

Berry Beary Kind

Book 9



*In a very kind town called,
“Berry Beary Town”*

*Lived a very kind Bear called,
“Berry Beary Kind”*

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Imagine a place where fun things happen every day;

Where everybody is happy and helping each other;

A place that is safe, pleasant and welcoming to all;

Where everyone is friendly and has what they need;

A place where new and interesting ideas and solutions can be tried.

...Perhaps, if we all do more than imagine, this dream can become a reality.

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1--Stars and a surprise

“Imagine!” Berry Beary Kind held up a clear glass cup to the light, “This use to be sand on the sea bed.”

A smudge was left on the glass and he finished washing it to perfection, then left it to dry.

With dishes washed Berry Beary Kind then moved on to other tidying work around the house.

“Mom!” he called out a short while later, when he couldn’t find her anywhere.

She was in the walk-in closet getting all prepared for the evening’s after supper stroll.

“Ah! There you are,” he said, as she responded to his call and emerged looking “Berry Beary Pretty” in deed.

“I see you are set to go, and looking as lovely as the glasses I just finished washing,” Berry Beary Kind complimented.

To which his dad agreed, and took his dear wife by the arm and off they went.

“Where to, tonight, Papa?” Berry Beary Kind asked.

The walk on this fine summer night would be through, “Starry Lane”. It was the pathway that led out to a lovely meadow were a spectacular view of the night time sky could be seen.

Berry Bella and Berry Beary Fun, his younger sister and brother, were staying home to practice some music with Berry Merry Song, for a surprise birthday celebration in two days. It was to be their elderly neighbour’s

birthday. They liked to put on surprise shows around town just to keep up the joy and merriment feelings. And it worked!

Berry Bella had a whole list of what days were special to what bears in the town, and she would plan fun events, simple to do, that didn't take a whole lot of time but that were remembered for a very long time.

Sometimes her brothers would join in the activity, or other times she invited friends and other town dwellers to do something special with her.

She even kept the reason for this night's music practice a secret from Berry Beary Kind and her parents. It was their usual practice night, but what they were practicing and why was to be a surprise even for them.

When Berry Beary Kind and his parents reached the end of "Starry Lane" and gazed up to the night sky, it was a wonderful sight. In need this was a great night to choose, as there was much activity in the night lights overhead. Seven zooming stars were seen, collectively by all three of them, and some fun time chatting was enjoyed as well.

Sometimes it was very busy being the mayor of the town, and it didn't always leave that much time for Berry Beary Kind to have family activities. But these were important too, both as time to relax, as well as for friendship time.

When they at last got back to the house, Berry Bella and Berry Beary Fun had just finished practicing their show and were putting away their instruments.

Berry Beary Kind noticed a bit of a twinkle in his sister eye, and Berry Beary Fun was quickly leaving the room to brush his teeth and get ready for bed—so no questions could be asked.

Berry Beary Kind said nothing. He was sure if it was something his sister was planning it would be good, and he'd find out eventually.

Two days later when their neighbour's birthday came around, Berry Bella, who had it all planned out and had snacks ready to serve, made a suggestion to her family.

"You know it's our neighbour's birthday today. What do you say we go pop in and sing her 'Happy Birthday'?"

It was a good time to do it, and so they all agreed.

What they didn't know was that she and Berry Beary Fun had secretly brought all the props that would be needed, including the snack to serve, over to that house already. They had them hidden in a secret place. So there was nothing to be detected. It would be a surprise both for the neighbour as well as for the other three members of her family.

"Knock, knock," Berry Beary Kind tapped on the door, and then let himself in, so as not to trouble the elderly bear who was resting on the couch, after she called out for him to enter.

"Well, aren't you a fine bunch, coming here to see me on this day that I thought no one remembered," she said, after they came in singing "Happy Birthday".

Bella then said they had a little something to present to her. That's when Berry Beary Kind and her parents got a questioning look on their faces and were eager to find out just what was coming next.

Berry Bella motioned for her parents and brother, Berry Beary Kind, to please be seated, and so they did.

While she did this, Berry Beary Fun had ran to the backyard and was bringing in the musical instruments and a small bag of props. Very soon the surprise "show" had begun. They sang a few songs and did some sort of a fun clown act, which was most enjoyed.

While the clapping at the end was going on, and a very big smile was on their neighbour's face, Berry Bella went quickly to get the bag of hidden snacks, that thankfully some creature of the backyard hadn't yet found.

Their neighbour was so touched to have this friendly family to share these moments with, she nearly cried. But instead exclaimed that there couldn't be a better gift than that they had given.

Berry Beary Fun gave her a hug and said he hoped her new year would be her best.

As they waved good bye and left they sang "Happy birthday" once again, and a radiant smile was beaming back to them.

The surprise had worked, and everyone was thrilled. It was always nice when something surprising and fun happens—something that made hearts happy and a town a better place as a result.

Berry Beary Gentle and Berry Big Beary put their arms around Berry Bella and Berry Beary Fun and complimented them.

"You used your time of music practice well. We're glad parents of such a delightful family."

Berry Beary Kind thought of a way to show his appreciation to his sister and brother for doing their part to cheer folks up. But he'd keep it a surprise, of course!

2--The Christmas Wreath

Great Grandma Gilderine was a very kind bear. She had been in Berry Beary Town for as long as most folks could remember. And every Christmas she put on a special program, for all ages, but especially for the young folks and their parents who liked to have a bit of artsy fun.

One Christmas it was particularly cold and most bears were all snuggled up on a couch or with a book beside their home's fireplace. It wasn't a day bears liked to go outside in, well not for very long at least.

However, Great Grandma Gilderine kept to her word and set things up in her big family den—an extra large room where all kinds of fun took place, especially on cold wintery days, like today was. She just buddled up real good with a scarf around her neck, a woollen hat on her head, and a song on her lips. And she got a good fire going in the fireplace too.

Most people were with their families on this Christmas day afternoon, but not everyone had a big enough family that could provide all kinds of fun and games all day long; and there were those who had mothers with little ones to care for.

Great Grandma Gilderine was going to be around making things as fun and interesting as she could for anyone folks who wanted to visit her. She put lots of work into the activity planning, and enlisted the help of other as well.

Well, she didn't always know what to expect, or rather who to expect to visit and enjoy the activities, but that was all part of the fun for her. "If no one comes at all," she thought, "at least I had fun preparing. And I don't really mind if folks just need to stay bunkered down on a day like today. Brrr! It sure is unusually cold. But with more folks coming to visit and a bit of laughter, that will really warm things up."

She then went to stir the hot veggie soup that she had going to serve to visiting folks.

"Ding dong!" the door bell rang, and in walked Berry Beary Friendly, bringing with him a bouquet of flowers. He kissed Great Grandma Gilderine with a Christmas greeting and made his way to the activity den. After him followed an array of visiting folks, and unusual amount, more than any other Christmas she had before.

Then she saw the reason, when the room was as warm and toasty as it could be, with so many folks visiting.

Berry Beary Kind and his sister Berry Bella had come. He said, “I told folks that the warmest place in town on a chilly day like today was Great Grandma Gilderine’s place. And I was right! I’m taking my coat off already.”

Well, it wasn’t the warmest before they showed up, but it sure was now.

Great Grandma Gilderine smiled. It was a kind thing that he had done, getting folks to visit, even if it took a cold walk to get there.

“So what do you have for us today?” Berry Beary Friendly, who was sitting beside her asked.

There were tables displaying different arts supplies including coloured paper, sprinkles of shiny things, pens, markers, paint and so forth.

“Well, I thought we could make the biggest wreath in the town,” Great Grandma Gilderine said.

That’s why there was a table in the center of the room with a very large piece of white cardstock. Everyone was to work together to make a paper wreath out of this and that. It would then be displayed on her large window, so big it was nearly like a wall.

“Well, let’s get started, shall we?” Berry Beary Friendly said to everyone, after helping to explain the project to the team.

“But not before we all have a good cup of Great Grandma Gilderine’s soup. I could use a bit more warming up,” he added. Everyone agreed, and before too long were all sitting around sipping cups of soup and chatting about what fun they each had had so far that day. A few Christmas songs were sung, to the tune of Berry Merry’s banjo, and Berry Bella helping to lead the singing.

“I think we are good and warmed up now,” said Berry Beary Kind. “I think my sister and I will do this portion here of the wreath, does anyone mind?”

Soon everyone had teamed up with a partner or two and began creating a work of art, and feeling comfortable warm.

“I didn’t know if anyone would show up today after all,” Great Grandma Gilderine said to Berry Beary Kind when saying good-bye at the end.

To which he replied, “I can’t think of a better thing to have happened. What would we have done with out you. You’ve made to day extra special for us all. A Christmas to be remembered, in deed.”

Just then a whistle was heard and everyone suddenly paused to see what was going on.

Berry Beary Conductor and his family just showed up at the door with a very special surprise.

He announced, “My family and I would like to give a Christmas treat to whoever wishes to come aboard the ‘Christmas express’. We have decorated it, warmed it, and have a band of musicians playing in one of the cars. There are snacks served in another train car, and story time in another train car with Berry Beary Cold who is visiting from frosty mountain. All you have to do is walk out to the nearest tracks and you’ll see the train ready to go. We can pick up others along the way, or drop you to your house, if you live near the train line.”

Everyone smiled. It was a fun surprise, and they were eager to go.

Great Grandma Gilderine wasn’t going to miss this chance either, and so Berry Beary Kind and Berry Bella helped to walk with her out to the train.

“My what a lovely wreath you have there,” Great Grandma Gilderine exclaimed to Berry Beary Conductor as she boarded the train. “I think you have the biggest one yet decorating the front of the train. My isn’t is lovely. Must have taken you a long time to make it!”

Berry Beary Conductor smiled. He and his family had made it and it felt good to be appreciated.

Great Grandma Gilderine decided to go to the train car where the stories were happening. It wasn’t every often that Berry Beary Cold made it down to this town, and she didn’t to miss tales of what goes on up in the mountains.

When at last the train had finished it’s journey around town, and everyone had returned to their homes, Berry Beary Kind thanked Berry Beary Conductor and his family.

“I think this has been one of our best Christmas days!”

They all agreed, and so did the rest of the town. So many people had done their bit to give a bit of fun to others, and together it made for a splendid time.

When Great Grandma Gilderine returned to her home and saw the lovely wreath that had been displayed, she whispered how glad she was for another year completely, with so many friends who had helped her out. She was already planning the next bit of fun she could offer—something for the New Year celebration.

“Great-grandma! Great-grandma!” the young voice was heard as Great Grandma Gilderine entered the house.

Her great grand children were ready for story time by the fire place. They were glad she arrived back just in time. They greeted her with smiles and were ready to end the special Christmas day with a good story.

“Tell us about when you were a little girl!” came the request.

And out of her aged and smile filled lips sprung a story.

“Let me tell you about the first Christmas wreath my father made out of real branches from the forest,” Great Grandma Gilderine began.

She had lived a long life, and hoped to have many more years added. Spending time with these young ones helped to make her feel loved and happy to be there living each day.

When at last all the children were tucked in bed, Great Grandma Gilderine reclined in her own for a good long rest, dreaming of the fun she’d do for children, the next chance she’d get.

3--The 50th Town Improvement Initiative

“Just one more to go!” said Berry Beary Kind as he dropped the last pebble into the can.

“The count is 49, and the goal is 50. In another few weeks I think we’ll reach our goal.”

“Berry Beary Kind!” his mother called out.

“Yes, I’m in the study,” he replied.

“Oh, good. There you are. I was just doing some washing when all of a sudden, a pipe must have come loose. Before I knew it there was water spraying, and I can’t use the tap until it’s fixed,” Berry Beary Gentle informed her handy son.

Berry Beary Kind looked up from jotting something in his notebook. “Already then. I’ll come take a look soon. I’m just writing a note to inform folks of the next united town’s effort to make things a bit more enjoyable in Berry Beary Town.”

Berry Beary Gentle came in and sat down to hear what her son was planning.

“Over the past two years we have done 49 special united efforts, and the goal was 50. Well, it could have been more, as so many people wrote in, in reply to an article I put in the paper, asking for suggestions of things we could all help each other with to make the town a bit more relaxing and friendly. --Without unneeded stress, you know. If there are things that could be done to change things for the better, I think we should all work together to do so,” Berry Beary Kind explained.

His mother looked over the long list of suggestions that town folks had made—things that, from their perspective, would make things better. She knew that if people are happier, then it would be easier to act more friendly and kind.

She agreed that the final idea selected from the list was a good one indeed.

“What do you think?” Berry Beary Kind said, showing his mother the written announcement.

“All malfunctioning equipment gets fixed—such as lawnmowers and bikes and cooking equipment.”

All broken equipment that towns folks knew how to fix, would be brought to a very large workshed, at the appointed day. Each part of the town had a day when it would be their turn to bring their things for fixing. Folks who were doing the fixing were helped out in other ways, such as meals being cooked and brought to their home by those who needed help getting their equipment fixed.

Just because someone didn't know how to fix things, or perhaps didn't have things that needed to be worked on, didn't mean they weren't included in the town's project. There was lots that could be done to all help each other out. Some town's folks travelled to distant areas to get

needed supplies, if that was what was needed for getting the equipment working well.

And of course each family needed to check to see what worked and what didn't. It would be no good if all was set to go, but folks didn't take the time to find what needed to be fixed.

When it was the day for Jellina's part of the town to bring their broken-down equipment, she and her mother pulled a wagon loaded with not only a few bicycles, but also plenty of snacks. Jellina had helped her mother choose what snacks to make and bring to those who were helping to fix their broken things; snacks for them to take home to their families.

Off they went on their rather tiresome walk. But not for long, for before they walked too far, a certain sound was heard. Jellina was the first to spot what it was. "It's Berry Beary Kind on his Lawn-mobile! Yea!" she said.

Berry Beary Kind had rigged up a contraption that used the motor of an old lawnmower, but had a seat to sit in, and most of all a way to tug a wagon. He used it for work in the yard, and for bringing supplies to town folks who were working hard outdoors.

It wasn't long before the wagon was hooked up and away Berry Beary Kind drove, taking the supplies and the broken bicycles to the shed. Now Jellina and her mother could walk peacefully along, hand in hand, all the way to the shed. They would be able to explain to the fix-it crew just what the problems were with the bikes, as well as divvy out the snacks to the workers for them and their families.

"Always happy to help!" said a smiling Berry Beary Kind, as he drove away after parking the wagon load of supplies.

“Mama, I wish we could have given him some of the berry pie that we baked, because he is helping too,” said Jellina.

“Well, I guess we’ll just need to make some more, then. Oh, you know there’s going to be a big party and celebration when this goal has been completed. Maybe we could bake some of his favourite pie for that event, and present it to him. Is that good?”

Jellina agreed it would be such a nice way to say thank you to him for all he had done for all of them. He cared for each one personally, as well as the whole town, and wanted it to be such a pleasant place to be.

“Clink!” went the last rock into the can.

Berry Beary Kind had just added the 50th counter. The goals had all been reached, and it had made such a difference to the town folks. He was now planning a special celebration to acknowledge all the work and team effort that had been made.

Again, he had written an announcement in the town’s newspaper asking for suggestions for what they could do to celebrate. He said that any suggestions that weren’t done this time, would be kept on hand for future fun activities.

He was looking over the list of fun when a knock sounded at the door of the study.

“Well, well! Hello Jellina,” Berry Beary Kind said as he looked up to see who it was.

“We just couldn’t wait,” she said.

Her mother then stepped into the room bringing a warm, freshly baked berry pie, made in the special way that he liked to eat it.

“Thank you so much for helping to make our town better by helping us all to help each other more,” said Jellina’s mother.

Berry Beary Kind gave both of his visitors a hug and thanked them heartily for their thoughtful gift and appreciation.

He would enjoy it with his family that evening, as they discussed ideas for the town’s day of celebration.

Yes, a day of fun, in all kinds of ways, would be had.

And, thanks to Jellina and her family’s gift of a berry pie, this gave the good idea that berry pie could be on the list of fun for all, during the day of celebration. It was the right time for it anyway, with so many ripe berries all around town. That was something the children could do—help to pick berries in preparation for the fun day. And the more they picked, the more pie could be made. A good day it would be.

A truly Berry-Kind of day.

4--The Invitation

Berry Beary Kind woke up with a bit of a sniffle, and he was feeling rather hot. His mother came to check on him and brought him something warm to sip on.

“These garden veggies, blended with warm water sure are soothing to my throat,” he said as he took the first few sips and thanked his mother.

“I’m glad it’s today that I’m not feeling well, and that it wasn’t last week when we were traveling,” Berry Beary Kind spoke a positive word and managed a smile.

“Yes, we did have a fine time down by the river with so many of our friends,” Berry Beary Gentle responded. She was glad to see that he was choosing to find something to be glad about, even though it was no fun to be feeling unwell.

“I’ll come by later on to see how you are doing—if you are not sleeping; though I do hope you will be. As fun as it was, the trip was rather tiring, and think it’s good in away that you do have time to stop for sort of a rest before getting on with busy life here back at the town. Maybe you’ll get some new and great idea that you might not have gotten if you were up and around and working around town as usual,” Berry Beary Gentle encouraged her grown son.

“Thank you, mother for your kind words and kind help. As big as I am, it still feels plenty great to have someone look after me when I need it. I think I’ll do as you suggested and try to get some more sleep,” Berry Beary Kind whispered, and then curled up under his covers like a bear indeed, hoping for some good hibernation.

Two hours later when Berry Beary Gentle came softly by to peek in, she found Berry Beary Kind just waking up from what seemed to be a good nap. He was looking better already.

“Oh, Mother!” he exclaimed. “I am feeling a whole lot better, and what a great dream I had!”

Just then his papa poked his head in the door.

“How are you doing, son? I’ve got some mail for you that might perk you up. You’ll have time now to read it and respond,” Berry Big Beary said and handed his son some unopened letters.

“Thanks dad,” Berry Beary Kind said, feeling rather curious.

His parents left the room, and he sipped on some juice his mother had brought while opening some of the letters to read.

“Oh! It’s a letter from Poppy-Ville. I’ve been trying to visit here. I wonder what George the Garage Fix-it Bear has to say,” Berry Beary Kind thought.

“I’m inviting you to stay with my family for a week some time soon—you and your family. We can hardly wait to show you all that has been set up and changed, due to the ideas we get from how your town runs. You will be the bears of honour, if you can manage to spare the time and get away to visit.

Hoping to see you, Gee-Gee Bear”

That was the way the note ended. A fun thought to think about in deed.

He was about to open the next letter when suddenly he was struck with memory of his dream. He’d nearly forgotten it while moving on to read the mail. But it was so much like what he was just reading.

When his mother came to check on him later in the afternoon he told her about the dream that went right along with the letter.

“I was going to some town and there were so many flowers there. There was some kind of a meeting that I was asked to attend. Oh, and we ate lots of honey. And I remember now when Gee-Gee Bear visited us some time back, he told us about the flowers, and I gave him some honey.

“I wonder if this dream is meant to come true! I guess I’ll need to get rested up first, and tend to some other needs around town, but after that, I think it would be great to give them a visit.

“The more towns that get set up with as much friendliness running things, the better. I can hardly wait to see what they have done to make it the best they can.”

Berry Beary Gentle smiled. It was good to see her son having something great to think about. She was sure this would aid him in a fast recovery. And it did! –For in 18 days they all were on their way to Poppy-Ville for a 4-5 day stay.

5--Poppy-Ville (Part 1)

“What a wonderful time we all had!” Berry Beary Kind was speaking on the telephone to his good friend, Berry Beary Fit.

Berry Beary Kind and his family had just returned from their visit to Poppy-Ville, and he was eager to tell all about it.

“How about we go on a long bike ride, and then hike up Mt. Tannel, and camp for a night by the lake,” Berry Beary Fit suggested. “Then you can tell me all about, and we can talk about the many things we need to discuss to make things yet even better around town.”

It sounded like a great idea.

Sometimes after coming home from a trip it was a bit hard to get back into the swing of things, the rather mundane or hard work side of life. But having something to look forward to, and having a friend to help make plans with did make the transition easier.

So the next weekend Berry Beary Kind packed his bike with some food basics, a jug of water, a very small tent and a sleeping bag. A good sun hat and jacket were added, and off he went to bike to Berry Beary Fit’s house.

“Knock, knock,” Berry Beary Kind tapped on the door.

But rather than the door opening, a “Hello” was heard by the side of the house where Berry Beary Fit was emerging from. He’d just gotten his bike out of the shed and was walking it around to the front gate.

“Oh, hi! It’s good to see you again. Been awhile since we had a long time out in nature together. I’m looking forward to this. Thanks for inviting me,” Berry Beary Kind said, and off they started to bike.

They hadn’t even reached the end of the first block when “Pfft!” a tire went flat on Berry Beary Fit’s new bike.

“Oh dear!” he almost said, but chose instead to say aloud, “Good thing it happened right here before we got too far. I’ll guess we’ll be going back for a bit. I do have all the materials needed to fix it.”

Berry Beary Kind added, “And it will give us time to chat while we fix it, which we wouldn’t have been able to do if we started on the long ride first of all—and that was the most important part of our outing, isn’t it?”

They both agreed it all was well still, and turned to go back to Berry Beary Fit’s house.

However, as soon as they reached the door, Berry Beary Kind’s phone rang.

It was a certain Mr. Nelly who desperately needed help. His truck was broken down, his dog had rang out and away into the forest, and he’s sprained his ankle already trying to run after the dog.

Berry Beary Kind offered to drive there to get him, and would bring him to his house. Other bears of the town could tend to the truck, wrap his hurt ankle, as well as round up his dog for him. Berry Beary Kind would ask different ones to help out.

“Looks like I’ve got a little something to do first. I’ll be back in an hour or so,” said Berry Beary Kind to Berry Beary Fit who was already getting to work on his bike.

Berry Beary Kind then biked to his house, got in his truck, and off he was to help someone in need.

“Oh, how wonderful you came back!” said the neighbour over the fence when she saw Berry Beary Fit was now in his garage.

“Why is that?” he asked.

“When you biked away, I was looking out the window and saw this bag fall off your bike. By the time I got to the road you were too far to hear me calling. I picked it up and brought it back here, hoping you would notice and return for it,” the neighbour told him.

“My sleeping bag!” Berry Beary Fit exclaimed. “Surely indeed it would have been sorely missed. It is a good thing I had reason to return. I think I was a bit too quick and eager to get going, and so I wasn’t as cautious as I should have been—both about tying on the bag, as well as watching what I was riding over.”

About an hour or so later, the team was at last ready to try again. But they were a happy team. All worked out, perhaps even better than if they had not had any interruptions to their first attempt at their bike ride.

“Look what Mr. Nelly gave us for our trip!” Berry Beary Kind said, show Berry Beary Fit a box. “It’s his ‘wilderness gear’ box.”

The two looked in and saw things like a compass, a detailed map of the just the area they where heading off to, binoculars, and a few other useful items.

“This is great!” Berry Beary Fit exclaimed. They then tucked the supplies here and there into their bags, and off they rode at a relaxed and happy pace.

“How about we stop before too long and have our lunch, and you can begin to tell me about the trip. I’m very eager to hear.”

And so that is what they did.

“The first thing I noticed when arriving there was...”

The story of all that happened when Berry Beary Kind was visiting Poppy-Ville was eventually written up for the town’s newspaper. Read it for yourself in the next story.

6--Poppy-Ville (Part 2)

--Newspaper’s account of Berry Beary Kind and his family’s visit to “Poppy-Ville”.

Popping over to see the Poppies --By Berry Beary Kind

Ah! And what a fine day it was when we all arrived to visit “Poppy-Ville”. Greeting us, of course was the most beautiful garden entrance way I’ve ever seen. These town dwellers of Poppy-Ville know a thing or two about gardens, plants and flowers.

The whole town was filled with colourful displays here and there, and just about everywhere you went. For as part of the custom of Poppy-Ville, all dwellers spend some time every day they can, to tend to gardening—either their own, or somewhere for the benefit of others.

I don’t think a day went by when I was there, without someone, somewhere, or a whole lot of some one’s spending time making things beautiful outdoors. I invited anyone who wanted to come and visit us here, to teach those of our town who are interested in learning more about working with flowers and creating art with living plants.

Our first stop with Gee-Gee Bear was at Mc-Yummies. It was here that we were treated with the town’s most famous food: Poppy seed muffins. Since growing plenty of poppies is what they do, naturally there are all kinds of poppy seed recipes in use there.

I brought back some recipes and a few bags of seeds, for those who wish to try them out. I suppose if many of our town folks wish for it, they can also take a trip to Poppy-Ville to get more seeds.

On the first day we went to see the “Waterfalls of glory”. These are really long and spectacular falls. A campsite is situated there, and it seems most of the town was there the day we visited it.

I guess they like having visitors, or perhaps they just like meeting up at the falls. We hiked around the mountain and swam in the clear and flowing water. A little chilly, but very invigorating. I can think of several folks in our town who would enjoy camping out there as well.

On day two there was an all-day festival. Town folks would come and go all day. The large field that is now used for town activities was set up with tables displaying all sorts of things folks had made and were skilled at.

There was a stage set up playing live music by various individuals or teams performing, all through the day. And of course, hardly anyone needed to cook in their own homes on that day, for those assigned to take care of food did a great job of making various delights available to those visiting. In the middle of the afternoon is when I got to meet many of the town’s young ones, for they had planned a big and special performance in honour of our coming. I promised to meet them all there the next day, to chat and find out what life was like in their town.

Day three we met with lots of town dwellers. I met and spoke with children at the field who came to play, or just to talk with us. We visited houses of folks who invited us for a brief time of chatting. I think I got to know how things are through the conversations we had on that day. Perhaps speaking with the young ones gave me the clearest view of what life is like for them all.

That night's dinner we visited with Gee-Gee Bear, our main host. So many had been inviting us to their homes that this was our first meal at their home all together. It was a relaxing evening.

Day four it poured rain all day and all night. We took the time to visit the town hall and see the history displayed, and talk with those overseeing the town. They shared stories and showed pictures of different projects and improvements over the years.

They told of the challenges and the troubles that had hit their town in the past 10 years. It must be that these folks there are very buoyant and work hard to get things back in order again, after things have been ruined or destroyed in some way.

Just like flowers in spring, so does this town and its dwellers like to spring back and make things as beautiful as they can. I saw that, as the extra rain caused some flooding in one area of the town.

The roads were a muddy mess with debris of leaves and branches and such washed into that area. But the next day when the water had drained off, a whole team was at work already, bright and early, with shovels and rakes, wagons and all that was needed. I think they think of it as a priority to fix things up again, and as promptly as possible, with as many town folks as is possible.

On the final day, we took strolls around town and got to see the very interesting architecture that they use in their houses. We got to see all the "famous sites" such as the oldest building, the Fountain of Joy, house top gardens, and ride on the unique type of transportation that they have invented themselves.

It is used when someone can't walk or get around easily—though they do prefer to walk if at all possible. It was like a tram on some kind of tracks, but sun powered, yet could be peddle powered on cloudy days by folks who wanted the exercise and offer to peddle and take folks around as is needed. It seemed the exercise did them good.

They were all in good health, as far as I could see. There was exercise of walking, of swimming, of gardening, and in many other ways. These are just a few of the most memorable things that I thought you might be interested in. (End of article.)

7--Berry Beary Gardener

“Let’s see, berries over here. And yes, berries—of another sort—growing over there. And on that side we’ve got, yes, berries. And if you step right this way I’ll show you where I grow..uh... berries. That about sums up what I’ve got growing in my natural, home-grown garden.”

Berry Beary Gardener was showing Berry Beary Kind around his backyard garden. He had put a lot of work into this year, and it was sure flourishing.

“Why don’t we go inside and I’ll treat you to some berry ice-cream topped with fresh berries, and a dribble of freshly cooked berry syrup,” Berry Beary Gardener offered.

“I couldn’t think of a better idea. Sounds berry berry great!” Berry Beary Kind responded.

Today was his birthday and what a treat this was. He realised that each berry had to be grown and cared for and protected from birds and bugs and other creatures that might like to help themselves to what he was growing. Every bite took work and daily effort.

Berry Beary town was a bit like Berry Beary Kind’s “Berry Patch”. He too had to look after things, and keep it all working well and flourishing. He could appreciate the work that goes into things. As he sat down with his friend, Berry Beary Gardener, he thanked him heartily and enjoyed the treat thoroughly.

“Now I have a story to tell you,” said Berry Beary Kind to Berry Beary Gardener. His bear ears perked up. He did like stories. Especially true ones. This was a like a treat for him.

“Once upon a time, many bear years ago, there lived a little dweller in this town, by the name of Sir John Albertson. He had come on a ship to settle in here. It was to be his first winter in the town, and what a cold one it was.

“He didn’t have much food stocked up, but he did have one thing: His favourite berries, preserved in jars. He made sure to bring these with him, along with some seeds for starting his own berry patch. He’d have to wait until spring to start growing his berries, but at least he had some jam and jars to nibble on over the cold winter months, along with a few other food supplies he managed to bring.

“There weren’t many folks around at the time, for it wasn’t even much of a town at the time. But I do wonder, if some of the berries that you have growing here are here because of the seeds that Sir John Albertson planted that spring so very long ago. He wasn’t the only one planting berries, but he did plant the most and kept them going year after year.”

Berry Beary Gardener listened. He’d never heard of this town dweller of many years gone by. “I should like to think that some of these berries are here today because of his continued tending to his garden. I think it’s quite likely. Quite likely indeed,” Berry Beary Gardener commented.

When it was time to leave, Berry Beary Kind took one more look around, then said, “You’ve done so well with your plot of land. How would you enjoy some expansion? There’s a field not too far from here that isn’t getting used for much. I’d like to give its use to you for growing more of your terrific berries. You’ve got a good thing going and I think it would benefit many others. You know how the young bears love berries!”

Berry Beary Gardener was pleasantly surprised. What Berry Beary Kind didn't know was that Berry Beary Gardener had walked over there just the day before and thought, "I wonder if this could be better used by growing berries?" It was amazing how his thoughts and wishes were about to become a reality. All he did was do the best he could with whatever he had, as small as it was compared to proper farmers. And he also shared what he had with others.

"I would very much, I mean berry much appreciate the use of that field. I think I could use it as a chance to teach any young bears and their parents a bit about growing berries. Anyone could come and help out, as well as pick some when the fruit is ripe. It could be a benefit to the town in many ways, Berry Beary Gardener expressed.

And so it was that the "Berry Great Garden Patch" was started. Bears from all over the town came to pick, and to help out too. Soon new berry patches were started in many new locations all throughout Berry Beary Town, and more and more bears learned how to grow them.

Just a bit of sharing, a bit of hard work, and a bit of being willing to learn and try something new, created a whole new side and feature to the already very pleasant and friendly Berry Beary Town—and helped it live up to its name all the more.

8-- Berry Beary Pilot

Berry Beary Kind was getting ready to go to the small airfield.

Meanwhile, Berry Beary Pilot was there, checking on all parts of the plane to ensure it was in tip top shape. He loaded up some food and water and a few blankets as well. "You never do know what weather will happen upon us, or if we'll have to make a sudden landing and wish we were better supplied for a bit of a wait."

Berry Beary Pilot was skilled at more than flight control, but thinking and planning for alternative happenings that weren't in the flight plan.

Just as he got all ready, that's when Berry Beary Kind arrived. He had on his scarf and coat, and several maps. He also brought along a new book to proof read, just in case he got the chance. In fact it was a book that Berry Beary Pilot had written of some of his flying adventures. It was going to be printed for the town's library soon.

"Hi there! How's it going? Flying right?" Berry Beary Kind said in greeting.

"All's well, as far as I know. We're good to go," replied Berry Beary Pilot, and into the small single propeller airplane they went.

"Thanks for taking me up. It's good to get a new perspective every now and then. Helps clear the mind and puts troubles back into size," Berry Beary Kind expressed.

"Glad to have you. I had some exploring in my bones, wishing to see beyond the mountain range that borders our town, but you know how very rugged they are. Only expert climbers can climb them, and even then it takes a long time. And driving over them is of course, not an option. Unless your in some kind of large sized 'entrodamobile'!" he laughed.

Berry Beary Kind smiled.

This was Berry Beary Pilot's "exploration" that he wanted to do before the next EXADD celebration. He wanted to come back with new stories and photos. He had no idea what would be discovered in this part of the land.

With so many details to tend to in the town, it was great for Berry Beary Kind to get something new and refreshing to do. And exploring new areas was always a bit exciting and refreshing.

The weather was perfect for a flight like this. There was great visibility as well, so photos from the plane would be easy to take.

When Berry Beary Kind and Berry Beary Pilot returned to their homes they had something wonderful to tell about. They could not wait until EXADD to share the great news. Berry Beary Kind was telling his young brother all about it, and the others of his family were listening as well.

“Guess what we found? And surprisingly near to where the mountain village is, but it hasn’t been discovered yet. A lake! A large, beautiful, crystal clear lake nestled rather high up. Only a flight in a plane at just the right angle and altitude would have been able to spot it. And of course it had to be a very clear sky too, with out fog and mist and low sitting clouds.”

Berry Beary Kind was clearly very thrilled about this discovery.

“Do you know what this means? That at last, at long last, those in that village can have a much better water supply! Of course it will take work, and many months of it, but just think, it will save us all so much time, and of course save them so much struggle, trying to cope with limited sources of fresh clean water.”

Berry Beary Kind felt like telling it out all throughout his town. This was the best news and clearly the best discovery of the year. But he’d have to wait until the next day, of course, and try to get some rest.

But rest was hard to come, as he just kept dreaming up one contraption after the next of how to get the water pumped up to their mountain village.

“Eventually I’ll think of something that will actually work—but I better get some sleep now, or try to,” he told himself.

In the morning a meeting was held with some of the bears who would be most interested in this possible project—the bears that often had to take truck loads of water up the slippery mountain road—the only place where there was a road. The rest of the mountain range was wild and undriven.

“This is really great news,” they thought. And soon they all were likewise dreaming up all kinds of things that could be invented or used.

Six months later a celebration was held in the little mountain village. The water system was working, and the crystal clear lake always seem to be full and clear and abundant. It had an underground spring that fed it, plus the snow melted into it in the late spring. It was a joyous time.

“We like to thank Berry Beary Pilot for his desire to go beyond his day to day needs and routine and to feel the call of exploration,” said Berry Beary Kind to all the gathered village folks. A cheer was heard and clapping for the new and great solution that was only possible because someone wanted to find out more, and a bunch of hard working bears cared enough for others to do something about a great discovery. It took more than discovery and exploration—it took doing something kind about it to make it worth it.

“Maybe we can put up a guest house here in our village,” said one very pleased bear, “then some of you could now visit us for a time of refreshing. Now with plenty of running water we know you’ll be comfortable and have what you need.”

That was a great idea. There sure were plenty of bears down in the town who would love to have a mountain stay every now and then.

Berry Beary Pilot added, “And I offer to be the transporting service to take folks up here when the house is ready. I do love flying.”

When one good idea that was completed was followed by a new idea that was exciting, this just kept things going from good to better. How fun life in the town was, with bears willing to help, and bears willing to explore, and bears wanting to show appreciation in the special ways that they could.

9--Berry Beary Fix-it gets stuck on North Pass

Berry Beary Fit and his group of young people were happily setting up camp at a place called “North Pass”. They had been hiking for some hours, and now it was time to get a meal going on an open fire, and set up camp for the night.

They’d need to cut down some branches from the forest to lay as the base of their tents. Other branches were found of the right style and cut the right length and shape to hold up the cloths that would drape over them for the night.

On top of the leaves and soft natural material that was to be their bed for the night, the sleeping bags were placed. Each tent was set up in such a way so as to face the fire that was getting set up in the middle of the circle of their tents.

While some set up the tents, others chopped wood for the fire that would be kept going throughout the night. Berry Beary Fit was assigning the different tasks to the youthful bears, according to their ability, knowledge, size and strength. A few were asked to collect some edible herbs growing nearby, these would be added to the stew that was going to be cooked.

Others had the task of checking around the area to see if there was anything to cause alarm. They looked for any dangers that would be good to be aware of—such as tracks from unfriendly animals, or even large tree branches that were hanging off precariously ready to drop down on an

unsuspecting waker-by. They would also fill the jars of water for the night from the stream that ran a short distance away.

At last all was set. Everyone could relax. The meal was cooked, the wood was cut and was sufficient for the cooking needs as well as the fire for the night. The tents were set up. Every one gathered around the fire, sitting on a bit of a logs or a rock, or just their travel bag.

“Can you tell us of an exciting time when you hiked up a mountain?” one youthful bear asked Berry Beary Fit.

He replied, “That sounds like a great topic for stories. And maybe a few of you have some stories of adventures to share as well. Or perhaps a time when a trip didn’t go as perfectly as planned and you had a bit of a challenge to figure out what you were to do to fix the situation.”

Just then a voice spoke up, “I have just the story—about a trip with a challenge that needed working out!” It was a voice they weren’t expecting, as it was from someone who was not on their team.

“Berry Beary Fix-it!” they all said and turned to see him standing there. He must have come upon this happy team of campers on his journey. Or what was it that he was doing? They were about to find out.

“I’m sorry to interrupt your stories and meal, but I’m at a bit of a loss what to do. My truck is stuck in the mud rather close to here, but out of sight from this camp. There is nothing I can do but walk. I suppose I could just stay here, but that won’t make things any easier. I didn’t know what to do, so I started walking, and then I heard some noises coming from this woody area. Boy was I happy and surprised too to find you all,” Berry Beary Fit-it explained.

“Imagine that!” replied Berry Beary Fit. “The one we all depend on for help when we are in some mechanical trouble, is the one needing help. Well, we’ve got to do something about it right away. For in helping you,

we are helping others too, as it's quite likely someone will be needing some assistance right about now."

Berry Beary Fit had a special calling device that he'd brought with him, that still worked out here in the woods. It would put him in connection with Berry Beary Kind right away. This was just in case help was needed while out with the young folks.

"How about I give him a ring and let him know your predicament. Maybe there is something that he can do," Berry Beary Fit suggested. A ring later, and Berry Beary Kind was made aware of the stuck-in-the-mud situation and was figuring out the best strategy and who could help. He'd call back in a bit. So while they waited, Berry Beary Fix-it was offered to join the campers for some stew and story time.

It couldn't have been more perfect timing when Berry Beary Kind rang Berry Beary Fit back with the good news. The meal and storytime was ended, and in about 20 minutes he would be there to help pull the truck out of the mud. This would give Berry Beary Fix-it time to say good-bye and start walking on his way back to his stuck truck. It was about a 10-15 minute walk, depending on the speed he went, of course.

Berry Beary Kind arrived several minutes later than planned, but he had all that was needed. He had a strong vehicle and some chains—and Berry Beary Fun, his younger brother was along there with him as well. It would be good to teach a new bear of the town how to get a struck truck out of the mud. Who knows what situations he might be in when he was a grown-up.

"Sorry I kept you waiting for a while. It's just that another call for assistance came in just as I was about to drive away to come and help you," Berry Beary Kind explained. "Thankfully it was something that my sister, Berry Bella could help with. When that was sorted out, then Berry Beary Fun and I could make our way here."

Berry Beary Fun spoke up, “Our neighbour’s young cat was stuck in the tree and making quite a noise. Not just the cat but a few dogs had surrounded the tree to bark for help. Seems they wanted the cat rescued just as much as our neighbour. So my sister got the ladder and a pet carrier box to safely get it down. –Down from the tree and past the dogs too, I’m sure.”

They all had a good laugh. Thankfully it was something simple and no one was in danger.

“Yes, I’m glad there wasn’t any real tough or strenuous emergency, or you might have had to wait quite a bit longer—or stay the night at the forest camp,” Berry Beary Kind said as continuing to hook up the chains and prepare to pull.

Then he asked, “By the way, how are they doing?” Berry Beary Fit it told what he saw at the camp, and how nicely everything was set up. Just the thought of it made Berry Beary Fun think of a bit of fun that he could be having too.

“When you were talking to my sister about helping with the cat situation, I got my sleeping bag and a box of snacks, along with a bottle of water, it’s right here in the car,” he said with enthusiasm. “It was just in case we also got stuck at North Pass.”

Berry Beary Kind thought that was a clever and well-prepared brother, and commended him. “Good for you. Would you like to put that into use?”

Berry Beary Fun nodded. After all, if there was fun to be had, he certain wanted to be in on it, as his name indicated.

“Well, let me think about it for a moment while we get this truck free. It’s not like we need to drive the truck all the way back into town. Once it’s freed, we can see what to do with our evening—or night,” Berry Beary Kind said with eyebrows raised.

For a while it was a tough go, but eventually Berry Beary Fix-it's truck was free! "Thanks so very much," he said to the willing helpful team that had come to help him. "Oh, I've forgotten," Berry Beary Kind added, "I brought you something to eat. Here you go, and have a safe trip back into town."

Berry Beary Fix-it was happy for a bit more to eat. He'd had a taste of the camper's food, as it was polite for them to offer, and he to accept. But he hadn't had his fill, and hadn't eaten much that day. "Bye then," he said, getting into his well-working truck with the nice snack in hand, prepared by Berry Beary Gentle, Berry Beary Kind's mother.

"So, well?" came the look from Berry Bear Fun. "I say we go look at the camp, say hello, eat the food we brought, and see how they are doing. Perhaps you can snuggle by the fire for a bit before we head home. I'm sure they won't mind a bit more company, for an hour or so," Berry Beary Kind suggested.

"Yea!" Berry Beary Fun exclaimed, and off they quickly went, in the direction Berry Beary Fix-it had said, for a bit of friendship time before going home to sleep in his real bed.

10--Berry Beary Activity

Berry Beary Activity—or Bee-Bee A, as he was called, was very much indeed like a busy little bee, hardly stopping to rest until nearly too weary to even take in nourishment and refreshment.

"There goes Bee-Bee A again," a bear might say as he zoomed past them on his three-wheeled motor trike. He liked to be going and doing, but sometimes it seemed it wasn't as important to him just WHAT it was that he was actually doing, as the fact that he was doing something.

"I'll see your cake you made for my birthday later. Gotta go now. Oh? You spent three hours making it, and the icing will melt if I don't see it

now... ah. What to do?" Bee-Bee A might say. "Can you take a picture of it and send it in the post to me? And when I've got the chance I'll come by for a nibble of it. Hopefully before next weekend I might have a bit of time. Just because it's my birthday doesn't mean I should stop all activity. The sun doesn't wait, so why should I?"

These were some of the things he used to say. He used to, until bears stopped inviting him for anything to do with rest and relaxation, or friendship, or nature watching, or simply reading a book.

It was hard indeed to have even a short conversation with him as he seldom knew what was happening in anyone else's life but his own; and even his own life held little to be talked about, just work or business of some kind or another. And during times of relaxation that isn't what anyone wanted to talk about.

If they asked him, "Did you see that article in our town's paper asking for contributions to the art festival—art we have done or have collected?"

"Nope. Didn't see it. I don't have time to read about fun, really. Too busy keeping myself busy," he might reply.

Yet, one of things he was busy with was collecting art from towns all around, keeping a hefty library of books and art and records. He would travel out of town quite often. He did like collecting things. Some of the cause for his business was also the fact that he did spend quite a bit of time collecting things, and then needed to take care of them.

If you could have read his thoughts, you might have heard him say:

"Gotta build some bigger boxes this weekend. The stuff has outgrown the boxes I built for them three months ago. Gotta keep up with all this stuff. It may come in handy one of these days. Too bad I'll miss the yearly spring festival, with the live music from Berry Merry Song and his band, and the games with the young ones at the park. I hear the town train is a

fun attraction. Though I've never had time to ride it, maybe one day I'll be able to. Gotta keep working so one day I'll have the time."

There was one time of day when Berry Beary Activity wasn't in a mad rush, but very subdued, though no one liked to disturb him at that time, to actually get to speak with him. They were worried it would get him all wound up again, thinking about this or that that he should be doing, instead of talking with them. Maybe they would say something that triggered a thought in his head and then his brief time of quietness would be over.

This was the time of day when he fed his cat, and gave the daily four and a half strokes (that is four pats on its back, and one little scratch on its head). Then Berry Beary Activity would sit in a special chair for the cat to curl up beside him. This usually lasted for 20 minutes.

"This dose is my tank up station. I can work twice as fast if I rest for a short while each day," he said when someone accidentally disturbed his rest. He was rather embarrassed to be just resting. That nearly spoiled his reputation, or so he thought. Though the opposite is what happened instead.

So one fine day Berry Beary Kind wanted to chat with him a bit and see what he could do to make life more enjoyable, and thus make things nicer for a whole lot of other folks that saw him busy, busy, busy. It started to affect the moods of the town folks, and their behaviour too. Something needed to be done.

"When shall I speak with him?" Berry Beary Kind wondered. "If I disturb his one rest, that's no good."

But after deliberating about it for awhile, he decided that for the good of Berry Beary Activity, as well as many others in Berry Beary Town, he was just going to have to visit at cat feeding time.

“Ding dong!” the bell rang. Berry Beary Activity answered it with his cat in hand.

“Oh, now that is a surprise!” he said, seeing the busy mayor of the town—Berry Beary Kind—dropping by with a big basket of all the things that cats love. There was food samples, bell toys, balls of yarn, a new little blanket to sleep on, and various other things.

“I heard it was almost your cat’s birthday, and I wanted to be the first to offer a gift—and to visit with you a bit too. I hear you’ve been pretty busy these days,” Berry Beary Kind said, inviting himself in and sitting down.

“Oh, and by the way, there’s a concert on tonight that you really shouldn’t miss. It’s all about your favourite things. I won’t spoil the surprise, so you can enjoy it for yourself. But here is a ticket to a front row seat. Be on time as on your seat will be a freshly made ice-cream pie. You know how hot it’s been. If you are late, it will melt for sure. It would be a shame to have to clean that up, as it was made by the best chef in the town. I guess I should be going then, you’re a busy bear.”

Maybe it was the load of gifts all at once, or maybe the thoughtfulness that Berry Beary Kind had towards Berry Beary Activity’s cat, or the sudden urge he had to have the best ice-cream snack in the town, but whatever it was, he suddenly paused, really paused. It caused him to then begin to have a nice long and meaningful chat with Berry Beary Kind—about the things that actually mattered.

“I’m sorry for the way I have been around others,” at last he said, when eventually Berry Beary Kind shared gently about this. “I guess I’ve been just too busy to notice, really. And that’s not good. What time did you say the concert was on for? I’ll be there for sure. And perhaps I could make an announcement there and apologise. I do want to change and make more time for the bears, and less time for stuff. I think that would be a good change,” Berry Beary Activity humbly said.

“Well,” Berry Beary Kind said, “Look at the time now? We’ve had such a nice time of chatting, that it’s nearly time to go. You know I’ve got a ticket to the seat right next to yours, and I’d be so very happy to have your company. If we go now, we can take the long way there, and have lovely walk in the setting sun. The pond looks especially stunning at this time of day, and the song of the birds in the park cheers you on your way. It’ll be like a concert before the concert!”

Berry Beary Activity thought for a moment. It would disrupt all his plans that he was going to use his late afternoon and evening for, but when he looked over his list he realised that the things on it could be done another day, if they even needed to be done at all.

“Let’s go then!” he said, and off they went.

But there was yet another surprise waiting.

“Just let me stop off at my house before we head off down the pathway,” Berry Beary Kind said.

Starting to get used to doing some things that others wanted, and not only what was on his mind, Berry Beary Activity consented. But a thought did pop up in his mind, “What will I do for the 1 or 2 minutes that I’ll be standing at his door waiting for him?”

He didn’t have to wonder, for Berry Beary Kind had planned it, that if it worked out, that he would invite Berry Beary Activity in to meet his family. A round of bear hugs and small chat was all that occurred.

“I’d almost forgotten how good it felt to stop for something even as small and simple as a bear hug and a hello. I think I shall like to have more of that in my life as well,” he said.

And so it was that every Friday night that it worked out, he would drop by the “Berry Beary’s” house for a bit of friendship time. He even

started to learn to play a few games, taught to him by “Berry Beary Fun” of course.

And that is how Bee-Bee A changed from being a busy bee, to buzzing around to be a friend to many in the town. Now bears looked forward to seeing him around, because they at last could ask him all those interesting questions they always wanted too—and he could get to sit with them and taste the splendid cakes and snacks they made for him too.

The town, once again, had a new spark to it.

11--The Fix-it Truck

The Story of how Berry Beary Fix it got his truck:

It all happened one evening when Berry Beary Fix-it was working on fixing a child’s wind-up train. He was clever at fixing things. Little things. Not too many bears could sit there for hours working away with tiny little bits and pieces, trying to get them working.

He never tried to do big fix-it jobs, perhaps mostly because he didn’t yet have all the needed tools to do those types of jobs. And even if he did, where would he put them? What sort of vehicle could he use to transport him and all those big-work gadgets to wherever he’d need to go?

All he had, and needed right now, was a little tool belt around his waist, and a few things in his pocket, and he could help with the little things. On to his bike he could go, and before too long be at the house of some family that needed his fix-it help. And that is exactly what he had done today. He’d come over to the Spinnzer’s place to work on a wind-up train that needed some maintenance.

When it was working well again, after a lot time of trying this and that, and cleverly making the needed spare parts out of bit of this and that, he sat back to watch the Spinnzer’s happy children playing with it.

They were loading up the cars with little items they collected outside, and watched it take the loads around and around the track.

“Knock, knock,” came the sound from the front door.

Mr. Spinnzer went to see who it was. He wasn’t expecting any visitors.

“Ah! Berry Beary Kind! How pleasant to see you. Come on in. What news do you bring us this time?” he said ushering in the friendly mayor and offering him a seat.

Berry Beary Kind then shook hands with Berry Beary Fix-it who he found sitting down watching the train activity.

“Believe it or not, it’s you, Berry Beary Fix-it, that I came to see. I heard this was where you were. I knew it might be long job, and I didn’t know when you were going to show up back at your place, so I thought I’d come find you here,” Berry Beary Kind said, sitting down nearby.

Mr. Spinnzer sat on the floor and played with his children, leaving Berry Beary Kind to chat with Berry Beary Fix-it.

“I’ve been getting a lot of calls lately that require quite a bit of fixing. I just can’t tend to everything, at least not as quickly as I would like to. I could sure use your help and your skills.

“This morning as I was drinking a nice fresh glass of water I was looking out the window.—Which I have done every day for many years. Yet this time, something caught my attention.—The old truck that’s sitting in our back yard seemed to stand out to me. It hasn’t been used for a good many years. But that’s just because it needs someone to fix it up,” Berry Beary Kind said to a surprised Berry Beary Fix-it.

“Are you saying that you’d like me to have a go at fixing up your family’s old truck—and then I can use it to go around helping out with

some of the help-calls that come in from around the town?” Berry Beary Fix-it asked, making sure he understood it correctly.

“Yes, that is what I’m suggesting. But only if you want. I know it will take some time to get it working well again, and perhaps you are too busy to work on it just yet. But it’s an offer. Or maybe along the way you’ll find someone else with a better vehicle that they’d like to give to you,” Berry Beary Kind replied.

“Hmm, that is an interesting idea. A very interesting one in deed. I think I’ll come home now with you, if you don’t mind, and get a quick look at it. Could I put my bike in the back of your truck?” Berry Beary Fix-it asked.

“That’ll work fine. Great then. And while you’re there, you might as well join our family for corn and peas soup, and whole roasted pumpkin. It was smelling mighty good when I left there no too long ago,” Berry Beary Kind offered.

And so it was that after supper, Berry Beary Fix it had his first look at what was to be his first fix-it truck. It was perfect, indeed, in so many ways. It was strong. It had large metal tool boxes built into it. It had a ladder, and a wince as well for pulling other vehicles out of mud. Just a bit of engine fix-it work—which he knew how to do--and some new lights, and tires, and it was good to go.

Berry Beary Fix-it could hardly wait to get started on what was now “his” own fix-it truck. He came over every day to Berry Beary Kind’s place after supper to continue on this project of restoring the truck and getting it back in good working order.

At last the day came when it was road-worthy and fit to use. Out the driveway Berry Beary Fix-it drove, and honked the horn to the team of cheering town’s folks who were just as glad as he to see this truck ready to get to work. The on lookers were waving and singing an old folk song they knew from many years back:

“We’re fix-it men in a fix-it van, helping out whenever we can.

We’ve got a hammer and a screw. We’ll go see what we can do.

We’re fix-it men in a fix-it van, helping out whenever we can.

Come along, there’s lots to do. We can sure use your help too.

We’re fix-it men in a fix-it van, helping out whenever we can...”

And on went the song, with new parts added, as they sung it like an anthem, for Berry Beary Fix-it’s first trip out.

He wasn’t just driving it to park in his back yard, for on this day the first job was given to him to tend to, and he was ready and eager to get helping.

“Someone stuck at North pass, again, here I come,” he said, and away he did go.

What a difference it did make to the town, to have another bear to call on in times when help was needed.

12--The Day the clock stopped

“I’ll be going out for tea at the coffee shop, mother,” Berry Beary Kind said when he left the house. Today was Mr. Albert’s birthday. He was turning 70 years old, and so Berry Beary Kind was going to have a bit of an early celebration with him. Just some personal friendship chat time.

“Why don’t you tell me what you loved most about growing up in Berry Beary Town. You’ve been here nearly your whole life now, is that right?” Berry Beary Kind asked this wise and alert elderly bear of the town.

And so their conversation began and many memories were shared. Berry Beary Kind took some notes of the things he said. He wanted to print an article in the paper about Mr. Albert and what the town used to be like.

Mr. Albert was glad to have something written about him. He felt he did have lots to say and few ways to say it. His eyesight was rather weak,

and so writing wasn't easy. He talked rather slowly now in his older years, and didn't get around much to talk to many others anyway. But this was a way that Berry Beary Kind could help be a voice for him to share with others things he was wishing to express.

"That's odd," Berry Beary Kind thought aloud when looking at the clock in the coffee shop. "Seems we've been talking for much longer than five minutes."

"You're right," Mr. Albert nodded, then checked with his watch to see if the clock was indeed the right time.

"The clock must have stopped," Berry Beary Kind said, and then rose to do something about it.

"I know the folks here are depending on it working right."

It was a wind-up clock that had run out of its wind. It was getting older too.

As Berry Beary Kind wound the clock up again and replaced it on the wall, Mr. Albert thought:

"I guess some of us bears do go slower and might wind to a stop one of these days, but that clock makes me glad that I wasn't the one stopping today. I'm glad that I do have a good amount of time left on my 'ticker'. I plan to go on and on. There's still plenty that I wish to do. And I'll start right now with the first wish of my new year."

When Berry Beary Kind sat down again he heard the first wish Mr. Albert had for his new year. It was not a wish for what others could do for him, but what he could do to make the town as fun a place as could be.

"I like having this time chatting about what the town used to be. If you don't mind, I'd like to be interviewed from time to time, for I have somethings I think would benefit Berry Beary Town if they were published. I want to start, and contribute to a 'thankfulness' column in the paper. There are many things that the bears of today think were always a part of life, but they weren't. And if those things weren't around, we'd all really miss them now.

"Take, for example the fountain in the centre of the town. It's a place for boys and girls to play nearby. Families gather to talk on the benches beside it. The birds come to drink, and it waters the plants around. The fresh water bursting up is always appreciated by thirsty town's folks. But

that hasn't always been there. There are many more, countless things, really, good things, since you and your family and friends have done your best to change thing over these years."

Mr. Albert finished speaking, and Berry Beary Kind thought that was a great idea. And so, from that day onward, a "Thankfulness" column was always a part of the town's newspaper, and Mr. Albert was one of the town's most frequent contributor to the content of this column.

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"Wow, listen to this!" said Jake, who was sitting in the corner store having a chat with Berry Beary Enough Stuff. He was looking in the paper and discussing the interesting news and such.

"In the 'Thankfulness column' it says that a road going from here to the port has only been useable for the past 15 years. I never knew that. I sure go on it a lot, since I'm a truck driver and bring goods to your shop here. What did you do before that?"

"I think it was walking through bush land or using a horse and buggy or bikes," replied Berry Beary Enough Stuff.

"Well, I sure wouldn't be sitting here today if it weren't for that smooth road—and for the upkeep it gets from your town. I think I rather like it here. Perhaps I'll move out here one of these days. Mighty fine folks around," Jake said.

Berry Beary Enough Stuff agreed. There sure was lots to be glad about, and he helped to remind folks of it when they came to his shop and began chatting. Talking about the good did have a way of making things all that much happier. Of course there were things to be fixed, and new challenges arose all the time, but the good far outweighed any difficulties, especially as they all reached out their hands to help each other.