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I think Bert liked a little pomp but no pomposity. Before I heard that he wanted something like the following, I could see a memorial potluck expanding across a large green field with one addition, the most handsome possible recliner occupying the center.

In April 1972 or 1973, the Teton County Planning Commission called for volunteers for a subcommittee on the economic impact of growth. Both Bert and I joined, meeting each other and forming a friendship over 18 months of mainly earnest discussions, chewing the fat that is still being chewed in this valley. I met Meg soon. They became special friends.

Questions of English usage and political changes engaged us all.

In September of '88, at the Old Timers' Picnic, Bert and Meg and I and a friend stood under a tree from which melted snow dripped continuously and our plates and food grew soggy. We knew finally the fires were ended. I have never seen Bert jollier or Meg so pleased.

Bert's memory stayed sharp, an anomaly among my small sample of older men. I could call Bert and always receive an answer to questions like, "What was the name of that restaurant?" and "Who did that thing?" and "Which place was that where that other thing happened?" Pretty good.

He was also the only person who apparently wanted to listen to my poetry. I would read to him with the needed sound volume. In the last years, he greeted me several times with the question, "Have you written more poetry?"— an enchanting question, singularly Bert's.

When at various moments I phoned Bert to voice my latest frustration, he would answer in a sonorous, gravelly voice, "HAVE A DRINK!" With the remembered voice, I keep on tap that suggestion.

During the latter years, parties were organized for Bert. There were different sorts of people who came — from his different circles — forming a loosely cohering temporary community in a place where individualistic, non-continuous relationships predominate. Only Bert could have been the nexus.