

Deborah H Nicely

I was born in Paris, by chance, in 1934, and grew up in New York City. In summers and on spring and fall weekends we lived in our country house in Westchester County. Summers were 4 months long at the independent school where I went. Later I went to a boarding school and to several colleges, finally graduating in history from Harvard, where I also got an MA.

My marriage to Fritz Levy estranged me from my family and brought me first to Iowa City and then to Seattle. I became the mother of two charming girls, one of whom is an MD at Group Health and the other, a kayaking and rafting guide and coach in North Carolina, as well as a valued accountant at REI.

My husband's association with the UW led me to a job at what was then St. Nicholas and which became Lakeside School, where I taught history most happily for 30+ years. I quickly was attracted to the playground which is the Northwest, starting out with my school's "beach hikes," which caused me to take up rock climbing and then glacier climbing with The Mountaineers. I also became friends with a couple of brothers who regularly did fascinating sea kayak trips in southeast Alaska, and I have been many places, starting out from Prince Rupert. Also I acquired some property northwest of Prince George, and I developed a summer routine of sea kayaking and then solo hiking in the mountains of BC.

Those were great summers - and yes - I also was occasionally lured on trips abroad. My history studies had been supplanted with languages - from school I had learned Latin and French; in college I went on to German, a smattering of Italian and then a couple of trips brought me into contact with Russian (the letters defeated me) and Swahili (a year teaching in Tanzania).

Eventually the gift of a horse sent me onto a new tack. These days my principle pursuits are horses (I have two Thoroughbreds and my favorite activity is "eventing,") and politics. I am always too busy and have never learned to be well organized. But I enjoy my life, and I try to be a plus, not a minus to those around me.