

25th Anniversary Edition



May 2019 | Free!



MULTIPLE FAMILY ESTATE SALE!

May 10th & 11th 8 am – 3 pm
164 Swede Anderson Road, Colville

Rain or Shine – Indoor and Covered Area
No early sales. All sales final. Cash or Debit card only.

Antique Furniture:

Victrola and records, Singer treadle machine and 1907 hand crank machine with beautiful wooden case, cabinets, dressers, desks, antique chairs, steamer trunks and more!

Old Treasures:

Jewelry, pocket watches, large old ceramic crock, and complete English silver plate tea set. Vintage collectibles (ceramic salt & pepper shakers & cookie jars). Many pieces of hand signed Fenton items (lamps, fairy lamps, fairy lights and statues). Limoges boxes, European collectible china, tea pots, cast iron cookware and vintage mixing bowls. Collectible knick-knacks.

Fiber Arts:

A vast treasury of spinning, weaving, knitting and crochet fiber arts collectibles; knitting machines with instruction books and videos. Hundreds of skeins of high quality yarn in every color. Crochet hooks, knitting needles and accessories. Spinning Wheels (Jensen Great Wheel, Pocket Wheel, Louet S10 Wheel and Babe Wheel w/skein winder) and all wheels have extra bobbins. A large assortment of drop spindles, including Turkish spindles. There are many weaving looms, including Navaho looms, a Rigid Heddle loom w/stand, tapestry looms, a Norwood Jack Loom, carders (hand carders and a Patrick Green Carder with stand). Antique Doukhobor spinning wheel that was probably made in Alberta or Saskatchewan in the early 1900s. Plus an amazing collection of books, patterns and instruction manuals of any fiber art that you ever wanted to explore!

Household Items:

LOTS of furniture, dressers, tables, chairs, buffets, desks, beds, bookcases, ornate dark mahogany sofa table, oak rocking chair, hope chest, storage cabinets, small appliances, dishes, cooking utensils, flatware, bowls, pots and pans, and much more! Beautiful Christmas items and ornaments.

Books! Books! Books:

A collection of hundreds of hardcover and paperback books in every category of literature – fiction, poetry, travel and more...many are out of print and valuable.

Shop, Camping, Sports:

Wood stove, used lumber, large saw blades, camping and sports equipment.

Party Barge (\$8,500). Two Yamaha Wave Runners (low hours) with trailer (\$2,000).
Classic 1966 Mustang Coupe 289 V8. Completely restored, excellent condition (\$24,000)

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THIS SALE!

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May 2019

Vol. 26 ~ Iss. 1

Publisher & Senior Editor

Gabriel Cruden

Copy Editor

Si Alexander

Contributing Writers

Dr. Barry Bacon • J. Merrill Baker
Linda Bond • Joanie Christian
Loren Cruden • Becky Dubell
Patricia Ediger • Jhanna Eggers
J. Foster Fanning • Jean Handwerk
Sarah Kilpatrick • Michelle Lancaster
Tina Tolliver Matney • Viola Murphy
Jack Nisbet • John Odell
Eileen Delahanty Pearkes • Michael Pickett
Leopold Hayden Powell
Jason, Melissa, and Gretchen Rumsey
Lynn Rigney Schott • Gabriele von Trapp
Christine Wilson • Tina Wynecoop

Advertising Sales

Gabriel Cruden • 509-675-3791
ncmonthly@gmail.com

Becky Dubell • 509-684-5147
mkbecky1@gmail.com

Gabriele von Trapp • 509-879-1987
gabriele.ncmonthly@gmail.com

Niki Baker-Dowdell • 509-732-0227
NikiD.ncmonthly@gmail.com

North Columbia Monthly

P.O. Box 541, Colville, WA 99114
509-675-3791 | ncmonthly@gmail.com
www.ncmonthly.com

Cover Photo

NCM's 25 years of May covers.

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**JUNE 2019
ISSUE DEADLINES**
AD SPACE RESERVATIONS:
Friday, May 17th
WHAT'S HAPPENING LISTINGS:
Wednesday, May 22nd



Made **O**f **N**ew **T**houghts **H**ere **L**ook **Y**ourself

- JOHN ODELL, WordsOfWords.com

The Stevens, Ferry & Lincoln County Developmental Disabilities Program

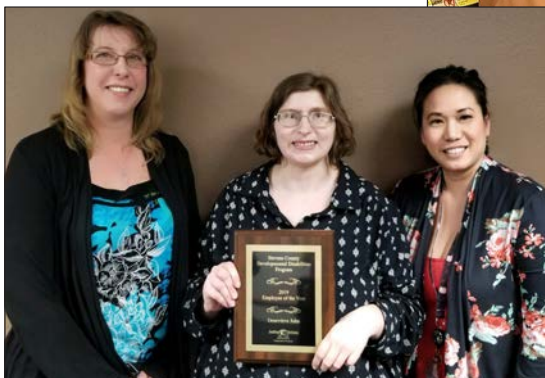
Congratulates our 2019 Employee of the Year and Employers of the Year!



Employer of the Year recognizes businesses committed to hiring, training, and promoting persons with ALL ABILITIES within their community.

For more information, please email newacsdd@stevenscountywa.gov.

Stevens County: Genevieve (Genny) John (below), and Super 1 Foods (top). Ferry County: Michael Willett and Ferry County Memorial Hospital (above). Lincoln County: Sam Fisher and Davenport Family Foods (right).



Employee of the Year recognizes an employee with disabilities where their employment attests to their strengths and talents and contributes to the economic life of their community.

From the Publisher's Desk

By Gabriel Cruden

I still remember the day I made my first cold call, selling ads for the *North Columbia Monthly*. It was in an upstairs office of The Book Depot at 103 Main Street in Colville. I was sitting at a large wooden desk cluttered with stacks of books, papers and knick-knacks. Slanting light came in through the dusty old windows and the floor fan wasn't quite able to keep the place cool.

I had a pen and yellow pad, an ad rate sheet, and a big, corded phone. I was nervous. I had scrawled my script, but then stumbled over it on my first call, so had to set it aside and just go for it. A life lesson right there.

After some practice, I started to get the ad sale rhythm and patter, began to learn how to listen for the cues that would shape my pitch, and to even land a few accounts. Who would have guessed that nearly two decades later I would not only be owner and publisher of the same magazine, but that some of my new accounts from then would still be advertising with the *Monthly* today!

Mark Harrison and Tina Cummings pub-

lished the inaugural edition in May 1994, the same year I went away to college. Steve and Karla Rumsey, owners of The Book Depot, took over the *North Columbia Monthly* in April 1999, although Mark and Tina stayed involved – Mark contributing his witty observations and commentary in his “News Not Fit to Print” column, along with continued ad sales, and Tina helping with layout and graphic design.

The publication's content evolved over time, attracted a variety of contributors and advertisers, and incrementally improved its look and feel as technology advanced. But, throughout, it also stayed true to its roots of being all about community. As I thumb through past issues, so many memories come back, and I see how the stories weave together a larger story of community and its ebb and flow through time.

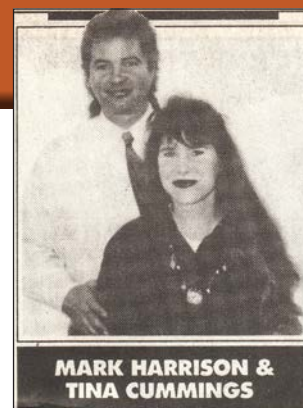
Karla carried on with the magazine after Steve's passing in October 2010, and then I took over after Karla's passing in April 2015 – both lives well-lived, celebrated, and far too short. Their presence is still felt and missed by all who knew them. Likewise, for Mark, who

also passed while relatively young, in December 2003. Tina, thankfully, is still out and about

doing good things in the world and offers her appreciation and encouragement for how the magazine is carried on. (Thank you, Tina!)

As I reflect on this 25th anniversary, I feel a great gratitude for the opportunity to embrace the history of what this publication has meant to our community over the years and to carry it forward. I believe in celebrating what's good and right in the world and building on that energy to infuse our future with what we hope for and envision for ourselves and our community. To do that, I believe in finding common ground through our shared stories.

I have such gratitude to all who have contributed stories, advertising dollars, creative works, and time reading and sharing. What a gift you all are.



Everything's Coming Up Dancers

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Carrying On A Legacy

By Jason, Melissa, and Gretchen Rumsey

While so much of success in our culture is measured by how much is in our bank accounts, what car we drive and what brands we wear, our parents had a much different vision for their lives. They sought out a livelihood that brought fulfillment and joy to them, their family and their community, even though that meant their bank account was on the thin side.

They continued and built upon the legacy that those before them created with The Book Depot and then later the *North Columbia Monthly* as they facilitated a space where the community could engage in creative expression and thought-provoking discussions.

As kids we observed countless hours of Mom and Dad talking about their hopes and dreams for “the mag,” as we called it at our house. We have cherished memories of authors and readers sitting at the coffee bar having passionate discussions about the magazine’s featured articles. Dad’s “teacher hands” were always waving as he made his points in these conversations while mom offered her quiet encouragement and new ideas and perspectives.

In a world where mainstream media pushes canned opinions and divisive rhetoric, we got to watch our parents endeavor to create journalism that was deeper and more meaningful.

“The mag” was largely Dad’s baby. He was always looking for the next thing to scratch that creative itch. Sometimes that was teaching, running a bookstore and the *Monthly*, and sometimes it was randomly coming home with llamas with lofty goals to train them to backpack. Mom was always incredibly supportive of Dad’s ideas, and though it added to her already monumental workload she made them happen. She recognized the value of this publication and its far-reaching influence on the readers and she became pivotal in making it a success.

With them not having the convenience of email until years later, the amount of work required to run the *Monthly* was impressive. Between customers and coffee orders at the bookstore, Mom ran ads to local businesses for proofreading and went door-to-door collecting content for articles



Steve and Karla Rumsey

and digging up events to include on the calendar each month. Then, together, they would assemble the content, often just in the nick of time.

Then a collective sigh of relief and it happened all over again. Mom and Dad set such a great example by accomplishing what seemed like an impossible task every month, together, doing it over and over again, doing it well, and still loving each other when it was done.

Then as Dad struggled and later lost his battle with cancer, Mom took the entire

publication process on herself. To watch Mom pull herself up from a devastating loss and publish the *Monthly* was truly powerful and inspiring. But that was how much value this publication had in their lives. It was worth every long hour. The value it added to the community by bringing people together from all corners was the vision they had for their lives. And passing the torch to Gabriel was with a blessing from the both of them.

We are honored to be part of the *North Columbia Monthly*’s legacy through our parents and we celebrate its 25 years!

The Natural World Is a Cure

By Christine Wilson

“Study Nature, love Nature, stay close to Nature. It will never fail you.”

~ Frank Lloyd Wright

“Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better.”

~ Albert Einstein

“The woods were my Ritalin. Nature calmed me, focused me, and yet excited my senses.”

~ Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder

There is a moment when walking outside with a birder that involves a lurching stop, a tilted head, and a battery of guesses about which bird they just heard. Depending on the auditory skill of the birder, they may stop at the first guess or slowly refine a longer list. When there are two or more birders, the guessing can involve a rapid-fire exchange of speculation.

This kind of dialogue is especially inspiring for someone like me, who didn't even know the difference between a bird feeder and a bird house until I met my in-laws. Their house had a glassed-in room surrounded by ingeniously devised feeders, and my lovely father-in-law explained, without patronizing me, that what I was calling bird houses were actually feeders. Oops.

That experience captured my attention and I've been working to increase my knowledge since, although life keeps intervening and the gathering of information has been slow. I still find it exhilarating to be with my knowledgeable friends, and they always inspire me to stay curious. Nature is an exquisite

companion and about as close to a magic bullet as we can get.

Having grown up sedentary, walking to school was my only physical activity (aside from PE in those horrific blue uniforms which were all the rage of PE teachers at the time) until backpacking in high school. I did love the ocean and sitting on a dock as a child, watching crabs crawl around sideways on the ocean shore, which was about as close to being a naturalist as I could imagine at the time. I identified with the crabs as they slowly sought out bits of sand to dig into. They seemed to love their cozy spots as much as I loved being curled up on the pier above them.

Backpacking launched a greater awareness of nature and of my relationship to it. I discovered then that we were part of the big picture, not separate from it. Walking for hours each day, without any motorized sounds, and with a backpacker's limits on necessity, showed me that I could live without the trappings of modern life. The lack of flush toilets, water pouring out of a faucet, or

electricity – all exposed me to a world that was complete in its simplicity and silence.

Well, it wasn't exactly silent. Sitting by a creek listening to the water roil over stones and hearing birds, even without distinguishing the species, I felt a kind of contentment that has stayed with me throughout my life. I can still get pretty wound up, but get me into nature and I'm all smiles, with a kind of peaceful satisfaction words fail to describe.

There is much discussion about the loss of appreciation of and exposure to nature. I do not think children start off their lives with a disregard of the natural world. However, I do believe we must put intentional effort into keeping them interested at this juncture in human history, given the sedentary, wired-in life of most kids. It is worth the effort for a multitude of reasons. Without a commitment to nature, I think those kids will grow up not knowing they have a stake in protecting it. Even the bees they might complain about have a critical role to play in their lives. Bees are the most common pollinators and assure the existence of at least a third of the food we rely on.

There are physical advantages to being out in nature as well. Blood pressure has been shown to be lowered, immune systems are boosted, and attention deficit disorders are ameliorated.

My favorite advantages are to our mental health. Depression is reduced. Worry and anxiety are lessened.

All this creates positive behavior and, one can hope, a strong desire to be decent stewards of the land, for now and for the future.

In my office, I have children create an image of a safe or calm or happy place in my sand tray. Inevitably, my stash of trees

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Random Acts of Community

and animals are used to create a scene and they often place themselves in the center of an imaginary wood. OK, well, there are usually a couple of unicorns thrown in for good measure, but still, it's all about the nature world. Hopefully, they will all grow up to make sure that the animals and trees and bugs they know about do not disappear into the world of unicorns.

So, what can be done? We can recognize that nature is right here with us, in our houses, as well as when we walk out our front door. The plants that cleanse our household air and supply those peaceful shades of green are part of nature. Much of what our houses are constructed from are gifts from nature. I think that recognizing our own relationship with the natural world is critical and, like most things, inspiring others to care has to start with ourselves.

Once we have fostered our own curiosity and our own connection with nature, we can pass that wisdom on to the children around us. The Friends of the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge offers educational programs for students. 49 Degrees North has snowshoe paths, one of which can take you through a stand of old growths. Those majestic trees take my breath away every time I am wandering in there.

And now that we are at the beginning of warm weather, the options are even broader. Craig Romano has written a *Day Hiking in Eastern Washington* book with Rich Landers and he has also written one specifically for hiking with dogs in the Inland Northwest. Spending time in nature helps students learn better and can improve behavior. An example of resource information for teachers and parents is: <https://www.childrenandnature.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/NTN-eguide-2015ALL.pdf>

When I was out in the wilds of Washington in my adolescence, listening to those birds and rehydrating soups, technology was not an issue. My nerdy father was predicting a computer in every house but even my father could not have guessed the ubiquitous state of modern technology. I love my devices but I believe that one of the most important gifts we can give our children and ourselves is time away from them.

Sharing meals brought to you by those pollinators and some hardworking farmers

is better with everybody's technology put away. Bird feeders are a wonderful way to appreciate the birds in your neighborhood, with two caveats: the first one being that once you start feeding birds, you should not stop because they now rely on your generosity; and the second one being that cats eat birds, so if you have cats around you have to consider the safety of those birds you are feeding.

As the weather gets better, strap on some comfortable shoes and get out on the trails. If you don't own a hiking book, look up hikes online and then turn the computer off and head outdoors.

Christine Wilson is a psychotherapist in private practice in Colville and can be reached at christineallenewilson@gmail.com or 509-690-0715.

China Bend Winery

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Drive In or Boat In

The Few. The Proud. The Unbelievably Weird.

By Dr. Barry Bacon, MD

"Dad, I've got to tell you about a conversation I had this week." My oldest girl called me from California where she works teaching family doctors in Santa Rosa. She

sounded animated, even more than her usual, positive self. I encouraged her to continue.

"I talked to this guy who has the highest security clearance in the country. He told me that part of his training was to go some-

where to be trained to survive in wild places so that he couldn't be captured, tortured and forced to tell national security secrets.

"He told me they just dropped him and another soldier off somewhere in northeastern Washington. They told him he had to fend for himself, find food in the wilderness and wander through the forest, trying to find their way out.

"They came upon a mobile home set in a clearing, and since they hadn't eaten for three days, they looked around to see if there was something they could scrounge up in order to survive. Suddenly the door swung open and a young man who hadn't found a razor or had a haircut in a considerable length of time stumbled out, a big toothless grin on his face.

"Do you guys want some venison?" The soldier and his comrade hesitated for a moment, since behind enemy lines they would need to use great caution in taking food from a stranger. It could place them at risk of capture. But here they were in the wilderness in northeastern Washington, uncertain whether or not these were enemies.

"They looked in through the door and saw another man sitting naked except for his whitey-tighties, feet up on the table, inviting them to come in and enjoy some food together. So, they decided they would take a chance, and they figured it would be better than starving. They enjoyed some of Stevens County's finest dining.

"Dad, do you know where they were?"

By this time, I was laughing almost hysterically at the story. "I know those guys!" I laughed. "They survive on road kill," I exaggerated. "Your mom and I have them over every Friday night!" We laughed at the thought.

"So what you're saying, Allison," I continued, "is that when it comes to training our country's elite security personnel, they drop them off in your parents' backyard and tell them they need to find their way home?"

"Yeah, Dad, I think that's what it means."

Many of us have seen or met them in the Little Pend Oreille wilderness. Elite soldiers in training in the wild places that make up

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**CHEWELAH**
SPOKANE TRIBE CASINO

our backdrop, places of beauty and wonder that we take for granted because we call it home.

We love this place because it is wild, but its wildness creates its own stories, its own character. In this issue of the *North Columbia Monthly*, I want to honor this magazine which, more than any other that I know, honors the places we call home. Our stories are worth telling. Our home is worth celebrating.

The second reason I appreciate the *North Columbia Monthly* is that this magazine, more than any other, has helped me to discover my voice. It turns out that I love writing. I find that there is a beautiful, often dormant portion of my brain that, in the quiet moments that I of necessity set aside to write, effectively expresses itself through

my fingertips and onto the pages of this periodical, an expression of my soul.

The responses that I have heard from so many have been positive and affirming. The joys, the laughter, the pain, and the struggles that are life, resonate with others. People from all over the tri-county area find me, tell me that they read what I am writing, and they want to talk to me about a story, an issue, their lives. It connects me to a broader audience of strangers and friends who connect with the stories that I write.

But more than anything, what I have been able to express in this journal has helped me to discover something in myself. Writing is cathartic and joyful and art, painting a portrait with words. And drawing people into a story, connecting their emotions to the people whose stories

I write, is a wonderful way to cause people to reflect on their own lives.

I honor the editors, the publisher, the spirit of the magazine, and the freedom to express through these pages the life that we embrace here in our beautiful home.

Even the goofy story of elite warriors sharing road kill in a dilapidated camper with a couple of mountain men in their underwear in the Little Pend Oreille wilderness. It's all part of the celebration of our lives, finding its way into the *North Columbia Monthly*.

Barry Bacon is a physician who has lived and practiced family medicine in Colville for 28 years. He now works in small rural hospitals in Washington state, teaches family medicine, and works on health disparities in the U.S. and Africa.

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THE 6TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ETHICS CONFERENCE



ONE RIVER : ETHICS MATTER

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER

DATES

May 30 - 31, 2019

LOCATION

Selkirk College, Castlegar Campus

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jennie Barron

jbarron@selkirk.ca

1-888-953-1133 x 21461

John Osborn

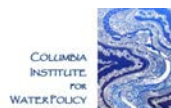
john@waterplanet.ws

This conference will consider new approaches to ethical governance of the river that strengthen river and community resiliency, restore salmon and other fisheries, and right historic wrongs done to the Upper Columbia River region, Indigenous peoples, and other citizens of the watershed.

- **Students & Walk-ins Welcome**
- **Discussion, Panels, Q&A**
- **Register online at selkirk.ca/event/one-river-ethics-matter**



THIS EVENT IS HOSTED BY SELKIRK COLLEGE AND SPOKANE COMMUNITY COLLEGES. SPONSORSHIP FROM THE COLUMBIA INSTITUTE FOR WATER POLICY, THE SIERRA CLUB, AND THE CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW & POLICY.



Grass and River Instead of a Boundary

By Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

A few weeks ago, on a drizzly spring morning, I noticed a robin in the ceramic birdbath in my garden. The large bird filled the small basin. Once it had finished splashing, much of the water had been displaced. It then settled on the rim of the basin and chirped happily.

A ground sparrow, whom I had often seen using the bath, was tucked in under my deck stairs and bathing on the lid of a Rubbermaid tub filled with rainwater. The watchful robin noticed the sparrow, fluttered over and, in a quick tangle of wings, chased the little bird from the makeshift basin.

As I watched the dynamic between these birds play out, I thought about boundaries, and the tendency we may have to say “this is mine.” The robin had clearly taken over an area of the garden far larger than the ceramic bath. The boundary had widened to the point that a much smaller ground sparrow tucked in behind a staircase had become an invader. Birds, dogs, deer, bears, human beings: In my estimation, we all have a shifting concept of what belongs to us and what we are willing to share.

Back in the early 2000s, I came across a copy of the *North Columbia Monthly* in a Nelson bookstore. And then another. And another. People started showing me various articles that might interest me. I grew to greatly admire this little magazine coming out of Colville, Washington, for its thoughtful approach sandwiched between the unassuming newsprint covers. While it looked like a free advertising circular, there was more going on.

I remember one column most vividly, by my colleague Jack Nisbet, about reed canary grass. His description of this invasive species was informative, thoughtful and (of course!) well-written. It made me think of how that same grass had taken over the reservoir shorelines south of Revelstoke, BC, along the flooded Columbia River and parts of the former Arrow Lakes.

In the case of “Canadian” reed canary grass, the plant was functioning less as an invasive and more as welcome savior. I had seen how the grass was tough enough to

survive unfriendly reservoir conditions in the Arrow Lakes valley. It was holding silt and soil in position. It provided food for geese and bears, both of whom liked to dig up the roots in spring. I found myself wanting to tell another side of the story of reservoir grass growing north of the boundary.

As my research into the Columbia River, its international treaty and the story of the Sinixt people grew and expanded, so, too, did my concept of the forty-ninth parallel begin to change. What had seemed like a simple political boundary between nations began to feel like a limitation. There was so much common ground, and at the same time so much need for more stories of reservoirs, a forum for the wish for ocean salmon to return, and a chance to consider how treaty provisions impact upstream inhabitants in both the United States and Canada. I decided to take up my pen and push back against the sense of limitation. I would do so with a river of words.

Enter Steve Rumsey, the editor-publisher of the *Monthly* at the time. When I contacted him around 2005 about writing a column from a “north of the border” perspective, he was immediately enthusiastic. He, too, had been working to reframe the concept of the upper Columbia region, he said, to blur the boundary and help build a shared community. *Welcome aboard, Eileen.*

Together with his wife, Karla, Steve had been delivering copies of the magazine into Canada, driving up to Trail along the Columbia River via Northport, and following the Kootenay River east to Nelson. A few years after Steve died, and after Karla had taken over publication of the magazine, she told me how much they had enjoyed their monthly adventures. Steve and Karla’s regular trips with those magazine copies echoed the traditional canoe journey of the Sinixt, who paddled upstream from village to Sinixt village, canoes loaded instead with salmon harvested at Kettle Falls.

Karla did a remarkable job of stepping into Steve’s shoes, learning the computer layout program and selling advertising to keep the magazine afloat during difficult economic

times. As the region slowly recovered from the great recession, she continued to deliver the magazine across the border herself, until one day she had a negative experience at the crossing station, one that frightened her and made her more reluctant.

I felt a great sadness, listening to her recount the story of that day. I understood her distress. I thought again of the Sinixt, who also grew reluctant to drive north from the Colville reservation to their traditional homeland, as a result of that boundary.

Steve and Karla were natural community-builders. Under their guidance, the magazine became a thoughtful forum for ideas and greater understanding. That tradition continues today under the leadership of publisher Gabriel Cruden.

My writing life has grown at times too busy with new projects and travel across the Columbia Basin to write every month. Yet I continue to write for the *Monthly* as much as I can, because I believe from a very deep place that the international boundary must not be a limitation that imposes on our understanding.

I believe our way of defining community in northeastern Washington and southeastern British Columbia needs to be fluid, like the river, like water collecting in a humble basin. It needs, whenever possible, to be shared by all.

Eileen Delehanty Pearkes lives in Nelson, B.C. Her book on the Columbia River Treaty, A River Captured, was released by Rocky Mountain Books. For more, visit www.ed-pearkes.com.

EAVESDROPS

What people have written about the north Columbia region

“There’s something calming and peaceful in the shapes of the hills here.”

~ Onion Creek Resident

Paddling On

Article by Jack Nisbet

To mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the *Monthly's* existence, it's impossible not to think about Kettle Falls and Steve and Karla Rumsey. Part of this column ran as a memorial to Steve in December 2010.

One spring some years ago, a large draw-down of Lake Roosevelt lured me out to the sharpening rock at the end of the road beyond the Kettle Falls Historical Center. From the bluff edge where the rock is situated, I could see that opening the gates at Grand Coulee had completely exposed Hayes Island. Tribal members had not set up their traditional encampment there yet, and the island looked raw and bare. I stood on the viewpoint for half an hour or so, drinking in the elements of speed and power that separate a river from a lake, before I noticed a figure far across on the opposite shore.

It was a lone man, and he had a canoe beside him as he faced something close to the real Columbia. You could tell he was thinking about putting in. A variable wind had begun to whip up a few whitecaps, and although Hayes Island looked pretty close to his launching point, it would not be easy to navigate the stretch of open water that separated our modern world from the time before.

The canoeist jumped in anyway, setting a diagonal course upstream that accounted for wind and current. From where I stood, it looked like he was glued to a single spot on the water, but the man kept paddling smoothly, holding to his intended line, taking a wave over the bow now and again as the breeze freshened. He was close to the island, but very far away. Finally, after what seemed like a lot longer than I would

have stuck with it, he let the wind beat him back to shore.

At that time Steve and Karla Rumsey ran The Book Depot in downtown Colville, and when I dropped by the store a few days later and mentioned this tenacious paddler, Steve freely admitted that it had been him.

"You know," he said, cocking his head in a way he had. "I wanted to get over there, but it just wasn't going to happen."

Even as he expressed disappointment, Steve smiled with pleasant bemusement. It was a look I got used to seeing after he launched into the *North Columbia Monthly*. Why would anyone, Steve wondered, push printed matter against the tide of the digital age? How could he inject some soul into his advertising? Would anyone notice if he tried to "class it up" a little bit with some real writing? As with his dicey canoe trip, Steve's

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Aerial photograph of Kettle Falls ca. 1930, showing the diamond of Hayes Island with a sparse covering of ponderosa pines, courtesy Kettle Falls City Hall.

awareness of what he was up against did not in any way dampen the joy he attained while doggedly pursuing his goal.

For the many of us involved with the *Monthly*, Steve acted as the most gracious of editors: shaping diffuse ideas, suggesting a logical direction, catching small embarrassments before they saw the light of day. Although he always offered encouragement, his teacher's gift for gentle listening did nothing to confuse his ear for a clear voice.

Steve may have understood what the magazine meant from the very beginning, but it took many of us much longer to catch on. At first it was a nice surprise to hear someone comment on a particular illustration or funny ad in Republic, or Addy, or Ione. When a salamander report drifted in from

Grand Forks, I thought it was a prank; when a letter from Washington, DC, revealed that someone's mother was sending issues back East on a regular basis, it seemed like a one-time thrill. But notes like that piled up both in and out of the office. Last month, when a complete stranger in Port Angeles pointed out a mistake in a recent *Monthly* column, I took it right in stride.

Steve figured out that a true community blends many voices from a wide and surprising variety of sources. Its boundaries expand beyond the grey lines that even its most faithful members imagine. The strands that connect an entity like this take so many separate forms that it is pointless to try to sort them all out. What you do instead is listen as carefully as you can and bend to

whatever work you feel like you can do.

Steve and then Karla recognized that such a community is larger than any single individual or family. They certainly would be gratified, but not necessarily surprised, to know that their creation has passed along and evolved under the guidance of a new and younger generation. Some of us like to think that the Rumseys are out there thumbing through copy right now, smiling at every new mistake and misadventure. They want to encourage us, we think, to paddle on.

Author Jack Nisbet is stepping away from his Boundaries column for now, but he will continue to thumb through North Columbia Monthly copy and smile. His schedule of public events plus an index of his past NCM columns can be found at www.jacknisbet.com.



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The Threads of Our Lives

Article & Photos by Joanie Christian

As I get older, time seems to move at an ever-faster pace, and I often lag in keeping up with the continual and sometimes abrupt and unwanted changes in life. I frequently find myself in disbelief at the time that has passed, whether it's because May is already



here, or that somehow my kids are now grown young men who are on their own. I suspect it is like that for all of us. But no matter the passage of time, there are familiar, caring and comforting threads that remain the same in our lives.

As if it were yesterday, I still vividly remember days long ago when I would take my young sons down to The Book Depot, eager excitement on their faces as they anticipated looking at the books. The children's section was a favorite of theirs early on, but soon enough they moved to other sections of the store, being exposed to new worlds as they grew and their interests changed.

But there was another draw to that little shop other than the marvelous books... the owners Steve and Karla Rumsey. A couple with a sharp intellect, quiet humility and love of community. Whether young or old, you were always greeted with a smile and genuine interest.

While the boys enthusiastically perused the books, I often found myself in stimulating intellectual conversations with the interesting and engaging couple, which exposed

me to new perspectives and challenged me to think in new ways. I was a stay-at-home mom at the time, and while I felt fortunate to stay home with my kids, I savored these meaningful adult conversations.

Though I grew up in Colville, after finishing college I lived with my husband and two sons in the Seattle area for about eight years before moving back. One of our favorite spots was The Secret Garden, a charming children's bookstore in the Greenlake community. My high school friends had all moved away during our eight years on the coast, and after returning to Colville, it took quite a while to find new people and friends I had things in common with.

The quaint and charming Book Depot was both familiar and comforting, a bridge from my old life to my new one, and I felt instantly at home.

Coming through the doors of The Book Depot, many times we would find Steve and Karla working on an upcoming issue of the *North Columbia Monthly*, back in the early days of the publication. The magazine was a labor of love for them, centering on the topic of community that binds us all. Sadly, Steve and Karla have since passed away, but their legacy lives on in the *North Columbia Monthly*. Many editors and writers have touched the publication over the years, but the Rumsey voice and mission still speak from its pages.

Their love of community lives on in the current editor-publisher, Gabriel Cruden, and in all who continue to contribute to the publication.

Two decades after walking through the doors of The Book Depot with my young sons, I now find myself a regularly contributing writer to the *North Columbia Monthly*, sharing my love of the area and

community. It is my version of paying it forward and continuing the tradition that Steve and Karla started; bringing something of my own that is familiar, yet a different perspective that perhaps helps others to see things in a new way.

It is a strange yet rewarding thing to have people who are complete strangers introduce themselves to me, telling me touching stories about what my articles and photography have meant to them.

A couple of years back, I wrote an article about life on the Barton Farm. As is their nature, the Bartons continue to graciously welcome me back to their beautiful farm, eager to share their little slice of heaven with



others. Darling lambs, goat kids and ducklings; a spunky striped baby emu; gorgeous peacocks; humorous pigs; playful calves; spunky llamas; and goats bouncing over to greet you with tails wagging – all incredibly entertaining and so fun to photograph.

But something deeper keeps pulling me back there. Maybe it's the strong childhood memories of early mornings spent gather-



ing eggs, feeding the pigs, and riding the tractor with my Uncle Bub in rural Virginia on my grandparents' farm as a toddler. They are some of my earliest, strongest and very best memories. Or maybe it's the images the Barton farm conjures in my mind of a simpler time, unaffected by modern technology and the chaotic and frenetic pace that is the status quo for many of us today.

There are always changes on the farm each time I go, from the Barton kids growing up a little bit more, to new animals, but there is a sense that time has stood still and much has remained unchanged. During a time when we are experiencing great change to the world as we once knew it, I find the genuine caring, simplicity and constancy of the farm familiar and comforting. Maybe it is a combination of all those things, but whatever the why, I just know that something speaks to my heart out there on that farm.

Karla and Steve Rumsey and their little bookstore ... the North Columbia Monthly

... the Bartons and the menagerie at their farm ... some of the many beautiful and meaningful threads in the fabric of my life that I didn't even realize were being woven at the time. These familiar and comforting threads remain with me, reminding me that, while change is inevitable, some things stay blessedly the same. Each of us have these threads in our lives, and we all share one common thread: community. May we all aspire to recognize and cherish those threads, and ourselves be meaningful threads in our community and in the lives of others.

"I find it is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folks that keeps the darkness at bay ... small acts of kindness and love." ~ Gandalf

Joanie Christian, a freelance nature photographer, has lived in NE WA for 40+ years. View her work at joaniechristian-photography.com and follow her paddling adventures at stillwaterpaddling.com.



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Cherishing Integrity

By Loren Cruden

Photo by Joanie Christian

When Steve Rumsey was publisher of the *Monthly* he wrote the magazine's book reviews. They were terrifically insightful and inviting. He had such an enjoyable way of conveying what was of value to a reader, as though panning for gold on our behalf: always trustworthy.

Literature has changed since Steve was around; I sometimes wonder what he would've thought of new trends such as autofiction (a speculative blend of autobiography and fiction) where plot digresses into commentary, chapters are short, not a lot happens, and what does happen is accompanied by personal reflection rather than traditional description. Pop-culture allusions abound and photos, quotes, lists, and charts may be included. Characters are often unnamed, dialogue left uncontained by quotation marks,

and the author-narrator's detached and insistent self-awareness leaches away most plot intensity. It is an interesting style and I've read some skillful applications of it, but there's something about mixing fiction with autobiography that uneasily echoes social media's blurring of truth and invention.

Autofiction is different from historical fiction, which projects authorial imagination onto people, places, and events of the past. Autofiction, in contrast, is an authorial hall of mirrors tampering with personal reality. As with computer-manipulated images, the actual is rendered irrelevant: something perhaps the opposite of the *Monthly*'s mission, throughout its succession of publishers. Wish I could get Steve's take on it and many other things! He had a way of making room for creativity without compromising integrity – something all the more to be cherished these days.

I miss Steve and Karla's presence among us – their wonderful bookstore, inclusive community spirit and tangible kindness to all.

Hey Steve – you're here a moment
then gone again,
off like Lewis or Clark on a quest,
leaving the prized gifts
we carry of you.
Snapshot: you reading poetry at the Café –
honest, witty stuff.
I marveled that a man so
keenly observant could be
so lacking in meanness.
Snapshot: you at the Book Depot saying
you and Karla could do a
'wine and cheese thing' to
publicize my books. (And I wished
I could be Ivan Doig for you
instead of the shy hermit who scurried out.)
In all snapshots you are good-humored,
generous, so smart but so
careful with our fragility: a
real man.
Now you're off again on
some tree-shaded river or buffalo prairie,
almost there.

Loren Cruden writes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, available at Meyers Falls Market in Kettle Falls and www.LorenBooks.com, and provides Home Pet Care in the north Stevens County area.

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The Seasonal Snowshoe Hare

Article and Photos by J. Foster Fanning

As I was close to meeting the deadline for handing in my article for this *North Columbia Monthly* edition, I happened to get a text from my friend and publisher Gabriel. He wrote: "It will be really interesting to see what everybody comes up with for the 25th Anniversary Edition." Gads! I'd forgotten that conversation of a couple months ago. Time to rewrite! I got to thinking ...

The *Monthly* has been with us since spring of 1994, a quarter of a century! While there have been many people instrumental in producing and delivering this fine local magazine, I think of Steve and Karla Rumsey when I reflect on the pillars of this publication. I had the good fortune of meeting the Rumseys when they opened their first little Book Depot in Colville, before the Main Street store.

I was immediately impressed with the Steve and Karla team; intelligent, compassionate, engaged in serving their community. Many a book on the shelves of my home library came from The Book Depot and many a conversation I enjoyed with the Rumseys regarding those books, life here in the highlands and more.

It was Karla, in 2014, who drafted me into the ranks of contributors for the *Monthly*. At first she just wanted a cover photo of a bald eagle, then more of my photographs. Soon she wanted me to write a few words to go with a certain photo and all of a sudden I was a monthly contributor with no prior intention of doing so. That was 57 issues ago. Thank you, Karla, thanks to *North Columbia Monthly* and a special thanks to the *Monthly* readers for allowing me to continue. Here's to another good quarter of a century.

You may have noticed our winter stretched through a rather cold March and on into early April. With all the snow in the river valleys and the incessant stoking of the wood stove late into the season, my thoughts turned to an old Yuit people's tale of the snowshoe hare. The Yuits' home is on the northeast tip of Siberia where winter hangs on a bit longer than in the Columbia Highlands.

The story goes that, many years past, demons from the dark and cold underworld stole the sun, leaving the earth cold and dark. The wise old Snowy Owl called

together a great assembly to determine who should be tasked with rescuing the sun from its captors. The mighty bear is chosen for the task but, as bears are wont to do, gets sidetracked by some tasty berries. Then the fast and cunning wolf sets forth on the mission, but soon curls up and falls asleep. Many other animals, each with some admirable (human) strength, make the attempt. But in the end the hero is the quiet snowshoe hare, who tenaciously struggles through great danger, retrieves the sun and, with its big furry legs, kicks the sun up into the sky where it beams brightly down and warms all creation.

Lepus americanus, the snowshoe hare, is also referred to as the snowshoe rabbit. The Ojibwe people call it "Waaboos." This is a species of hare found exclusively in North America. The hind legs of a snowshoe hare give us the origin of its name. These legs are noticeably larger, sporting dense fur and with bigger toes, than those of other hares or rabbits. This adaptation evolved to provide additional surface area and support for walking across the surface of snow. The fur on the soles protect from



Steve & Karla Rumsey at Rickey Point on the Columbia River.

freezing temperatures.

Those super-feet are attached to some very powerful hind legs. Hares can jump up to ten feet at a hop and move as fast as 25 m.p.h., and they are strong swimmers. Considering they're only about 20 inches long, that's a pretty impressive track record.

Snowshoe hare habitat ranges throughout the coniferous and boreal forests of the Alaskan and Canadian Rocky Mountains, from the western mountains of the Pacific Northwest east through the forests of Montana, Minnesota, and Michigan, and into the deciduous forests of New England. Most of these coniferous forest habitats are found on mountain ranges in the northern tier states and Canada.

Snowshoe hares are herbivores and a food source to other animals, especially lynx. They are one of the few mammals capable of camouflaging themselves from predators. The autumnal decrease of sunlight triggers a protein response in the hare's metabolism causing a molt from brown coloring to a shade of white, thus enabling it to blend in with the snowy

winter landscape.

In spring, as days lengthen, a reverse in the molt process occurs and they turn back from white to a reddish-brown, which



assists them to conceal in trees, shrubs and forest debris. Their stylish seasonal coats are made up of different layers – silky soft under-fur for insulation, a medium layer of thicker hair, and then long, coarse outer hair that sheds. Note, though, that the tips of the ears remain black no matter the season.

In summer, snowshoe hares feed on plants such as grass, leaves and ferns; in the winter, they eat twigs, tree bark and leftover buds. Occasionally groups can be seen feeding together. Snowshoe hares are generally nocturnal, so look for them at

dawn and dusk. They have acute hearing and are able to detect predators from a great distance.

Although living in areas of cold winter conditions, snowshoe hares do not hibernate. And like so many other members of the rabbit family, they are prolific breeders, with up to four litters in a year averaging three to eight kits each. Unlike baby rabbits born without fur and with eyes closed tight for a week or so, hares are born with their eyes open and a furry coat. Within a few hours of birth, snowshoe hare kits are ready to put

those amazing feet to use and start hopping.

So, after you finish this 25th Anniversary edition of the *North Columbia Monthly*, lace up those boots, grab the field pack, set out for a hike and put your amazing feet to use on those now snow-free trails. It's a great time of year to be outdoors!

J. Foster Fanning is a father, grandfather, retired fire chief and wannabe beach bum. He dabbles in photography as an excuse to wander the hills and vales in search of the perfect image. Learn more at <http://fosterfanning.blogspot.com>.

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From My Heart

By Tina Tolliver Matney

Lately I have found myself contemplating the vast sea of changes this monthly magazine has weathered over the years and how grateful I am to be a current contributor and what this regular writing experience has brought to my life.

In 1994, when the NCM was born, I was a busy stay-at-home mom with three kids to shuffle around to various activities. I didn't read much back then. A steamy novel might find its way to my nightstand where I would generally get three paragraphs in before creating a big welt on my forehead or nose by dropping the book on my face. The only things I ever really read through were recipes after I realized "winging it" in the kitchen was not always a good idea, and the directions on bottles of childhood remedies for allergies and headaches.

I also didn't write much of anything but the occasional apology to the school for one of the many weird diseases my kids seemed to pick up and spread like little petri dishes. I kept a journal off and on through my adult life, but it consisted more of notes on things like how many calories might be in a double helping of Aunt Lottie's cabbage and noodles and how many miles I'd have to run to work it off.

But as my kids grew and moved on, my life changed and I began to take writing more seriously. When I was asked to contribute to the NCM as a regular writer I was truly surprised that anyone thought my writing was worth reading. Just like it is with most of my "talents" I am my own worst critic.

When I started this journey, I had every intention of keeping my articles light and humorous. If you know me, you probably see/hear/read how incredibly crazy and weird my life can sometimes be.

But life has been anything but light and

humorous for quite some time now. Hardships and heartache happen to us all at some time or another. When life is hard, I find it difficult to write at all, much less write with humor and lightheartedness. Pouring my life stories out can be difficult when I'm hiccup-sobbing and my eyes are blurred with tears.

There have been several occasions when I have asked Gabriel if my article is too dark or heavy. His answer has always been to write what I'm feeling, and so I do. His encouragement has helped me to write from my heart, even when it hurts.

But my confidence as a writer doesn't come from reading what I wrote and deeming it good, or bad. It doesn't come from sitting down and easily pounding out a thousand words that I only have to edit for punctuation and spelling before I push "send." Confidence is gained when I struggle to get my thoughts organized enough to at least write down an idea that is taking its own sweet time to grow into a finished article. More often than not I'm pleading for extra time. That plea is always granted, and that in itself boosts my confidence, to have an editor who trusts I will

pull through and get my articles done.

I am truly grateful for the NCM for this writing experience. But mostly I am grateful for you, the readers of this publication and my column "This Great Big Life."

A while back a customer walked into my plant shop and asked me my name. When I told, the customer reached out and hugged me and said: "I read your articles. Last month you touched my heart with your words. You made me realize I have a friend who needs me to hold her hand more while she's still here. Thank you. I just wanted to tell you that in person."

I was speechless. Standing there with this stranger, both of us with tears in our eyes, embraced in a hug that felt so warm and loving.

And so that is why I write from my heart for this amazing publication that encourages truth and sharing of real life as we live it. Thank you NCM for giving us this gift. Happy anniversary.

Tina is a mother, grandmother, artist, rescuer of owls, eagles, hawks and other wild creatures, children's book illustrator, gardener and hobby farmer who makes her home on the Kettle River. Check out the Kettle River Raptor Center on Facebook.



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WHAT'S



MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM!

APPENZERS

Events

May 1: Artists Reception, Quartzite Brewing, in Chewelah, 6:30-8 pm.

May 2: First Thursday Art Walk, 5:30-8 pm, downtown Chewelah.

May 3: Joe Hirsch Benefit Dinner/Auction, NE WA Ag Trade Center, Colville, 6 pm.

May 4: Tasty Fundraiser for Chewelah Faith Resources Group's summer food program, serving children in Chewelah and Valley, Quartzite Brewery, 3-8 pm. Silent auction, music, and \$1 donated for every drink from bar and food item from trailer sold. Call 509-936-5687 for more info.

May 5: Northport Lions Club BINGO at the Northport School Cafeteria, Noon-4. Early Bird, Regular, Fast Pick and Blackout with a \$500 Jackpot. Proceeds benefit the many community projects the Club supports. Refreshments available. Must be 18 or older to play. Call 509-690-2158 for more info.

May 8: The Opioid Epidemic in Our Local Communities panel discussion, hosted by the Colville Branch of American Association of University Women (AAUW), Chewelah City Hall, 301 E. Clay Ave., Chewelah, 6 pm. Panelists include Dr. Caleb Holtzer, who won a state-sponsored grant for Providence NE Washington Medical Group to form a Hub and Spoke Program to widen availability of Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Addiction; Matt Schanz, Tri County Health District Administrator and co-applicant for the Hub and Spoke grant; Lynn Guhlke, Medical Health Clinic Director for NEW Alliance Counseling; Stevens County Sheriff Brad Manke; and Gina Tveit, District Court Judge in Stevens county, as well as by neighbors who have been directly affected by the epidemic. Mary Selecky will serve as Mistress of Ceremonies. There will be the opportunity for questions and answers.

May 10: Scholarship fundraiser yard sale, hosted by PEO Chapter AX in support of women's education, St. Paul Lutheran Church, 295 E. Dominion, Colville, 7am - 5pm.

May 10: "Fur Ball" dinner/dance to raise money for the Happy Tails (off leash) Dog Park in Colville, scheduled to open May 18. Silent auction, no-host bar provided by Fired Up Brewing, dinner by Lori Roberts and dancing music by DJ Dave Pehl. Doors open at 5 pm, dinner at 6:30 pm, dancing at 8 pm. 50/50 tickets are already on sale (don't need to be present to win). Call 509 684-5977 or 509-684-2585 for more info. See ad page 32.

May 11: Free plant exchange, Colville Community Garden, 170 B Hwy 20.

May 11: Everything's Coming Up Dancers, Northern Dance Theatre's spring performance, Colville High School auditorium, 2 pm and 6 pm. See ad page 5.

May 11: Northport Lions Club 17th Annual Golf Scramble at Dominion Meadows Golf Course, Colville. Fun, food, competition, fellowship and prizes! \$50 per person, which includes green fees & lunch. Check in, 8 am, pre-golf meeting, 8:40 am, shotgun start, 9 am. Submit registration by May 3. All proceeds benefit Northport community, youth, and educational programs. Call 509-732-4191 for more info.

May 11: Colville Library Improvement Club book sale, 10-1, downstairs in the library.

May 11 & 25: Northport Raceway race days. Visit facebook.com/groups/8614388563/ for more info.

May 12: Mother's Day.

May 12: Wine & Song (and chocolate!), Pend Oreille Playhouse, 236 S Union, Newport, WA, 3-5 pm, featuring wines from Shannon Faye Winery and music by Mike Moudy and Chuck Morel. Suggested donation, \$25 per person. Call 509-447-9900 for more info.

May 14: Rural Community Vitality Forum, Community Colleges of Spokane - Colville Campus, 985 S Elm St, Colville, 9:30 - 2:30. Come tell us what is working and what is not, to secure the economic future of your community. Lunch will be served. Visit wb.wa.gov/ for more info and to register.

May 14, 21 & 28: International Film Festival, sponsored by Spokane Community College - Colville Center, Rendezvous Theater, 985 S. Elm St., Colville. Community college instructors will lead a discussion about the film at 6:30 pm, followed by a showing at 7 pm. Films are: "Wasteland" a Brazilian documentary, "Miracle of Bern" a German drama, and "Monsoon Wedding" an Indian romance. Snacks provided by the Associated Student Group, and admission is free to the public.

May 17: Colville Chamber of Commerce / Mayor's Open Golf Tournament, Dominion Meadows Golf Course, Colville. Check-in at 11 am, shotgun start at Noon. Call 509-684-5973 for more info. See ad page 15.

May 18: Music on the Mountain, presented by the Chewelah Arts Guild with support from the Vinson Fund, and performed by Gonzaga University Symphony Orchestra, Chewelah Peak Learning Center, 3215 Flowery Trail Rd., Chewelah, 2 pm. See ad page 32.

May 18: The Rotary Clubs of Colville and Kettle Falls are sponsoring a fundraiser for Community Partnerships for Mental Health in recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month at Fired Up Brewing in Colville, 3-8 pm. Fired Up Brewing will donate \$1 for every house beer sold during this event. There will be a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, live music and a chance to learn a few facts about mental illness and the stories of people living with mental health challenges. Come and help us raise awareness and end the stigma of mental illness.

May 18: Experience the power of rhythm and see the Drum Brothers in concert at the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Colville, 7 pm. This high energy performance brought to you by the Vinson Fund and the Betty Skidmore concert series. There will also be a Hand Drumming Workshop, 11-12:30, and African Dance Workshop, 1-2:30 on Sunday, May 19 at Northern Dance Theatre, 151 W. First Ave, Colville. To RSVP, email or call Drum Brothers at matthew@drumbrothers.com or 406-531-8109. Please arrive a few minutes early to allow extra time for registration. See ad page 19.

May 25: Calling all Collectors, Junkers, Hoarders and Others! The VFRC-Colville Food Bank is

hosting "A Collaboration of Collectors Flea Market" at the Colville Fairgrounds. If you would like to sell, barter or trade please call the VFRC at 509-684-2971 for an application. Deadline is May 11. You can also donate your gently used items to the VFRC.

May 25: Nostalgia Days Car Show, Chewelah City Park, 9-3. Cars, truck motorcycles - if you are proud of it, we want to see it. Free to all and public is welcome. Trophies will be awarded. Donations are accepted, as well as participation encouraged in silent auction and raffle to cover cost of show. Call 509-684-4333 for more info.

May 27: Memorial Day.

May 30-31: Sixth Annual International Ethics Conference, Envisioning the Future of the Columbia River, Selkirk College, Castlegar Campus, B.C. See ad page 12.

May 31: Spaghetti Feast Fundraiser to support Children's Summer Food Program of the Colville-area faith-based Community, Colville Community Church, 930 S. Elm St., 4:30-7 pm. Call 509-684-4441 for more info.

June 2: Barrel Derby Day, Curlew. Call 509-779-4742 for more info.

Cutter Theatre, calendar of events, 302 Park Street, Metaline Falls, 509-446-4108. Details available at cuttertheatre.com. See ad page 22.
5th: "Remember" with Allen McCully, 2pm
19th: Cutter Coffee House Concert, 2-5 pm
June 1st: Health & Wellness Expo, 8-Noon

Trail & District Arts Council calendar of events. Details available at trail-arts.com.
1st: Menopause The Musical, 7:30-9:30 pm
11th: Ken McCoy Band - Silver City Days, 8-11:55 pm
25th: STEPS Stairway to Entertainment, 2 & 6:30 pm

Music at Northern Ales, 325 W. 3rd Ave., Kettle Falls, northernales.com, 509-738-7382:
2nd: Rusty, 6-8 pm
3rd: Bottom Dollar, 7-10 pm
9th: John Pritcher, 6-8 pm
10th: Raptor, 7-10 pm
16th: Michael Pickett, 6-8 pm
17th: Open Mic, 7-10 pm
23rd: Jim Murphy, 6-8 pm
24th: Christy Lee, 6-8 pm

Music at Republic Brewery, 26 Clark Ave., Republic, republicbrew.com, 509-775-2700.
4th: Fat Lady, 7-10 pm
18th: Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs, 7-10 pm
31st: World's Finest (ticketed event), 7-10 pm

Meetings & Opportunities

May 8: Northeast Washington Genealogy Society meeting, 1 pm, LDS Church basement, Juniper Street in Colville, entry at the back of the building. Visit news.org for more info. All visitors are welcome.

Jacqueline Brewer of Chewelah is the featured Artists of the Month at the Tri County Economic Development District Gallery in Colville, displaying her paintings of a wide variety of subjects. Call 509-684-4571 for more info.

Library Events: Check out the extensive calendars of libraryeventsatncrl.org (Ferry Co.), scrlid.org (Stevens Co.), and pocld.org (Pend Oreille Co.).

MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM

The Northport Times

NORTHPORT - MAY 2019: Since the time of the Smelter's inception, a tremendous struggle has oppressed the men who work there. Early mornings and long shifts were the cause of their most difficult frustration. This could not be helped, as ore processing is an arduous industry. A meeting was held by the resident Superintendent and all the more influential managers. It was decided that they should try an experimental project called "Coffee Break." This was to be held one half hour before each shift was scheduled to begin. Piping hot coffee was offered free of charge to workers during these times.

This study lasted for a full thirty days and by the end of this time, the men were arriving to work early and exhibiting bright countenances and cheerful demeanors. An announcement was made the following morning, that "Coffee Break" was a successful endeavor and would be fully implemented as a regular part of each day.

—Viola Murphy

CALL HOSTING PARTIES TO CONFIRM LISTING INFO. THE NORTH COLUMBIA MONTHLY WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ERRORS OR SCHEDULE CHANGES. VISIT NCMONTHLY.COM FOR DAILY LISTING UPDATES OR TO SUBMIT A "WHAT'S HAPPENING" LISTING.

LISTEN UP

Reviews by Michael Pickett

Don Felder: Let There Be Rock

Twenty-five years ago, as the *North Columbia Monthly* hit newsstands with Mark Harrison's unmatched satirical wit and Tina Cummings' world-class layout and design, the Eagles decided that hell had indeed frozen over.

Fans flocked to the new reunion album, and one of my first music reviews for the *Monthly* took shape in the mostly black-and-white-but-gorgeous publication. Now, a quarter-century later, the trouble that brewed in the Eagles all along (really, they are a musical corporation that sings about the ruthless ways of corporations, while engaging in all the same practices) has left them with one original Eagle. Meanwhile, guitarist (and secret weapon) Don Felder is now free to create *American Rock-n-Roll*, a

jet-fueled collection of collaborations with some of the biggest names in rock.

Incredible guests include Sammy Hagar, Slash, Richie Sambora, Orianthi, Peter Frampton, Joe Satriani, Mick Fleetwood, Chad Smith, Bob Weir, Toto's David Paich and Steve Porcaro and Rush's Alex Lifeson.

Hagar growls and wails at the mic with Felder on the gut-punching "Rock You" (with Satriani firing on all guitar cylinders), while Lifeson's signature acoustic and electric touch sparkle on "Charmed," a kind of answer to Felder's

former partner Joe Walsh, on "Life's Been Good."

Weir and Satch ended up on the record just for stopping by, and that's kind of the feel behind the album: fun times with talented friends. While Felder may not have crafted the next "Hotel California" here, he is still the guy who brought that guitar masterpiece to the Eagles, and 25 years after the *North Columbia Monthly* noted the tenuous reunion of Felder's band, he and the magazine are still going strong.



Devin Townsend the Empath

For over two decades and with dozens of albums that bridge hard rock, ambient and metal with the vision and wit of one of today's greatest artists, Devin Townsend has been pushing the boundaries of what's possible in recorded music.

With the release of the ambitious new *Empath* collection, Townsend once again

reaches well past any one genre and fuses soaring symphonic and operatic vocals with ballistic hard-rock and metal to jaw-dropping effect. This is a stunning achievement even for Townsend's stratospheric genius as a composer, player and vocalist.

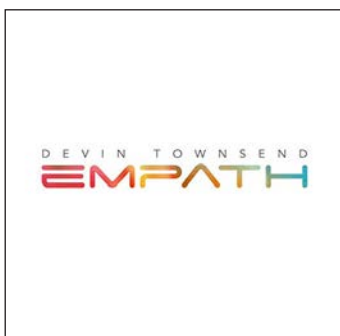
The absolutely arresting "Why?" showcases Townsend's world-class tenor, which

seems to channel the best Freddie Mercury aesthetic over soaring symphonic arrangements, while the cinematic "Singularity," "Spirits Will Collide" and "Evermore" combine impossible combinations of rock and spell-binding symphony in completely unpredictable ways.

A rabid global following loyal to his vision gobbles up even his most ambitious recordings as soon as they hit the marketplace. *Empath* will no doubt be a monster-seller for the Canadian mad genius, who easily carries the torch for progressive artists like Zappa, Bowie, Rush and others. There is simply no other artist like Devin Townsend on today's sonic landscape, in my opinion.

This album is as groundbreaking as it is gorgeous, and if you want impeccably crafted music that sounds unlike anything you've heard before, Devin Townsend's *Empath* is the genre-defying album you need.

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A Good Read

Reviews by Loren Cruden

The Winter Soldier, by Daniel Mason

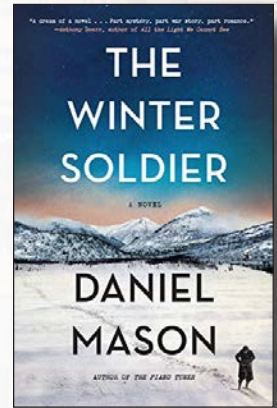
Daniel Mason's storytelling seeks, foremost, to ruffle the heart, his sentences fluent in that language, a heightened atmosphere within which his characters enact the human experience on a vastly lit stage. Thus *The Winter Soldier* reminded me of Anthony Doerr's World War II story, *All the Light We Cannot See*, but is set in the Austro-Hungarian Empire during World War I and has a simpler, less luminously-spun narrative arc.

I had to fetch a blanket, though, while reading Mason's conjurations of frigid winter misery on the war's Eastern Front. The story describes little actual fighting; instead we see its consequences. The main character is a medical student from an Austrian upper-class family who enlists in order to finally get hands-on experience with patients. His posting takes him to a field hospital run by a nursing nun; its doctors have absconded. The story is about what happens there.

Our protagonist, Lucius, is a less-than-adept conversationalist, though academically top of his class at the medical school. The young nun, Margarete, is plucky and voluble, and carries a rifle. She's the real boss, guiding Lucius. Mason, himself a doctor and professor of psychiatry, infuses the story with medical

authenticity and psychological insight. Much like Pat Barker, he lays bare the impact of war on the psyche of soldiers and those who deal with their injuries, physical and mental. The sheer scope of the travesty of World War I offers a dark feast for historical novelists who venture it. "Certainly, she was well aware of the incompetence of the High Command, of the growing debacle of the war; certainly she had heard of the entire Third Army sent against the wrong front; certainly she had seen the shoes made of cardboard, the summer coats given to alpine patrols."

The book's title refers to an initially anonymous, unspeaking shell-shock victim brought to the makeshift hospital – an iconic soldier pivotal to a story that, Zhivago-like, has love at its center, epic journeys of return, and oh-so-much snow.



Elmet, by Fiona Mozley

Fiona Mozley's debut novel, *Elmet*, was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2017. Not bad for a novice author (who in her back-cover photo looks about fifteen). *Elmet* is the old name for a disreputable out-of-the-way corner of Yorkshire, in northern England. Mozley's main characters are out-of-the-way and disreputable, too: a bare-fisted fighter and his two teenaged children, Daniel and Cathy.

The story is told in Daniel's voice – which, from the opening sentence onward, I kept hearing as a girl's. It gradually becomes clear that this is intentional. His sister Cathy is an angry, self-directed kid, ever rolling cigarettes the whole family smokes. In our country this family would be termed survivalists. They build a house on land not theirs, the dad a hunter and scavenger with no regard for law, the kids haphazardly schooled, singing and dancing to the radio or making their own music: no TV, phone, or electronics, but lots of outdoor savvy. "Everything he did now was to toughen us up against something unseen. He wanted to strengthen us against the dark things in the world.... And yet there was nothing of the world in our lives." Until, unfortunately, there was.

Mozley's lyricism is earthy. Her descriptions and narrative details are fresh, at times extraordinary. "When he pulled the air around into his cavernous lungs he looked lighter than he was, like a circus tent caught in an updraft." The story stays within traditional themes of family and social relationships,

but Mozley uses her characters and plot to move these into an almost mythic realm – archetypes clothed in the contemporary: John Smyth, defender of the common man; Mr. Price, the corrupt, wealthy oppressor; androgynous Daniel; Cathy the modern Artemis.

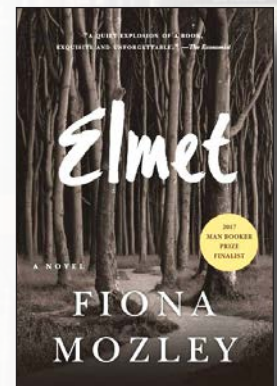
The tale builds, then culminates in classic blood-soaked tragedy, Yorkshire at its mythic darkest.

"Smoke moved over the water. The shadows were long, thin teeth, and light curled around trees, between trunks and crooked, clad branches. It made parchment of the leaves. It made dust of the morning dew."

Another recommendation from the M shelves:

Walter Mosley – John Woman

Loren Cruden writes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, available at Meyers Falls Market in Kettle Falls and www.LorenBooks.com, and provides Home Pet Care in the north Stevens County area.





Mountain Meandering

Photo & Text by Patricia Ediger

My favorite season is spring. Not only is it the most transformative season, with the natural world coming back to life from seeming death and dormancy, but it is one of brilliance, joyful color, and bird song.

Living in the mountains, winter is especially challenging. Deep snow covers much of our landscape, starting in November and lasting through March. Every day that spring takes hold is felt intensely. It manifests in snow melt, the arrival of migratory birds, green buds on trees and bushes appearing overnight, new grass blades shooting up through dead brown thatch, a certain smell and warmth in the air.

Nature is awakening and, with it, a part of me that has also felt dormant. The first day that I see robins and

hear their "cheer-up" and see the green-violet swallows swooping and chatting in joyful play while they snatch gnats from the air, I find myself deeply moved and rejoicing for the spring rhythm that has surely begun.

Over the last 25 years, the *North Columbia Monthly* has gone through its own rhythms and

seasons of change. The monthly publishing, in all its forms, has helped my understanding and appreciation for the life all around us.

My first meaningful memories of the *NCM* were the articles by Jack Nisbet. His knowledge and stories of this region's history, peoples, native plants and wildlife have intrigued me and

life experiences that regularly touch my heart and stir my emotions. These are stories that tell of the rhythms and seasons of human life, the discoveries of hope, love and renewal that come out of loss and pain. We find unexpected gifts in unexpected places. Surprises waiting for us around the corner or just outside our window.

Renewal is found as we keep moving with the flow and rhythm, eyes and hearts wide open. Perceiving and embracing the truth we need for growth and for deepening.

This last winter was a long one, yet I am that much more energized and grateful for the spring rhythms. Every week is bringing new warmth into our beings. Our skin and souls soak it up. We see growth all around and with it the beauty of renewed life. The



inspired me to learn more and appreciate such rich treasures. During recent years, the *NCM* has featured wildlife and nature photos and the stories that accompany them are ones I anticipate each month.

The *NCM* has a wealth of talented and eloquent contributors who share deeply personal

birds with colorful wings and exultant songs are returning once again to rebuild nests for their young.

It's a colorful and gorgeous world outside and for the next couple of months it will only get better. May it inspire hope for all that concerns us and bring renewed song into our hearts.

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~ Poetry of Place ~

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Working on the Spring

By Lynn Rigney Schott

You are over in the old cedar grove
up Hockersmith Road working on the spring,
cleaning out the leaves and sediment
that block the box this time of year.

I'm in the garden bending over beds
of primrose, daffodil, peony, iris, clearing
out damp layers of leaf and mulch, spent
stalks and stems, working on the spring.

The killdeer cry and dive above the field
looking for a snowless edge to make a nest
along the ditch, above the pond, among
the stones – they are working on the spring.

At dusk the frogs with their incoherent
songs, sweet as mud, are working on the spring
reminding us that animals once were gods who
made no promises, except to return, again.

And what of the Brewer's blackbirds arriving
with their hit-and-run antics, commandeering
the treetops with that edgy argot, building nests,
cantillating, feverishly, loudly working on the spring.

And the stoic lilacs who have waited all winter
to write their purple prose depend now on the simple
gravity of rain which reminds us year after year
mercy is not strained, working on the spring.

The Clothesline

By Jhanna Eggers (for Mom)

Shirts on the clothesline, blown' in the breeze
Colors of the rainbow, set my mind at ease
Wildflowers on the hillside, grass returning green,
Shirts on the clothesline smell so nice and clean.

Shorts on the clothesline, dryin' in the sun
Skimpy little dresses, clothes for summer fun!
Sure don't need to wear much; skinny-dipping, too
Shorts on the clothesline, summer, I love you!

Jeans on the clothesline, flying' in the wind
Flannel shirts for gettin' wood, soon winter will begin.
Gold leaves spiral down to Earth, floating' on the creek,
Jeans on the clothesline, and rosy Autumn cheeks!

Sweaters on the clothesline, strung up by the fire
Wooly socks and mittens, boots and snowsuits there.
You may think I'm old-fashioned, or perhaps don't have a dryer;
It's true, but then, the clothesline's been my beauty-art inspired!

Sheets on the clothesline, blown' in the breeze
Colors of the rainbow, set my heart at ease.
Straight upon the bed they'll go, fresh as morning dew
Sheets on the clothesline make me think of you!

The Neighbors

By Gabriel Cruden

They are at it again
their amorous cacophony
invoking images in my mind
damp, clutching, gasping, urgent
images.

Some say it's the first robin
or the unfurling daffodil
or the budding of the maple.
But to me, spring truly begins
when the frogs sing.



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Community Notes



Dave Jones: "I miss sending photo ads to you every month. It was the highlight of my short real estate career. The voice of the North Columbia Monthly has colorfully woven itself into the tapestry of this community. Happy 25th anniversary!" (Photo by Dave Jones)

Margie Heller: "As a former resident of the north country who still has many friends in the area, I enjoy reading the North Columbia Monthly to keep me updated on the happenings in that area. I especially like the nature-oriented features, such as by Eileen Delehanty Pearkes, J. Foster Fanning, and my longtime friend Jack Nisbet. But I've come to look forward to many of the other writers' entries as well."

"In the January issue, I was absolutely shocked to find a reference by Karen Giebel to the towns of Dunkirk and Fredonia, NY! While I was growing up in Pennsylvania, my family spent a couple of weeks every summer at a cabin in Lake Erie, which was close to those two towns, and we shopped in them regularly. That time in my childhood and my years living in Stevens County were both very happy times on my life. What a pleasant surprise to see them both in one reference!"

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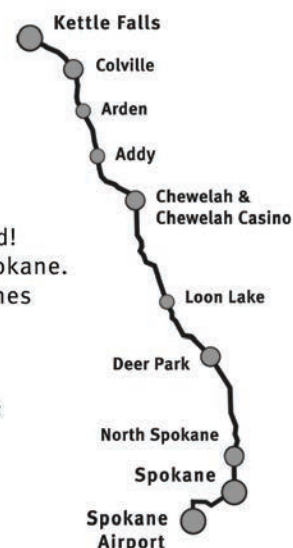


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Learning a New Landscape While Savoring the Old

By Leopold Hayden Powell

On this twenty-fifth anniversary of the *North Columbia Monthly*, long-time readers will know I have retired. Some will know I have moved to Vashon Island in the Puget Sound. Relocation and retirement can be disruptive; however, I am fully enjoying this new life. I do miss mountain forests dearly and find that old friendships are all the sweeter for having to make travel plans to connect.

The Northern Inland mountain region feels isolated from surrounding regions and from valley to valley. The Vashon-Maury Islands, where I live now, are absolutely isolated, by the waters of the Salish Sea. Everyone and everything must come and go by boat or small aircraft. A few hardy souls, and recently a cougar, swim the seaways. I cannot drive to Seattle, Tacoma, or Bremerton without waiting in line for ferry or commuter boat. Insularity shapes the nature, culture, and history.

Let me take you on a tour. Ride your bicycle from Tacoma's Point Defiance Park by ferry to Tahlequah. Vashon Highway is dug steeply into the bluff, forming most of the Vashon-Maury coast. Low shores and beaches are few. North on the highway, you see familiar Douglas fir and western red cedar forest. Dense growth and understory of salal and sword fern tell the difference. Red alder and big-leaf maple forests are only west of the mountains. Down the grade to Quartermaster Harbor, where cottages perch between the road and water. Moored boats are reminiscent of New England. The same for the village of Burton, with its century-old white church. General merchandise and marine hardware are at the Burton Store. Yes, there is a connection to the namesake snow and skate boards. There is industry on the island too.

Nine tenths of a mile beyond the village, turn right onto SW Quartermaster Drive. Shortly, you will have the salt chuck near on both sides of the Portage. Vashon and Maury were separate, until the causeway was built in 1919. SW Luna Beach Road, Y's to the left, more bike-pleasant than Point Robinson Road. The destination is Point Robinson Park.

The Northwest sea is here: classic lighthouse, wind, waves, shore birds and nesting

"...everyone knew that all islands were worlds unto themselves, that to come to an island was to come to another world."

~ Guy Gavriel Kay, *Tigana*, 1990

eagles, the Victorian keeper's residences where lodging can be reserved. Ocean-bound ships pass, along with seals and sea lions. Humpback whales and southern resident orcas visit. Prepare for the beach to be sometimes narrow, sometimes wide and usually windy. The tides and wind were the Point's original builders. Down from the drift logs the beach fines from cobbles and gravel, to sand and shell, to hard-packed sand with a few rocks.

At low tide most marine animals are hiding. Inch-long grey-green donuts are green anemones. Wade into rippled water and patiently shade them to see them spread their tentacles. You might dig around a finely ridged pebble to find a fist-sized moon snail. The brown coils, looking as if cut from a toilet plunger, are moon snail egg masses. Pools around large pebbles trap hump-backed shrimp, less than an inch long and almost transparent, but they are there.

Turn from the marine environment to see the human-made landscape. Workmen with horse-drawn scrapers dug the ravine to raise the point. The spoil formed the benches, now occupied by the lighthouse and residences. Logs were skidded down the ravine and off of the bluffs. The logs must have been mostly large western hemlock. Salmon berry and red-flowering currant are native, but opening the forest has allowed them to out-compete sword fern and salal. Volunteers and the Park District struggle with the introduced species:

scotch broom, English laurel, ivy, holly, Himalaya, and trailing blackberry.

Abundant thanks to the volunteers who toil restoring this and many other places across the island. Vashon Parks District and Vashon Island Land Trust cooperate to restore and protect green areas and historic sites. They know that it will never revert to native. With help, some land can adapt to a new nature. Islanders have realized before others that there are environmental limits to civilization.

As in the inland Northwest, islanders work hard, love their families and serve the community. To those that remain in the mountains and valleys, I advise you to treasure the solitude and silence that cannot be had with the inevitable closeness, noise and light of suburbia. Stand in the dark, in awe of uncountable stars.



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Along the Mountain Path: We Are All Connected

By Sarah Kilpatrick, E.R.Y.T.

Yoga is a Sanskrit word meaning connection and harmony. This means the individual is integrated, body, mind and spirit. Another, larger meaning is the way we are all in community, and the *North Columbia Monthly* has always been about our community, and its connection to peoples, history, nature and the larger area we are a part of.

I had been teaching yoga for a few years when I was asked by Steve and Karla Rumsey if I could work for them at The Book Depot on the corner of First and Main in Colville. I remember clearly the first day that Mark Harrison and Tina Cummings walked into the bookstore. They were new to the area, and Mark intended to publish a local monthly magazine, the *North Columbia Monthly*.

Steve and Karla were excited and supportive from the beginning, and my world expanded to include this publication. Mark would come in and talk to Steve about this and that, Karla helped with distribution, and it became a part of our world.

After Mark's tragic illness and untimely death, Steve and Karla became the publishers. The *Monthly* had become a respected and widely accepted part of the expression of creativity and communication, and no one wanted to lose it.

The Rumseys worked hard to maintain and then to grow the publication.

In 2000, with the support of my dear friend Darlene Hallett, and the cooperation of Jeannie Acorn, Mountain Path Yoga was able to open a studio in the third floor of the Barman's Building. Ben Atherley made a beautiful metal sculpture of Three-legged Dog Pose from which to hang a sign painted by David Chastain. Yoga was on Main Street!

Steve came up to the studio and took some photos so that I would have a logo for my ad in the *Monthly*, and his picture of me in Three-legged Dog Pose is still the logo used for all my Mountain Path printings.

From the beginning, the studio was a work of community, and the *Monthly* was my chosen method of connecting with that community. Shortly after the studio opened, Steve asked me to contribute a monthly article to the magazine, and "Along the Mountain Path" was born. It was a way to make yoga available to a wider audience, and keep the studio in the public eye. Steve put it under the heading "To Your Health." (I think he was hoping that our health professionals would contribute as well.) After all these years, here we are!

First we lost Steve, and then we lost

Karla. The family and many friends agreed that Gabriel was the perfect person to carry this publication on. He has done a fine job. He has also been very supportive of me as I have dealt with some health issues. When I was very ill in 2015, Brenda St. John, a wonderful yoga teacher in Chewelah, filled in to keep the column going. The *Monthly* has been an integral part of Mountain Path Yoga since its beginning and writing my monthly article is a practice of a different kind for me! Practice, connection, growth and harmony. Yoga.

I have received notes from readers over the years who have found something useful in the articles. For that, I am profoundly grateful. Once in a while I'll be somewhere out of my regular path, in Chewelah or Spokane, and while I'm writing a check for a purchase someone recognizes my name and says "Oh, I always read your article!" What an unexpected delight! The *Monthly* is wide-reaching!

As we continue, each upon our own mountain path, may we recognize the importance of community, connection, education and mutual support. We are all in this together! With gratitude.

Namaste.

Sarah practices and teaches at Mt. Path Yoga studio, 818 E. Columbia Ave., Colville.



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Sharing Memories of 1994

By Linda Bond

I used to spend a lot of time thinking about the past. I'd turn memories over in my mind, share them with others by repeating the same stories over and over, and try to glean something meaningful from it all. Thoughts like "What if I had done it this way?" or "I wonder why (name) lied about me?" or even "Did I make the right decision about college?" ran through my mind on a regular basis. But, somewhere along the line, I stopped spending so much time in the past and began to appreciate the present.

I've heard it said that I can't do anything about the past and I don't know what the future will bring, so I should live in the present and enjoy what life is giving me. And for the most part, I've found that to be true.

For instance, although I have submitted articles to the *NC Monthly* for about two years, it's always the one I am working on "now" that is the most challenging and exciting. Then along came the 25th anniversary of the *North Columbia Monthly*. I did some calculations and decided that meant it had started in about May of 1994. And WOW! The memories came flooding back; not so much my personal experiences of that year (since I was in one of my less tumultuous periods), but thoughts about what was happening in the world, our country and in the North Columbia region.

Let's Go Fishing or Take in a Movie

If you'd been around and liked to fish, you would have likely caught a few trout or

just gotten into the sturgeon or pink season. And steelhead were just becoming available. But it was the August-September chinook (largest Columbia River salmon) season that offered the most cherished prizes.

Rather than hitting the water, we might take in a movie or two. *Forrest Gump* was popular with nearly everyone, and there was *Pulp Fiction* for those who didn't mind the violence, as well as *Clear and Present Danger*. Or, we might just stay home and watch *Wings* or *NYPD Blue* on TV. Remember when we had only a few channels to choose from?

If you liked music, you may have been listening to "Hero" by Mariah Carey. The rock band Nirvana had played in Spokane in January, and there was more to come.

Advertising was urging us to try Orville Redenbacher's gourmet popcorn for our tummies and the Braun air drier to puff up our hairdos, ladies. Milk was the drink of choice, and Puerto Rico was the vacation option of the day. If we were looking for a new ride, we could buy a new 1995 Chevy Lumina for a whopping \$16,000! And don't forget *Baywatch*, the beachside sensation.

In the News

In November of 1994, the Confederated Tribe of the Colville Reservation Grand Coulee Dam Settlement Act provided \$53 million from the U.S. government to the tribe for the past years that tribal land had been used to generate electrical power. In addition, the act provided for ongoing

annual payments by the Bonneville Power Association into the tribe's accounts.

On May 10, NASA broadcast a solar eclipse live. Bill Clinton was president and Al Gore was vice president. Amazon was created and the rest, as they say, is history.

This was also the year we watched live, in shock, as police chased former national favorite O.J. Simpson down the freeway.

At Fairchild Air Force Base outside Spokane, a B-52 bomber crashed on June 24.

Volatile memories

As you may be able to tell, I drew these "memories" from archives available on the internet. I'm not sure what this article would have looked like if I had to draw from my own personal view of these events. They say our brains can trick us. False memory is formed from: 1) suggestion; 2) recent events; and 3) competition from other memories. I'm told our brain also fills in sensory gaps – the colors, sounds and feelings may not have been the same originally.

And then there's our imagination. We create reality out of what we imagine when we read books, or listen to music. I guess that's why they also say, "Memories are state-dependent." Maybe the wine had something to do with it.

Linda Bond is co-founder and leader of the Inland Northwest Writers Guild and Outreach Coordinator at Auntie's Bookstore in Spokane, WA. Write to her at lindathe-writer@gmail.com.



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Garden Weed Control Methods

By Michelle Lancaster

I grew up in Colville, reading the *North Columbia Monthly*, and one thing that sticks in my mind over the past 25 years is that I always learn something new from each issue. Now, as a writer for the *Monthly*, I also appreciate the feedback and enjoy hearing from other farmers, gardeners and readers about their own experiences on the various topics I write about. Here is a recent learning example:

Each year we look for ways to improve our garden. A couple years ago we found a method of mulching that significantly reduced weeds, therefore leading to improved crop growth and productivity. This method changed me from a frustrated farmer ready to give up to a contented gardener with healthier produce.

It's as simple as layering. Each layer works to provide fertilizer, smother weed seed and preserve moisture. The layers can vary based on what you have available. What we do first is cover the soil with our own composted mix of animal manure, straw and shavings, then add cardboard, then more compost (near the plants) or bark/wood shavings (in the lanes).

Initially, we tilled the land to bring back air to the soil. The term "no-till" is a magic word in modern sustainable farming, but most sources I have read do note that 6-inch tilling may be required initially to help restore air to the soil. From there, lanes can be created to walk on, protecting the planting area from compaction.

The lanes can be put in first, or the planting beds can be developed and the open areas filled in as lanes. I prefer to make the lanes first, so that we avoid stepping in the planting zones. In some spots, such as the early planting area for onions, we do create beds first. I'm still trying to find a suitable alternative to plastic for covering between the onions. We tried straw and shavings, but they are not heavy enough to block the weeds. Perhaps a thick paper or thin cardboard would work better. This year I will let my dad grow all the onions, since he has more space than we do!

The downside to this method may be the extra time spent in the spring setting up the permanent lanes and beds and covering bare soil before weeds have sprouted. On the positive side, hardly any weeds grow, and I can spend the rest of the summer enjoying the plants I intended to germinate rather than the volunteers I do not want. If the beds are kept intact, the succeeding years require much less initial labor.

This year we are considering another version of preventive mulching that I read about in the book *Weedless Gardening* by Lee Reich. The whole garden is covered at once, before planting anything. Then openings are made just where a plant is inserted, with the idea that all the rest of the soil is covered and the few sparse weeds that come through can be quickly pulled out.

A potential negative to this method involves soil temperature. Last year, we

developed the layers early in the spring, thinking to get ahead, but the soil was so cold that the mulch slowed the soil from warming up, effectively insulating it. I planted down deeper into the soil. This year we are considering either a form of raised bed or making mounds of soil to plant the starts in, so they are above ground a bit to allow the soil to warm up more, since our gardens are borderline for sunlight and warmth.

I purchased a copy of *All New Square Foot Gardening*, 2nd edition, by Mel Bartholomew from Coffee and Books in Colville. His method involves mixing compost with peat moss (acidic, offsets the alkaline nature of compost) and vermiculite (lightweight, porous, helps hold water and air in the soil mix). I purchased a bag of Canadian peat moss from North 40 and a bag of vermiculite from Country Store, and will add those to our own compost mix for a few beds this year. I have a feeling these beds will warm up better than planting at the soil level. If so, that will solve many issues of cold-climate gardening.

As always, the challenges in gardening keep us thinking up fun, new ideas. Each year our garden improves and we find ourselves weeding less and enjoying gardening more.

Michelle Lancaster homesteads with her family on Old Dominion Mountain in Colville. She writes at Spiritedrose.wordpress.com.



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Living in NE WA: Lessons Learned

Twenty-Five Years Past ... A Future Parady

By J. Merrill Baker

Twenty-five years ago, the printing press was already obsolete. Translucent e-pads were the new norm, every cyber-able person with an implant – or viable bio-tattoo – was fed information for their daily indoctrination on the climate, protocols to follow, and the status of their personal bio-energy fields. It was a New Day!

Our little *North Columbia Monthly* had evolved into a daily download, and the ads for automated dog-walkers and local house sanitizers were still present, with their digital exchanges of creds – or credits as the old folks called them. The meetings for the community solar and turbine engineers and the network of Planting Facility Guilds were announced weekly, as were the Weavers and Gleaners' meetings (via teleconferences), all via our *North Columbia Monthly* channel. These downloads were not only displayed by your implant/tattoo, they were conveniently presented on public display towers in town.

The artist colonies were advertising new offerings on holo-screens for the day to enjoy, and the optical entertainment games were downloadable – free if it were yesterday's now-solved coding puzzle for you to work out in slow motion.

The AI automated tractors were fueled and roaring to life to till the fields for this next season's plantings of hemp and mixed greens. Field fertilizer was applied after receiving their loads of reconditioned humaner from the recycling plant and the

chicken ranch where feathers and remains were composted year round. All in a day's, well, *morning's* effort as the sun rose and fueled the solar energies which fed the equipment via a nifty WiFi-type transmission.

Our days were clear now, with even temperatures controlled by our climate satellites, except for the pre-planned rain days. The winter snow sports were located in altitude-appropriate settings, with no unexpected thawing to damage the venue's value to avid participants.

Archival photographer Joanie Christian beamed her observational delights from her tree house over the river, and our Sarah Kilpatrick played our selection of the morning's yoga experience from her studio atop the Chase-Horizon building. Our naturalist Jack Nesbit proclaimed the latest cloned variety of a prehistoric berry as an edible delight grown in the refurbished sun-pit gardens in the Vaagen estates. Our psychotherapist Christine Wilson was overseeing the training of the 5-to-6-year-olds in their sign language skills along with their mental telepathy abilities. Too young to receive their implants/tattoos until the age of 12, they relied on the experience of the elders.

Dr. Barry had enjoyed the musical tattoo symbols that were painlessly and hermetically sealed and fused in a new-age process onto the left inside wrists of the capable citizens. Made portable, he remained an advocate in cyber-education-by-osmosis and its future applications.

Eileen Delehanty Pearkes had noted the re-routing of the Columbia River through the LCC (*lightweight cellular concrete*) aqueducts, with special salmon ladders built in. Seamlessly, that freed up the ecosystems along the river's edges and transformed the hydroelectric plants that floated atop, thus allowing embedded, kinetically-contracted dispersal of energy transmissions throughout the regions.

Our muse, Loren Cruden, had returned to her first love, Scotland, and offered her daily inspirations via Hologvision, and also sharing what the cat had taught her on their morning walks. Our matriarch of now-everybody's-grandkids, Becky Dumbell, was busy garnering the attributes of travel with her hydro-air cycle over our countries' many aqueducts. Our publisher-editor, Gabriel, was out in the Biome, ardently teaching his twenty-plus grandchildren the ins and outs of the cyber communication links that fueled the *North Columbia Monthly* community, and how it was farmed in the olden days for a historical reference before the onset of selective, personally downloadable virtual libraries.

This being the second twenty-fifth anniversary of sharing with the community all types of the wisdom and wit of our forebears, we celebrate that we can still wonder and communicate and enjoy "Where and How We Live!"

Onward!

J. Merrill Baker is a budding Ruralite-Futurist envisioning the possible.

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Drinking from Trees ... Telling

By Tina Wynecoop

“The quiet knowing trees, asking them to join me in their knowledge that I have lost...”

~ Alfred Gemmrich, poet

The best things have come to me by word-of-mouth, including the *North Columbia Monthly*. I learned about it from a friend. I'm exceedingly “sappy” (sweetly happy) about its continued presence in my life.

Happy 25th anniversary NCM!

How does this celebratory essay integrate tree sap, tattoos, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, ingenuity, industry, spiles and praise? Read on...

The steady stream of quality writing included in the *North Columbia Monthly* draws me in; I wish I could say I have been a reader for all its 25 years. I dream of finding those early issues to see what our regional historians, naturalists, social workers, reviewers, poets, biologists, doctors, humorists, photographers and essayists had

been sharing with their Upper Columbia neighbors all that time, “asking them to join me in their knowledge that I have lost.”

I joined the magazine's flow by becoming a regular reader and occasional contributor in 2007. The first NCM editor, Steve Rumsey, kindly welcomed my first submission with a thoughtful email. His untimely death a few years later was mourned.

His widow, Karla, assumed the full mantle of publishing, editing and distributing NCM. I loved knowing her. We'd arrange to meet for coffee as she made her monthly rounds from the Airway Heights printer where she picked up her truckload of bundled magazines and proceed with deliveries in Spokane before heading north along Highway 395. Distributing each fresh collection of stories, events and advertisements at drop-off portals within her Upper Columbia community was both arduous and rewarding for her.

In 2015 her sudden passing rocked our world again. Heartfelt accolades were spoken during her memorial service, and she left us much to be grateful for. Virgil Seymour, a Sinixt/Lakes Colville tribal member, honored her by conveying condolences from the Colville Confederated Tribes. Their respect for this wonderful woman whose magazine often turned its spotlight on the region's First People was sincere. In the tribes' traditional way of honoring, Virgil gently draped a Pendleton

blanket over the shoulders of one of Karla's children. The act's wordless deep eloquence was “heard” by the grieved hearts in the auditorium. Such comfort! Such a tribute! Karla is robed in our collective memory.

There was an undercurrent of concern about the future of the magazine after Karla's passing. Who would, could, fill her shoes?

Worrying became wonderment when intrepid Gabriel Cruden arranged to purchase the magazine from the family of Karla and Steve. The *North Columbia Monthly* continues seamlessly and uninterrupted. This third owner-editor-publisher wears the Rumsey blanket with the grace and perspicacity befitting the publication's origin. Within its folds, writers, photographers and advertisers are sheltered and showcased.

NCM's regional presence is vast. It reaches both shores of the upper Columbia River, including the Spokane and Colville Reservations, numerous towns and cities, and on into interior British Columbia. Readers living far from its distribution route subscribe to it by mail; others find it online at its website and on Facebook. Librarians share it. Museum staffs save its historical articles for their archives. Over and over the magazine's cover page showcases the region's beauty, featuring the work of photographers whose artistry with a camera invites passersby to pick up a free copy.

So here is the connective tissue I've found between tree sap – the liquid that runs up a tree when the temperatures begin to moderate after a hard winter as warm days paired with chilly nights create a phenomenon stirring the tree from dormancy to activity – and my feelings that overflow with heartfelt “sappy” praise for NCM:

First, without the gift of a tree's sap, the early spring migration of hummingbirds would be thwarted. The rufous and calliope hummingbirds time their spring travels northward through our region with that of the activity of a woodpecker. The red-naped sapsucker drills/taps a favored host tree to drink the sweet liquid. The bird's industry draws insects to the sap wells. The tree's ooze entraps them and they become protein sustenance for both sapsuckers and hummingbirds. Bats and porcupines are also rewarded when they visit the neatly

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Stories ... Sharing Appreciation

arranged, evenly spaced sap wells created by the sapsucker.

Since antiquity humans have had their body and face artfully decorated with tattoos – “writing on skin.” This is a worldwide cultural practice. What did the ancients use for ink but a mixture of sap and soot.

East coast colonialists discovered that tree tapping and syrup-making served to satisfy the sweet tooth. This activity has been turned into an enriching, profitable industry. Sap extraction is done in our Upper Columbia region on a much smaller scale. Plateau Indians relied on a tree’s restorative tonic in late winter when food resources were depleted and hunger and hardship hovered. By incising trees, indigenous women collected sap with spoons made from mountain sheep horn. (A spoon was found in a riverside burial before Grand Coulee Dam was constructed.)

Ethnographer John Alan Ross devoted many decades learning from and recording the traditional ways of the indigenous people of the Interior Columbia Plateau. He noted, “Sap was collected in late winter or early spring from both deciduous and coniferous trees. ... Women were more active than men in the collecting and processing of sap. ... A woman could claim any number of sap trees simply by cutting and placing her collecting receptacle on those she tapped. Sap was collected from tamarack and birch trees. Birch sap was always considered a delicacy.

“Several other tree species will share their nutritious liquid if tapped. It required considerable time and patience to secure a significant quantity of the clear, sweet liquid. Sap was considered a thoughtful gift and elderly recipients claimed the best of stories could be recalled only after an adequate consumption of this delectable food.”

Wanting to gather this “delectable food” from my yard trees I purchased a spile, a stainless steel tool used for conducting sap from within the cambium layer of a sturdy tree to a waiting container (www.tapmytrees.com is an instructive website).

The word *spile* originates from “spike.” First I drill a shoulder-high 5/8” hole in a large maple’s trunk and insert the spile. I wait a short while before drinking from

the jar that has been hung from the spile’s hook. I’ve learned that morning draughts are especially refreshing because the liquid has been chilled during the night.

I offer to share sap with family and friends. Some resist. When I began tapping last year, my husband waited to see if I keeled over after drinking the free-flowing sap. He said he would taste it “if I survived.” He wasn’t aware that his tribe’s ancestors, the Spokans, relied on the native trees’ restorative juices. Tree sap (*lamnás*) was highly valued.

Ross noted that tamarack sap (*sne’mc’m*) doesn’t have the pitchy flavor of other coniferous trees. Our yard’s non-native maples offer their rich sweet food just the same. Husband watches me drink freely – and live! He tastes it. A sip is enough to satisfy his mild curiosity. He says he prefers his maple sap boiled down into thick syrup, preferably store-bought. He pours it over his huckleberry pancakes until the “pancakes swim backstrokes in it.” Others recognize the uncooked liquid for the elixir it truly is. They swoon and sing when I share what I’ve collected, and recall their own best-of stories.

I don’t cook my maple tree sap. It is a time-consuming process and a lot of work. A Minnesota friend’s husband taps their maples to make syrup. She advises that it is best to boil down the collected sap outdoors. The fragrance given off is glorious. Her neighborhood is blanketed in its perfume. “Making syrup in the kitchen smells good, too,” she says, “but this has repercussions.” Her friend processed it indoors and reported the sap’s sweet steam “filled the air and coated everything. Her cat stuck to the floor.”

It’s not sticky at all if you drink it straight from the source. A few companies are bottling maple sap and promoting it as a lower-calorie and better-tasting alternative to coconut water. According to the University of Alaska at Fairbanks website, nutrients that abound in tree sap include glucose, amino acids, vitamin C, potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, sodium and iron.

Which brings me full circle in explaining how I feel joyously sappy about NCM’s presence as it celebrates its 25th birthday. Reading the magazine restores and invigorates me. I learn new ways. I praise the expertise demonstrated by the publisher to create a product worth sharing – a product that blankets the region with the perfume of knowing and sharing. My appreciation, of course, includes *everyone* who has made, and continues to make, the *North Columbia Monthly* the best little magazine in the Upper Columbia region – perhaps the Universe!

March April Yay!

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Love the People Here

By Jean Handwerk

Seven years ago, I faced a surprise divorce and, just as surprising, ended up moving cross-country from the crowded megalopolis of the East Coast to this area. I moved out of a large house on a quarter-acre lot in a subdivision of over 300 houses with all the nearby suburban conveniences and temptations to materialism and self-indulgence. I ended up here, in a section of the country I had never even thought about visiting.

I now live in a much smaller house on over twenty acres with no neighbor in sight. It is “inconvenient” to heat with wood, and I have to plow snow from my unpaved road and level out the ruts after the spring thaw. It’s an hour-and-a-half round trip to get necessities not available in nearby Northport; back East everything I needed was within a fifteen-minute drive. I grow what I can and make those trips to town as infrequently as I can. And I even like it that

way!

What drew me here, of all places? Simple – sort of. I had wanted for years to escape the crowded suburbs with their endless housing developments and shopping malls and billboards, but my ex preferred all the conveniences, so we stayed. When I knew the divorce intentions were serious, I immediately put the house up for sale, and it sold within two weeks. I had six weeks to figure out where to go – and I had absolutely no idea. I was retired from regular employment and could go anywhere, but all I knew was that I wanted out of the city and into the country. I and my five siblings had been raised in the country, and the longer I lived in suburbia, the more I missed the quiet and beauty of country living.

I asked the Lord for His direction, and I got the distinct impression “North.” That closed some doors, but ... north where? I started a list, with New England at the top. Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont? Or maybe New York or northern Pennsylvania, where mom and dad were laid to rest in a steep hillside cemetery? Then I got a phone call that settled it for me.

I’d been working online for several years as a writer, proofreader and copyeditor for three different ministries – and two of them were located in northeast Washington. One of the men I’d worked with told me of a doctor out here whose work coincided with mine.

At the time I was writing articles about alternative health. I talked with her a few times on the phone, flew out to spend a few days with her at her invitation, recognized we were of like interests and values, and ... *this is North, isn’t it?*

I relished the thought of working on similar issues with her. Not only that, the layout designer, whom I’d worked with online for years, and his wife told me I could stay with them until I found a place of my own. *And* I could store my belongings in their commodious basement until then.

Done! I knew exactly what my plans

were, and even had friends in the area already. What a blessing God had in store for me.

I flew back home with only four weeks left to vacate the house. I packed and sold and gave away with an intensity fueled by that deadline. I must have been crazy to sign such a short-term deal. Whatever I had left had to fit into the largest van I could find. A friend from southwest Washington flew in to help drive the moving van cross country, my minivan in tow behind it. At night, when neither of us could safely drive any longer, he slept in the cab; I had made a sleeping bag burrow amid boxes and furniture in the back of my minivan (one chair had to be stored under the truck while I slept). He would wake me at 3 a.m. and I would move to the cab to finish sleeping as he headed us westward. At 6 a.m., my usual wake-up time, he would need a catnap and I would take the wheel. We made it from Delaware to northeast Washington in three days.

Now I see my siblings only every few years, due to the time and cost of travel, plus the busyness of our lives. They’ve tried to persuade me to move back East; they want me where they can come see me and help me, if needed, and vice versa. I have resisted, telling them I’m happy here, but still the “wish you lived closer” comments have come.

One late-2018 issue of the *North Columbia Monthly* was so wonderful that I corralled extra copies, tore out several of my favorite articles, added a cover letter, and sent them on to each of my four sisters. The letter explained that not only do I love the natural beauty here, but I love the people. They are “quite varied,” I wrote, “but they interact and live with values and humor and great adaptability and genuine interest in one another. In small cities and towns, one gets to see the same people over and over, and friendships build quickly. I guess one could say life here is personal, rather than impersonal.”

I told them about this unique monthly publication that I also love – a compilation of personal articles, usually their

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introspection about the experiences of living here. How much the writer enjoys raising her animals. Musings by a doctor about giving up a huge income in order to help people here, where values are more like his. A humorous and insightful piece about the consequences of a fall from a ladder. The annual anticipation of the first snow. Simple things, maybe, but they speak of the importance of day-to-day thinking and living, where people matter more than things.

One sister emailed in response, saying she now understands why I don't want to move from here: "Thank you for sending me pages of the monthly magazine. Just finished reading all of it. There is definitely a different lifestyle in a small town. Glad we were raised where we were. My boys don't care for big cities, either. [Son #2] is only five minutes away from his work, living on ten acres. When you are there, you feel that you are really in the country. [Son #1] is outside of the town where he works, but has closer neighbors. I think everyone around him has at least five acres in a cluster, then it is all farmland around them. And [Son #3] misses the country, although for family reasons, he is where he needs to be at present."

I think anyone with perception realizes the blessings in having nature around them. Cities deprive people of that deep need for things natural – for stars, not streetlights; for wild animals in their habitat; for moonlight on snow-quilted fields, not neon signs on busy streets, and for quiet time and a place for just thinking about things, not constant distraction, noise and activity. In this corner of the world, I can drive all the way home from town and not meet a single oncoming car.

It is true that incomes and job opportunities are greater in cities, but so are the temptations. One's values can get skewed when superficial things come too easily. What I find, too, is that even where land is open and farmed, such as in the Midwest, I am not happy without mountains and streams. And in regard to the sometimes-challenging practi-

cality of country living, I appreciate the "use it up, wear it out, make do, or do without" mindset, and the family and neighborly values.

People matter here – all people. That's what makes this area different than where I came from; it's what has made me different from what I was before I

came here. And that's a good thing.

I recently overheard a conversation between a local person and someone who'd just moved to this corner of the state. The newcomer was overjoyed at her new surroundings and circumstances. "I just love the people here!" she exclaimed. So do I, lady. So do I.

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A Word's Worth

By Gabriele von Trapp

Learning a new language can be a complicated and arduous affair. I well remember my own struggles with learning the English language with all its anomalies and idiosyncrasies.

My mother and I emigrated from Germany when I was seven. I began school two weeks after our arrival and did not speak a word of English. Actually, I did pick up one word from a crew member on the cargo ship bringing us to America. It was "sailor's talk" and should not be repeated here.

Interestingly, I immediately used it in its proper context without knowing the meaning. My mother scolded me and translated it in German. She didn't want her little girl slinging cuss words on her first day of school, or thereafter.

The English language presented many difficulties. There were too many rules to

memorize and obey ("i" before "e" except after "c," which doesn't always apply) and numerous considerations using verbs, punctuation, idioms, parallel structures, adjectives, adverbs, modifying phrases and dangling participles (a word formed from a verb intended to modify a noun which is not actually present in the text – what?!). And then there were the synonyms, antonyms, homonyms and heteronyms, which makes no sense at all. Why use the same word for two different meanings?

But that did not stop me from wanting to learn the language. English fascinated me and there was the element of the social "sink or swim," which was a great motivator.

I embraced the challenge head-on and became a word-nerd, frequently reading the dictionary while I was on the "head." I spent hours with my nose in that book because one definition always led me to another or its opposite. I memorized the grammatical rules and could determine the meaning of a word by finding its root. I ventured to learn weird words like discombobulate and lackadaisical. I prided myself in correctly spelling difficult words with silent letters and I endeavored to recognize the difference between words like indite and indict, which are pronounced the same. I was having a heyday with my new language and was ready to go public.

In fourth grade, an inspirational teacher

told me about a school-wide spelling bee and encouraged me to participate. I marveled at the opportunity and steadily built the courage to stand on a stage in front of the entire school. Students from fourth grade through sixth grade participated.

One by one students were eliminated, down to six, five, four, three and finally one other student, a sixth grader, and me. It was a tiebreaker's round and my turn was next.

The announcer said the word to spell was "coffin." I thought for a moment about all the rules I had learned and arbitrarily spelled "coughing," a much harder word to spell. I spelled it correctly, so I thought. I could have asked for a definition but didn't think to do so. The announcer eliminated me and I was devastated.

To this day I still tell a little white lie in saying I won that spelling contest though it is not true. In my mind's eye, I had lost by no fault of my own! It was truly a misunderstanding. Even so, second place was still a triumphant feat for someone who couldn't speak the language just four years before!

I continued my love for words and language and began to use words creatively, expressing my emotions, experiences and imaginations. I began to read and write poetry. I loved the challenge of structuring words to form a haiku and I took writing classes once I entered high school. Words were wonderful, powerful, danger-

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Inner Landscape

ous and fun, and I naughtily used them for all they were worth, sarcastically, facetiously and with verve, although I was never a fan of puns.

To receive a language credit in high school, I opted to take German. I thought this would be an easy class for me. The grade I received at the end of the term spoke volumes. I received a "D." I believe Herr Wood, the teacher, didn't have the heart to fail me. I bombed! Speaking the language was not the issue, it was the grammatical technicalities that put me under. Needless to say, I never used my mother tongue again.

A few years back, I had the opportunity to work with an individual who also has a love for words. He was grammatically adept and a skilled writer. As Communications Department director, he invited me to participate in a few projects and I accepted enthusiastically. The tasks forced me to mind my p's and q's and I felt I was in my element.

His departure from the organization did

not hinder my passion for writing, and I was subsequently assigned to a larger role in creating documents, editing, producing correspondences and developing publications. Writing was the least of my duties but what I loved most about my job.

I was eventually to leave my position as well and found myself without direction and purpose ... until I received an invitation from my former communications director friend who was now the owner and publisher of the *North Columbia Monthly*.

Gabriel proposed a daunting task: write for the *Monthly*. I shrunk in terror at the proposal, exclaiming that I was not a writer of that level. With soothing encouragement, he begged to differ. He recognized my potential and knew I had a bag full of history to draw from. I had lived in the Inland Northwest and North Columbia region for quite a few years. I raised a family here, I was part of a larger community and had first-hand insights about "how and where we live." I accepted the endeavor with thoughtful apprehension.

After a slew of articles, the challenge of writing has become a privilege and a means to bond with a community at large and ad infinitum. The stories I read by others in the publication remind me of how I got here and why I choose to continue to live in the Inland Northwest. I relish reading what other writers contribute from their experience, perspectives, adventures, passions and insights, using their unique writing styles. I am no Wordsworth, but I continue to learn, strive, connect, discover and find encouragement in who I am and why I write.

Danke schön, Gabriel Cruden, for giving me the opportunity to share my experiences on the pages of the *North Columbia Monthly*. In gratitude, I cordially celebrate the 25th anniversary of this inspiring and extraordinary publication.

Gabriele von Trapp lives by Deer Park where her memories, dreams and reflections fuel her vigorous engagement with the present as she forges an ever-evolving future.

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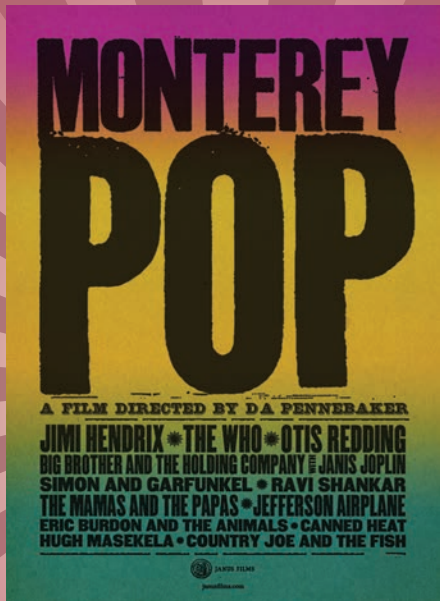
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Me? Writing? And Then The Years Flew By

By Becky Dubell

How many of us out here living day-to-day know what we were doing 25 years ago this month? Had to get my calculator out to figure which year. May 1994. And ... guess what? I do happen to know! Our oldest daughter, Darcy, had been awarded the honor of representing the community as Miss Colville. It was the start of a fun-filled summer of visiting many towns and riding in parades on a float filled with pink, blue and green dinosaurs. Wow! Where does time go?

Well, since this is the 25th anniversary of the *North Columbia Monthly's* first publication, we can only imagine what Mark Harrison and Tina Cummings were up to in preparation for the first issue. I came on board in February of 2006 when Steve and Karla Rumsey were the owners. My sister-in-law, Barb, gave me a call, urging me to answer the call for advertising sales rep. Good grief! Where did 13 years go?

Steve and Karla were so easy to work for – fun and relaxing to be around. The house along the creek. The driveway that, in the winter, I could pull into but then had to back out of and, you know, I never did end up in the ditch. Steve and his motorized bicycle. Karla and her dogs. They were special people and are very much missed.

Me? Writing? Really? Steve called, asking if I would write an article for the October 2008 issue about the Beaver Lodge, which was undergoing a change. Soooo ... off I go. Not really having a clue as to what I should

be doing, how to go about this assignment. I had not written anything except a few letters to family members since I had graduated from high school. I remembered the “who, what, when, where and why” rule from English class (I think) and just winged it.

Finally got it done and turned it in to Steve at the community college, not realizing that he taught English there. My words to him were, “You have to realize that I have not turned in an English paper in over 35 years.” I kept the note that he wrote me and it still makes my heart smile: “Becky, you have a unique style of writing.”

I guess writing like I chatter is unique. Thank you, Steve, for letting me chatter. Wow! Twelve years have flown by with more writing than I ever did in high school, I am sure!

When Gabriel and family (and I do mean the whole family) acquired the *Monthly* I was very glad that they let me continue with them on their new adventure. They have been really good to work for and have let me share my soap-box and life since Jim passed away in 2015. And they still let me chatter away.

Our readers have been very supportive of me over the past 13 years, especially the last four. I've had a few women in particular thank me for sharing what is happening in my life – they see themselves getting through the rough patches too. When I miss a month of writing, I am asked if I'm still writing – life happens when you are busy

making plans. Wow! The years do fly by!

Many things have changed in my life, and yours no doubt, over the last 25 years. Sit back and take a long look. Write some of the stories down for your family. I look at my three-year-old granddaughter and try to figure out how she knows when to use the past participle (I think that's what it's called) in a sentence. I am very proud of the decisions that my 17-year-old grandson made. I look at my daughters, who are 40 and 42, and wonder why I have been blessed with such fantastic young women. Life can change rapidly while you are making plans, so take time and enjoy the moment.

I will finish with my mantra that works for any situation I have been in:

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&

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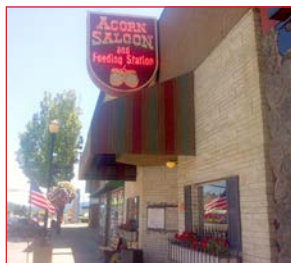
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June 28-29	Get Out Fest getoutfest.com
June 29	Stonerose Fossils Annual Auction www.stonerosefossil.org
July 12-14	Wings Over Republic Fly-In www.wingsoverrepublic.com
July 26-28	Pick Axe Rhythm and Blues Festival https://pickaxeblues.com
July 26-28	Back Country Horseman Steak Ride www.fccbchw.com
Aug 30-Sept 1	Ferry County Fair ferrycountyfair.com
Nov 29	Holiday Homecoming www.republicchamber.org

Ferry County Events 2020

Jan 11	Ferry County Rail Trail Ski Day republicwa.org
Jan 18	Winterfest www.republicchamber.org

