly. He says he thinks it was as much for the neighbor's benefit as for him. I was not home. I undoubtedly was told of this, but I cannot recall any of it.

Later I asked my older son his memories of the greenway. He reiterated the bridge incident. Then he reminded me that he had worked at Giuseppe's restaurant when he was in high school and earned enough money to buy a used motorcycle. Giuseppe's was on the edge of Village Seven. He said he used to ride his motorcycle up the street to an area where he could access the greenway and rode along it to work. While motorized vehicles were not allowed on the greenway, he said it was more convenient using it rather than riding along busy Academy Blvd. I have no memory of him using the greenway as a street.

As I recall our boys never caused us much trouble, but after hearing these two incidents of which I have no memory, I wonder how much else they might have done that I either do not remember or do not even know about.