

## A community, an 'art' project, giving back, Kids are important



Posted by Jay H.

6/22/15, 9:37 am

*About 2 months ago I placed a table, umbrella, a chair out in the park across from my studio.*



About 2 months ago I placed a table, umbrella, a chair out in the park across from my studio.

I worked there in the sun on my latest project (opera? recorded soundpiece? so far I don't know and it's a growing project and if I decide it's solid I'll talk about it in another essay).

I would bring my cup of coffee or tea, books, paper, ink, fountain pen, and sit.

Eventually I brought out two more chairs, a teapot (with tea) and glasses- made a sign (**please sit and enjoy, yours Jay**). I added a table cloth and during "Spring Cleaning" (joke) discovered some blank 3X5 notecards and added them to the table with a note (**If so moved please use a notecard for a poem or a message to someone far away and leave for all to Ponder**) and two pencils.

For about 2 weeks nothing happened except that neighbors would infrequently stop by drink some tea and chat. I felt good about this as a kind of sharing the experience....

It's difficult to see, in the photo, but at the end of the landscape is a clear (no wires/poles/bridges) view of Mt. Rainier. I am not a good photographer and don't know how to make that better- sorry- don't really have a camera.

Then notes began to appear, sometimes someone would draw a picture (a girl's legs, a squirrel, the mt., a skateboard) sometimes a thank you note to me (my favorite is one of the first that says they are *lost at 1:10AM and discovered this and thought it was magical*).

This location is a major bikeway both for pleasure riding, training and commuting and for the first time the table setup caused many of the riders to look up and notice the view. I began hearing "wow", "great view" "I'm envious", I would offer some tea and rarely someone would actually stop and sit for a moment and we'd talk. People just wandering would come by check out the table while I wasn't there and I'd be on my way there to work and discover that there was an opportunity to talk and find out about them.

So far I've hosted people from other countries, a cellist, real estate brokers, lawyers, a coffee broker for an African country (I've forgotten which) who told of how he was working to get the quality of their small farm coffees up so they could compete internationally. I get less work done now but am enriched by doing this.

Every morning I check if someone has come by (after I've retired) collect the dirty glasses, check the tea and make fresh to refill the pot. Wash the glasses and replace them- it has turned into a performance art project - but only sort of, my intention - if you could even say I had one- was to share and have a lovely place to work, and doing the rest was merely to see what might happen. Overall it's been a good experience.

The most interesting part has been that some 15 year old skateboarders have been dropping by, drinking tea. At first they (young young young) were a bit perplexing- they went to a neighbor's house because the teapot was empty (they had drunk it all) asking for hot water and a lemon....Over the top. the next time she (neighbor) sent them to me.

The guys are nice kids, polite etc but kids and sort of clueless about how the requests they were making were more than what they should expect. I talked a bit about that refilled the pot and they disappeared. I suspected that I had been severe and that I wouldn't see them again.

The next day I hear skateboards coming down the road, there they are. They stop, I invite them to sit with me, we exchange names, I talk about how this is something reciprocal- not a restaurant and approaching my neighbors was not ok.

We talked about why they were skipping school where school was how long they could stay away. No lecture from me I was just interested about what they were doing and how they thought about it.

After that they come by often I think they were the ones that first drew pictures on the cards but also a poem, I won't ask- it's not part of what I think this is about.

~~

Yesterday I woke and went out to do the set up and someone had destroyed it.

Overturning the table (maybe throwing it- it's not heavy) crushing some of the glasses, breaking the teapot, breaking one of the plastic chair - legs off, back cracked, and throwing the cards all over.

Heartbroken (the teapot had a symbolic meaning for me) and a bit frightened as the destruction was so thorough.

I cleaned everything up as well as I could. There was a lighter and I'm guessing that a] this is a one-off occurrence b] that is was like a drug/meth rage kind of thing. This morning everything was ok.

What is my reason for telling this?

Off and on it seems like it's 'against the law' to be a teen. Perhaps inevitably, a few people asked me if I thought it was the 3 skateboarders. They are a minority mix- black, Hispanic, and Native American and NO I DIDN'T. In fact I feel like I'm helping them in that we talk about school if and why and when it's important- no pretense that it will 'get you a job' because it might not, and about living (I'll never be considered a MOR role model). What might be important.

At no time do I forget that they are young and that nothing is in stone so anything they think or say is theirs and we can disagree but what they say/think is important, of value.

It pains me that they were even suspected.

There are so many ways to give back to the community- for me kids are the most important part of one, finding ways to protect and support them is what I try to find ways to do, without breaking my bank, without being 'good' (I'm not).

Yesterday after cleaning up and leaving the studio, getting some dinner, early evening- there's a knock on my door. Two of the kids are there and one took a header off the skateboard a long friction burn on his forearm and an open wound on the opposite elbow. They came for help- clean up, water, I bandaged up what I could. We talked a bit about what happened and I noticed that he wasn't looking well. I asked if he had hit his head? (No helmet- remember? young=immortal) at first he said he didn't know, the other kid was a bit frightened and said no he didn't but then the injured one said he thought he did and bent over.

They said live close by (turns out not close enough), I don't have a car, they don't have phones (a different story for another time). I can't justify calling an ambulance as even with ACA they may not have insurance. So I say get home, be careful tell the uninjured to walk with him....I hope they are both ok. (Next day the uninjured one reports that they made it home but not really how the injured kid is- ---)

There's no lesson to be learned here for them. Helmets are expensive, the skateboards could be the most they could afford- even if I were bold/stupid/pompous enough to buy them helmets they most likely wouldn't use them (I know I wouldn't have if I hadn't been terrified the only time I got on a skateboard). This is part of life.

I'm glad I could be home to offer some aid.

We'll see what the next episode brings.

Jay

## A community, an 'art' project, giving back part 2; update



7/9/15, 5:22 pm

*The tea table project continues and here's an update*



Since last writing there have been no more "incidents".

The poem/message cards have grown in number and I now have a June stack and a 'recent'

stack. It's now common that if someone stops and has a glass of tea that they will leave a message or a drawing (or both). Sometimes the idea I have about all of this is quite different one once someone left some \$ (there's now a sign saying "Free Tea" which was up before the \$ was left) and someone else left a salacious message that is the alphabetic translation of my phone number (which I have destroyed). Another person left the woodchuck riddle (see examples of all of this below). Which doesn't seem like a poem left for other's to ponder but it did to them.

The teenagers have not been by as much, it's possible that it's too hot and with summer school they are too busy. A- brought some roots to make tea with- he calls it Huskus (see below) which I've not found a description of online. (he spells it this way) The tea is a sweet spice kind with those kind of aromas and flavours. A pleasant change from the Jasmine and Assam I've been making for everyone. I now in the evening have a glass of it before going to bed- beats hot chocolate in this weather.

Another neighbor donated a chair to replace the one the people broke and recently a person who has come and chatted and lives nearby bought an orange teapot to replace the one broken. So there is a pot of brown tea and a jar of light colored root tea.

The table is getting crowded or I need to make a bigger table (joke – I'm not doing that). Sometimes cyclists will stop and ask for lemonade, that's something else I'm not going to do.

I did make a 'holder' for the cards one place marked 'last month' and the other end 'recent' to keep them apart and because the June stack got so high.

I haven't understood how this is all going to work out yet. Making some of it as I go along (a cyclist passed yesterday and said 'it just keeps getting more complicated' – not really I think but I understand why he said it as he doesn't stop).

The part of this that is an adventure? Well all of it of course but talking with the people who can take the time to stop and chat has been the most adventure-some, they are taking a chance to slow down and talk to me, tell me who they are and what they have to say enriches.

So here's the 'June' cards.....I've deleted names and addresses when they are given as I don't think people will *assume* that this isn't at least sort of private and as you can read some of these messages are very personal.

I should have a translation of the Vietnamese card next week and I will add that then.

## THE CARDS

The card I put out *"If so moved, please use a notecard for a poem or a message to someone far away. And leave it for all to ponder."*

What follows are the set of cards written on (words) from May 15<sup>th</sup> to the end of June.

They are not in order- too many people have gone through them scattered them and most have no date (not the point anyway) so I am just going to type them out in the order they are in today 07/09/15 .

1] lie (*this word is hard to read I'm guessing*) empty, open, choiceless, like a beach waiting for a gift from the sea.

2] a drawing of a woman's legs (lower part of skirt to grass)

3] this whole night has felt like an absolute dream. It is now 1:10AM and, as we walk around happily lost, we stumbled upon this table. Magical. S- & L- (*this was the first card ever filled out and got the ball rolling so to speak*)

4] I am not a poet but the mountain! (and a drawing of the mountain)

5] Thank you for saving my lost hat! (heart drawing) *she had left her hat (who ever this was) on the table at least 4 days before returning here to reclaim it.*

6] *this is a riddle written in Vietnamese now translated;* Yellow pistil with white petals & green leaves.

Grows in muddy (meaning dirty/nasty) water yet does not carry the foul smell of the mud ~ what is it?

7] It's a painting, It's a photo, it's a postcard- no- wait- It's real- magic.

8] Fun place to enjoy? Thanks (signed by my landlords)

9] "in the absence of an open heart there cannot be a fully open mind." - unknown *yes they signed it 'unknown'*

10] Mother moon, Father mountain, sister sun, and brother grass, pencils chair and tea in Glass.

11] Jasmine brings up Japan and soaking tub one summer long off where the humid air made it wetter than the soak. (drawing of person in a soak tub)

12] 07/27/15 (*it should be 06 but doesn't matter*) How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

13] Dear Mom,

Because you are gone, I am adventuring for you now.

I know you are having a great time with me in spirit.

14] (drawing of 2 bicyclists) on reverse (drawing of a man in flannel and a hat and a dog-'old dog haven *desperado*)

15] my eyes can only tell the truth.- A Poncho (drawing of a skateboard) butter balls 70mm [*I'm pretty sure this is from one of my teenage skateboarders- again I never asked- not the point.*]

16] headphones on eyes down. Chatter from another's world. Almost missed this. Now: birds. Planes. Mountain. Air. An inspired thought a generous act deftly done. Thank you.

17] Thanks- your generosity is inspiring *signature deleted*

18] a tangle in the trees. What does it help to hold on? Let it go. It's time.

\_\_ \_\_ the view leaves and returns anew capture no moment, no place just fleeting time.

Grace.

19](drawing could even be of me- then a stick figure) 80's Jeff! Great tea! Party Funs

20] (a drawing of the scene from the table of the lake and the forest before it)

21] .83 longest ride to Mercer Island Rob...not my favorite ride leader (frowning icon)

22] A broken heart is an open heart

23] a drawing of a squirrel)

24] What a gift to stop and share a moment of beauty with all who've been and will enjoy this space. Many thanks (signed but can't read)

25] Hey this is A- (smiling face) I left Huskus roots for some tea. (*this is perhaps a native root for tea very spicy in a clove cinnamon way- I have found no information on search i.e. google or duckduck-*

26] Thanks for the invitation to stop and absorb more of the natural amazing beauty around me-! Great tea.

27] nice deal thanks check #22



28] I've been asleep for awhile now. Thank you for waking me up. l-

29] Came by to see if you were holding court (drawing of male and female symbols joined by a peace sign.

30] Kind of sick of this warm weather, but honestly on a day like today how can I complain. What. A. Place!

31] *(this card appeared with the one in Vietnamese)*

Pajarillo eres bonito

y de bonito color

Pero mas bonito fueras

Si me hicieras el favor

de llevarle un papelito

a la duena de me amor. *(if there are misspellings those mistakes are mine the cards are written on in pencil so if it ever rains -this is Seattle and it has, rained, the words remain.*

*However sometimes it's not easy to read) {here is a rough translation;*

**Pretty bird/ so colorful/ so much prettier/ should you do me the favor/ of carrying a little paper/ to the owner of my love }**

32] Dear Jay- This is great we like it from (names deleted)

33] I love tea that is free (smiley face)

34] Visiting from Australia and this view is picturesque but the free tea & notecard is divine ~ I'm in love (smiley face name deleted)

### Community tea table report #3



8/10/15, 7:44 am

*This is July's report on the community tea table/art project I set up in May*



July at the tea table project has been a bounty. I doubt that the number of messages will be the same for August or any other month. This project is mentally slated to end mid-September however Seattle's weather this year has been so unusual (little to no rain and some of the hottest days on record, for us) that keeping this going longer may be practical.

The changes to the set-up have been modest. I replaced the 'Free Tea' sign in paper with a wooden one (the one day it sprinkled destroyed the paper sign). I found marked 'free' two green plastic chairs like the one that got broken and so now there are 4 plastic chairs (2 white, 2 green) and the 2 wooden ones from last month. I ran out of the Huskus root and for a while was making daylily flower and root tea but lately have not replaced that jar so it is just the Jasmine/assam pot that is available.

One of the teens revealed that the \$ that was left was more than what I found and he took it 'for safe keeping' but (of course) spent it. **Card 22**

A few of these card/messages require an explanation if you are not familiar with Seattle.

**A]** Seafair is a nearly month long festival...Each neighborhood will have a parade, and often a cultural(Norwegian, Native American, Japanese and Chinese, Black [this summer] Black lives matter and culture) local festival at different, though sometimes overlapping, times during the summer. It culminates in an Air show of acrobatic planes and includes the Blue Angels team- This part takes place over Lake Washington (Seattle exists between Puget Sound [salt sea] and Lake Washington [fresh water]) below in the water are held hydroplane races. All this ends on the first weekend of August. It's loud (planes/jets/and the hydros themselves (they used to be called "thunderbirds" because the engines were so loud you could hear them miles away- those engines have been replaced by jet turbines and are quieter- now only like the dentist drill on your teeth) raucous, and mobbed.

**B]** the road I live on is inside a park. (see **Card 28**) The tea table is on parkland. The road is a small two lane paved hairpin turns former horse and buggy one, part of the Olmstead Brothers (Central Park designers for example) design for most of the Seattle side of Lake Washington. It is a designated bicycle route and there are herds of cyclists daily either commuting or joy-riding or training {totally does not look like any of these people are actually having fun}.

**C]** during the Tour de France the number of bright plastic coated cyclists increases dramatically. There is also, in July, a mass bicycle trek from Seattle to Portland called STP. Reports from those who have done it are mostly 'did it once- long boring – no need to do it again'. It's a bit over 170 miles and on/along the I-5 freeway.

**Card 31** was written by my teenage Native American tea drinking friend after he came back from dancing in a Sun Dance ceremony in Oregon.

**Card 23 & 24** (it's possible that **Card 42** is their's too) These were done by a dad and his two young children- one is old enough to ride his own bike the other rides in a kid-trailer behind dad. The drawings are supposed to be from The Little Prince and though it was in English by the 1940's it was not a childhood book that I was exposed to. I didn't know about it until I started tutoring kids in the early 1970's. I was sitting at the table when they rode by and they stopped showing me which cards they had already done- shocked that I didn't know what they were drawing or where they came from. The blobby thing is python swallowing an elephant? ok.

**Card 26** Turns out the group of 15/16 year old teens are heavy marijuana smokers. I have not been down on them for it and that has been both a good thing and has occasionally backfired (there is now a burn-hole in the tablecloth and one time there was ash and debris all

over the table, torn cards used for 'papers' – I have had to set out the rule no smoking at the table and clean up your mess i.e. be respectful. I spend a bit of time, it seems daily, talking to at least one of the 'kids' that is possibly a topic for another time).

**Card 35** I/we live in a diverse neighborhood. Really diverse- not just racial but economic too. There are million \$+ homes and subsidized row houses. Rusty cars in the yard and people who have painted the grass green to 'keep up appearances'. By chance I had walked out to the table after this man had written his card out. We talked for about 15 minutes before he showed me the card. We now had something 'real' to talk about.

As a former bus driver, I have been threatened, assaulted, etc and know a great deal about the trauma of encounters like his. So I was able to ask him how he felt, he told me about his current discomfort and unease. I talked about how in my experience it takes a while to get more comfortable and not suspect everyone- flinching at every possible encounter with strangers. I don't know if it helped, hope so.

There are at least 3 cards but I can't spot them right now that happened one early evening. A group of 4 people were riding I offered tea and they stopped, "What is this" "Tea" ...Two men Italians, two women Japanese (I think). We sat and drank tea and just jabbered. They left.

I mentioned this to some friends who go to Italy yearly and they said that Italians would totally get this as they do it all the time- the it in this case is stop and sip and chat slowing down, just taking a bit of time.

The women also seemed to 'get it'.

The oldest man used to be the boss of the younger man and one of the women worked for the younger man and the other woman was visiting the other woman ~ along for the ride. And the ride was a long one...which I shortened by telling them a 'shortcut' back to where they began that they were unaware of.

Many of the cards have idiosyncratic spellings, and syntax I have tried my best not to change any.

Last thought for the month on this project- there is a suspicion of the table, often a "why?", the gift (if it is a gift, or if not a gift an offering with no strings) itself seems suspicious to them. There are some who resent it. I'm not sure if I can explain that, even to myself, but instead of just an offer there is the idea that I am claiming something, part of the park for myself, or that in some way the table and chairs are exclusionary. For those who have expressed this kind of things to me I have not found a response that can correct it.

### **The cards of July**

*(again not in the order of 'submissions' because weather and people reading them has shuffled them too much for me to know how to put them back in order. I try not to read them every day, that way it seems to me like the messages really are shared with everyone and not just for me.)*

1. On a moonlit walk taking back the lake on Seafair weekend this spot rocks. Thank you
2. Even after /all this time,/ the sun/ never/ says to the earth/ "You owe me".../ Look what happens with a love like that – it lights up the whole sky!- Hafiz
3. This oasis is the perfect antidote to the blue angels. (smiley face)
4. Sparkling beams through the crotch of the trees/ diamonds sink to lake bottom. Deep



along shores of slippery stead.

5. Greeting from Teresina- Brazil, (two more names) (a pointy nosed smiley face)

6. If the punishment must fit the crime, must the reward fit the good deed?/ How does one repay truly genuine altruism?

7. To someone/ far away./ I am smiling pondering your joy./ Sending my heart to share your pain.

8. You are so lovely- the nicest view of Rainier and tea too./ I'll work on a better poem for next time I go jump in the lake.

9. Check the view of Mt. Rainier from this very spot at 4:30 AM good times Smile w/ Chaddy

10.It's a super view of Mount Rainier @ 4:30 AM/ With the one I love.

11.A business card with the pencil writing"thank you"

12.Minh Pham was here July 28, 2015/ 7.21 pm

13.A little tea/ a fast bike/ a little cup/ a fast life/ a little love/ a fast forward/ to warm us up/ and lots of strife//a giant sun/ a slow ride/ a giant hill/ a slow me/ a giant lake/ a slow Sunday/ It's such a thrill/ a simple cup o' tea. (names)

14.I'm grateful that you put this little oasis out for us to use. Thank you!

15.Thank you for your generous and truly refreshing tea and conversation! (name)

16.My first biking in Seattle and feel so lucky to stop by HERE! Thank u for the nice treat! (name)(sunface drawing and word balloon [Seattle heat])

17.Yours truly!/ THANKS 9 years old (name)

18.(circle around "this tea cup") is a gift sitting in the quiet thanks be to you.

19."Now I know what they mean by eye contact."

20.Beautiful. Thank you.

21.Keep up the good work.

22.Someone left \$1 and some change/ seems strange *I wrote this*

23.(a square) Is it a box or a sheep

24.(a drawing of a tea cup and saucer, a drawing of a cat, and larger drawing of a blobby thing)

25.This space make me feel un-alone. What a treat to start the day- 6am, in middle of bike ride. "tenth of the tour"

26.Michael smoked weed off this paper/ Truuu, tea was extra good

27.Thank you for the tea/ so sweet of you! (Japanese script) Vielen dank. (two names one western alphabetic the other Japanese)

28.Just got done treating invasive trees in the adjacent woods. This tea was such a treat in this heat -/thanks/(name)

29.This is better than an octopus' garden! (drawing of octopus with tea cup tea table and sign 'Free Tea!)

30.(drawing of Mt. Rainier) Generosity/ and/ kindness/ abides/ and/ abound

31.Live with peace, love, harmony, happiness, and value.//If you take away money, clothes, people, and anything that makes us believe that we need materialistic things to live. You're lost./What would have? (reverse side picture of a skateboard)

32.Exam/ wegbehu/ ma benocunege (I have no idea what this is or in what language

anyone help?)

33.Thanks for the tea! It made our bike ride so much better (heart and two bicycles “sister bike love” heart)

34.Thanks for the tea! It was a perfect mid-ride break! You rock! (smiley face)

35.I was robbed at gunpoint last month in our neighborhood. Your offering of tea & space helps remind me it will be OK. Thanks for helping me heal. (reverse side a drawing of dragon monkey head -Chinese-like)

36.(large drawing of dog head) Save Jenny Dog//Jenny was here/jennydog.co (reverse side)Seattle animal shelter want to euthanize me. My people are fighting!

37.Last weekend. I went camping. On the final night. Entering my little tent. I sat down. On a bee. In the dark. Sting and buzzing under togs ensued. Now, in the 'itchier than hell' phase. I come to our glorious field. To this table. And I see....before I set.... a lovely bumble bee. A repeat? No I shush him/her away. And sit to write about it and sip some tea. (drawing of chair and a bee)

38.(large drawing of tea cup and saucer with three stick figures holding cups)

39.Thank you for the tea Jay! I will be back. Have a great day! (signed and though it seems this person knows me I don't recognize the name)

40.(in cursive) Thank you for the tea (smiley face)security gal

41.Daddy,/ We hope you have a good visit in Dublin./ Bring me something when you come home. (name)

42.Thank you for the delicious tea (three names a 2 yr old a 4 yr old and dad- a 4 year old [I'm guessing] drawing of a person and a drawing of their bike with a kiddy trailer on the back)

43.To Amber-/Every time I see a little baby girl I think of you. Every time I feel a lonely pang in my heart I think of you.

44.What a lovely spot! Thank you. My dog wolfie and I are visit with my friend (name withheld)

45.365 days ago my mother touched death. She pushed it away and is still with me with strength. With tea and view, thank you for this space to be grateful and think on all that life brings.

46.Thank you for this beautiful gift! Was very much enjoyed.

47.Jay you are chill. Butt

48.When I try to have the thought/ it escapes me./ When I asked to fall in love/ I felt lonely. Once I heard their sounds/ the birds surrounded me. / Ask for nothing and you have found me.

49.The lone buttcheek of mountain ascends,/ a vast clench of lava stuck in the air catching last moments of ancient sunlight./ A nude beach, lover lost amidst the tailings, struck now, as though a forehead glistened with an effort to climb./The rump of walking, roving out west, a look over the Pacific at gold delivered to the edge of the day./ It's time for those ass-pants/ and a yoga-mat. GRACIAS!!

50.recently I've been thinking a lot about 'Life' with a capital “L” and 'life', the way we live. I find one beautiful, and the other tragic. Sitting by the lake, watching the birds and the beats, enforces my views.

51. Wouldn't this earth (*I think- this writing is very very small and the style is hard for me to read*)// be a better place if everyone could give- share like this venue./ Cheers

52. See to understand.../then/ to be understood (name)(on reverse side) Took a wrong turn and ended up here with my best friends/ Thanks

53. (big drawing of a cat) Thank you we needed this. We are having hard times. (heart, heart, heart- name)

54. Walking this morning I realized, however difficult my days may be, there will always be the woods to walk in. (heart)

55. Miles of asphalt under the tires. Left after sideways thick rain streams knocked down the felt birdhouse./ Her wet fur wreeks of urines- why didn't I stop when she longingly looked out the window?(spelling theirs)

56. Thank you (child's printing name and heart)

57. (music notes) dada dum dooo/ I believe I took music classes for a house around here. I now play drums and guitar. Thanks for the start! (name which could have been any of my students too many with the same name)

58. (drawing of a sun/mountains/cat with cup) poem on the street.tumblr.com/ Tea for me/ Tea for two/ Tea for you/ Take a tea to me/ and I will take a tea to you/ tea's the warmth of others/ made in a kettle (reverse side) take a look; Poemonthestreet.tumblr.com/ Poems written for passerby in Portland, OR

59. A spot of tea cools me down on a hot! summers day/ Turn my back...it is a mirage? Swirls of heat off the field of grass/ an ice cream come, alas (reverse side drawing of the mountains with names labeled)

60. I've ridden past this spot a dozen times & likely will a dozen more time before my time in Seattle is up. I have always had the inclination to stop, so here. I am!!(smile)/ I hope that all the people who are dear to my heart know that I think they are significant. Your tea service demonstrates this idea towards humanity. (reverse side) peace, love & Happiness.

61. Today I woke up and saw my life though the leave I always have. Tomorrow I may do the same; I'll never know. Until the day tomorrow is not a day in my life, but a remembrance of what I was. Until tomorrow was nothing but what I will miss today.(their spelling)

62. Thanks Jay/ what a nice day/ hate to be away. but / here I am. By the way./ Raaaiinnnierr/ up hill from here. (name)

63. Few of us can do great things. Yet we can all do small thing with great love...We pass this way but once. May the world be a little better for our passing.//Thank you for this opportunity to relax and appreciate a beautiful place, while sipping tea. (name)

64. (drawing of mountain) herbal tea clasp clang/ I sit down, view mt. Rainier/ sip a smoky tea./ (field- haiku) { *this is theirs not my parenthesis* }

65. I'm moving to Europe and can't wait. (name)

## Final Report 2 months and 2 weeks about the Community Tea Table



11/8/15, 8:33 am

*here are the 'cards' from August and below them is comments and the cards from September and 2 weeks of October*



The cards of August

(again not in the order of 'submissions' because weather and people reading them has shuffled them too much for me to know how to put them back in order. I try not to read them every day, that way it seems to me like the messages really are shared with everyone and not just for me.)

1. Tuesdays, 1am ; the city soaked in rain/ The city is changing the street light/ the dull yellow of romantic midnight walking alone/ is gone to the bright white of hospital halogens/ I will miss walking beneath them/and wishing for something else.

2. Everyone puts a piece of themselves in who they love, so when someone seems empty just know that they put too much into a person who didn't put anything back into them.

3. Thank you? I hope everyone who stops here has a wonderful day! I love you!

4. Prayers for my father. Who's been in the hospital for eight weeks now, and is still waiting to see if he'll every walk again.-----Today I'm out here, enjoying the sun, and thinking of everyone who cannot.

5. Fires rage afar/ and smoke fills the air/ haze makes for beautiful sunsets/ and some go on/ as if all is the same/ all one while knowing/ big changes are afoot. This is the time of change/ the time to die/ the time to bring new life into the world.

6. When will you be happy?/never./happiness is an emotion, that effects how you live./and when you choose how you live./you're never happy. (picture of skateboard.)

7. (drawing of a naked pregnant woman-

8. Sorry no poem but thank you (smile) it made me smile.

9. I don't know

10. Jeffrey, where you are now, do you look up and sense impossible mysteries?/ and do you ever think of me?/I have not found the portal you dissapeared into. (their spelling)\

11. LOVE (big block letters)
12. A sun faded tablecloth/ More beautiful each day/ Proof of glorious days (names and a drawing of a tandem bicycle- this couple were riding around on their 25th anniversary)
13. Today/ god speaks/ through my/ vagina
14. (drawing of stars, moon, sun and a hand [I think] "Birth in the physical is death in the spriritual. Death in the physical is birth in the sprituel:~ Edgar Cayce (heart drawing and their spelling)
15. So you want to know the Secret to life? {turn over} There is no Secret.
16. To trust in the world is to....Jump head first eyes closed into \_\_\_\_?
17. [there are check boxes next to each /\_/] (check all that apply) /love with/ love for/ love together/ love self/ love other/ love ancewstors/ love the future/
18. (drawing of 2 bicyclists the mountain and a bird on back drawing of a man with a hat and a dog )desperado/ old dog haven
19. (stars and scribbles) i have/galaxias growing/ inide me! (their spelling)
20. Ciao a tuttie./ Asero venuta ei america per trovai l'amore. Ho cercato d'appertutto- Da New York, a Miami, Losangelis, e finalimento Seattle. Nu 60 anni are vivo qui in America. (not positive that I am reading this correctly it's the best I can do. )
21. you're/ worth it/ and/ IL Y (heart drawing) (I love you)
22. Don't do drugs and stay in school!
23. To my new friend,/ the elegant owl./ Thank you for/ letting me watch/ you bathe in/ the moonlight.
24. (sketch of the scenery) Thank earth
25. Have a nice day! (heart heart)
26. I love you/Gie/Sopralie
27. What a beautiful gift!/ Our tea time discussion is/ all about what figts we/ can offer our community.
28. beautiful spot with a view of Rainier where we can drink tea & talk about accomplishing things that scared us. Love (name and date)
29. Friend told me she was going in for Stage 4 surgery & then it kept delaying. Finally she left & left a note on her door that she had to leave early couldn't say goodbye and do drop off cat to new home week later- I see her posting on FB- I message how did surgery go- no reply Then I find out she never moved out! It may all be a lie- she said she was good muslim. I am sad.
30. F\*(\*ing cancer! F\*()(\*)(\*k! My first real adult friend, I like to talk about you like a peer and after awhile casually mention how you bought the first ford tractor that came out, or how you pioneered being a badass parapellogic in the days when an you said you sere "supposed to just sit in a corner and piss yourself." Death's it; back to dirt and nothing else. I'll remember and love you til I die and keep telling stories about. You. & us (the mans name) RIP 2015

### **The Cards of September and the end of the tea table**

I kept the tea table going until Oct 15th. During those days (October days) I slowly removed a chair or a glass. As the rains came I moved most of the cards inside and the umbrella and it's stand- pulled out of the ground. The final week and on the last day I dismantled (sledgehammer) the table.



The table was a wooden box that was in the cottage when I moved in. I used a jigsaw to make cutouts for feet on each side and used it for years either as my table or the base for a larger table. It had truly fulfilled its function and I felt it was time to discard it and either make or get/buy something better/newer (someday-probably).

Now at the tea table spot there is one green chair sitting above the top/surface of the table as though the table sank into the ground.

On sunny days one/I can still sit there and look out over the lake/forest/to the mountain, but honestly it's nearly winter here and often too wet and definitely too cool/cold for me to do it.

So below is the last series of cards left by people for those 6 weeks. As the weather turned and public schools began, passersby dwindled so there were fewer visits though up to the end the Teens would visit and drain the teapot.

Any thoughts that I have I will include after certain cards but generally it is what it is and it will be different if I do it again next spring. Heraclitus is said to have said 'you can't step into the same stream twice' he didn't really say that but the sentiment is a good one. If I do it again it will be different – different/new visitors attitudes- even the weather will be different and so will the tea and the table, in fact so will I.

All the best for your winter months- Thanks for reading.

1. Saturday the 5th 9:50AM Acts like this help to restore my faith in humanity. Thank you.

2. Thank you for being here. So simple and so kind. Helping to heal so much with the beautiful act. Inspiring!

3. 9/6/15 it's in your true/ afraid, vulnerable, weak/ moments that true strength/ is built- Laura Bicknell (this may be a quote I don't think 'she' wrote the card but then I don't know that either)

4. 9/12 One time I lived within a crow./ I learned things I did not know./ Tree tops and bramble bush forgotten/ wintered over, mold and rotten/ hopefully there is still time to grow.-m

5. Rico- you are 10,000 miles away but I still think about you every day. (on the back Queers +Beers)

6. If I was a dog I would eat a frog/ If I was a frog I would sit on log/ If I was a log I'd hide in the fog.

7. 9/16 How happy is the blameless vessel's lot/ the world forgetting, but the world forgot/ Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind/ Each prayer requested, each wish resigned./ I may forget the moment, but my delight in it is still real.

8. Sept 7 2105 summer at its end/ the days are getting shorter/ our nights are but dreams./ There once were 2 rappers named Mirapalot & Rap God they went on adventures that were often dangerous or odd they went for swims and climbed on top of lighthouses and did it ever so sneaky like two little mice

9. 9-12-15 Bicycle riding/ Disaster relief trails/ do it for doughnuts/ 3 names

10. Oasis

11. Jay where da trashat

12. yo was good j. some fite ass tea (mush). We need that trash can tho. Yup drawing

13. names 9/30/2015 Garfield highschool 016' (most of the teens who came by attended this highschool from previous posts they're the 'skateboarders' 11-14 are definitely

their messages)

14. drawing of skateboard everybody sucks assholes

15. drawing of teapot with a bicycle and rider inside the pot

16. Lots to think about these days/ stress from work, not enough play/ changes in life coming down soon/ unsure what I want for me & wifey & cats/ Everything will work out in its own way/ we'll accept and love what comes/ together will be easier./ I am glad to have a partner/ Thank you Victoria. I love you.- KFC on back Thanks for making & keeping this!/ 1st stop for my and VL 9-9-1015/ surprising reflective emotional moment!

17. How lush the world is, how full of things that don't belong to me- Louise Glück

18. 9/10/15 Tires on the bridge, birds in the trees/ boats on the water, squirrel in the grass/ you and me; majestic Tahoma/ watching over us always- VLG on back Thank you Jay! We've ridden past many times & finally stopped for a beautiful rest. Busy world, doesn't encourage enough moments like this- thank you for offering this moment. VLG

19. skateboard drawing on one side morning crisp air, tea,/ indian running through/ the veins. My head is in/ the clouds, but my gravity is centered {I have a lot to say about this young man but I'm not sure this is the time or place- he visited often and we talked a lot}

20. Jay- out for my morning run! Thx for the tea- name

21. I can see earth/ resting on the clouds./ You can see stepping/ stones for the giants./ wish you were here/ (and I was there).

22. Drawing of a rocket or jet

23. drawing of the teapot

24. September 22/15 I'm the beginning of eternity./ the end of time and space./the beginning of every end./ the end of every place./ what am I? (spelling theirs and on the back) hint: the power enrolls./ what do these words/ have in common?

25. 9-29 Tremendous/ Elegant/ Awesome tea (under each letter of 'tea' are the other three words- vertically- and then the three words written horizontally again at the bottom- spelling theirs-- on the back a drawing of the teapot with steam coming out of the spout and a name on the pot)

26. 9-30 glasses went from kitchen to sake. (I began to put out taller glasses as the small ones I began with broke) /more jars. More drinks to please Me./ don't like the cig butt under a foot dance/ mountain is hazy. Doesn't escape a glance/ dog is bouncing for another treat./ time to go on. Last day of the tea feast. (on back drawings of glasses cig butts teapot tea jar chair dog and a heart) I will be sad when it's all over

27. I've been riding up & down this hill for 3 years. As fast as I can. This is my 1st time stopping. I had no idea the view (and tea!) were so good!/ Thanks for both! A reminder I guess.... to slow down once and awhile...peace sign and name

28. I can hear your brakes/ from the top at the tea stand./ fix your goddamn bike.

29. Just breathe.../Thanks for the tea/ and bunny/ and talk/ name and date 9-7

30. Motorists are calling in sick to public holidays, boredom is inevitable in a room.

An experiment, a process has come to a conclusion. Makes me feel a bit poetic, definitely humbled. I didn't know, didn't really plan this out, how this would develop and it definitely did not go the way I could have expected.- - -

The heartbreak of someone destroying the set up.

There was one man who wanted to get into a fight with me 'your private office- it's OUR park too' who until then and never again actually stopped to see what was offered – a frightening moment but a week later no longer worried me.

Some neighbors who I had never met (I've lived in the neighborhood for more than 30 years and in the cottage for 25) came by- some more than once. The too few, to my mind, cyclists who paused and stopped or, at least because I was sitting there, for the first time noticed the view- in some ways (that I'm not really proud of- presumption/pride on my part) was a point I was trying to make – if in fact I was making any point at all.

As the project went on and I added the cards and the tea and then herbal tea and more chairs I found that sometimes this was more work than I had 'signed up for'. Then there was, more often, just the pleasure of doing it.

I got a fair amount of my own work done which was the reason why I set the table out there, so in that way this was a success.

Doing it made me feel good – not better than- good for myself. So I'm glad to have done it- think I'll try it again and if you have the urge to do something similar where you are please let me know how it goes for you.

Yours- Jay