

Roadblocks to Eden ...

btw...

God Reigns!

By Terri Bentley

When my husband and I found an Idaho mountain for a steal at the cusp of the real estate downturn, we quickly purchased it.

We had visions of grandeur on the 230-plus acres of breathtaking views. We saw ourselves building a dream retirement cabin, saving some view spots for our children, and reserving an area for a future church. Although Garden Valley, Idaho, lives up to its picturesque name, there isn't a Lutheran church within an hour's drive in any direction, Boise being about an hour due south.

Such a simple and God-pleasing plan, we thought, especially since the northwest is often considered the most unchurched region of the United States. However, as novice property developers, we had no idea of the roadblocks that could be constructed against our potential Eden.

The road grades seemed too steep up the mountain, not all the potential lots passed perk tests, and there needed to be an emergency egress road in case of forest fire. The planning and zoning folks staged resistance even when emergency services, foresters, and their own survey engineer approved our plans. And most disturbingly, we had a neighbor who didn't want us to do anything to the mountain, to the extent of putting an "Attack Neighbor" sign in his window and a gate across our access road.

Three years of planning and zoning meetings and paying endless fees to survey engineers, lawyers, and county officials — and we haven't broken ground on anything yet.

We've named our future development Rendezvous Point, the perfect place for God's people to meet with a natural rock spire overlooking the area [see logo]. Since the road leading to our property is named Cloudy Lane, I have visions of a God Reigns Lutheran Church there someday.

So when the man-made leaks are plugged, we will proceed, if it is His will, to our next planning and zoning meeting. (No, we haven't given up yet.) Or if we see that this is not in His plan, we will give Him back His mountain and continue to live for Him in the valley.



btw... btw is the acronym for "by the Way (Jesus)." It sets the tone for the current issue.