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Recognizing Our GYMNASTS OF THE MONTH



OCTOBER

Above, from left: Competitive Team Ellie Vining,
Starlet Brook Coulter, Starlet Penelope Cardenas,
Lil Stars Daisy Steele (at right). Not pictured: Pre
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~ JOHN ODELL, WORDS OF WORDS

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Random Acts of Community

By Christine Wilson

“Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. And where there is sadness, joy.”

~ St. Francis of Assisi

C.S. Lewis is a heroic figure for me. He was a soldier during World War I and lived through the Second World War as a scholar and writer. The horrors of WWII weighed heavily on him and, while I cannot find evidence of this, I have a vague notion he was the one who said “if you want to work on forgiveness, don’t start with the Nazi SS.”

There is much talk of the divisiveness in the United States, even to the point of being compared to the Civil War. I have fallen prey to that misery myself and am looking for healing over this year. As is often the case with writers, I put pen to paper at least as much for myself as for others, and I vow to participate in generating a societal and hopefully successful healing salve.

We find ourselves now in a painful place, having been through the wretchedness of bitter disagreements and in some cases even losing friends and family over our divergent beliefs. I’m recommending the “progress, not perfection” model of recovery.

This current era is reminiscent of the late 1960s. I have a distinct memory from that time of sitting in my Aunt Ethel’s house in Coeur d’Alene while on a weekend break from my studies at WSU. I was pretty much a societal drop-out at the time and I sat quietly during that family gathering, wondering how we all got so disparate in our views. As I listened, feeling alienated and quietly dissident, I was sure my internal ranting was audible. It apparently wasn’t. Eventually, one of my relatives said to me: “Do you know (at which point she named some other student)? She goes to WSU too and she’s quiet like you are so I thought you might know her.”

Hmm, how to reply. If memory serves me correctly, I smiled like the Cheshire cat and said no. I could not imagine ever having anything in common with any of “those people.”

And therein lies the rub. “Those people” are our neighbors, relatives, friends, and fellow countrymen. We have become estranged and there are a million writers out there speculating about how the separation became so drastic. Creating a separation into “us” and “other” is the dangerous way we slip into such a binary view of people. Lyrics from the ‘60s, always lurking just below the surface of my mind, have been rising up to a discernible level:

“Nobody’s right if everybody’s wrong.”

“And don’t speak too soon for the wheel’s still in spin. And there’s no telling who that it’s

naming.”

I still believe we have more in common with each other than we have disparate. Eventually I came back to Coeur d’Alene to finish my graduate program. Aunt Ethel helped us find a place to live, made her famous and lovely chocolate cake, and seemed to have no idea I had written her off. She had become afraid of the changing world and insisted I watch out for people trying to help me load groceries into my car. They are just trying to steal your food, she said. My heart broke for her when she complained, with the only uncouth word I ever heard her use, that Coeur d’Alene was being “Californicated.”

Eventually, in her 90s, she had a stroke and had to work hard to talk at all. I was back to listening but with much more empathy this time.

“You didn’t join the other side. The battle lines just disappeared.”

David Wilcox wrote a song called “Fearless Love.” He’s an engaging storyteller and in this song he describes a scene where people on two sides of an issue are squaring off. Someone on the one side throws a rock that hits a man on the other side, who falls to the ground. A person standing alongside the rock thrower runs over, picks up the man’s sign and helps care for him. He gets grief from people who ask how he could carry that man’s sign. And the conclusion David Wilcox draws is that “In your heart the choice was clear. You didn’t join the other side. The battle lines just disappeared. Fearless love makes you cross the border.”

So, barring some visible chance to help a bleeding person seen as the opposition, how do we work on making those battle lines disappear? In that tale, it is about shifting the story line. That “other” became an injured fellow human. I love the (alleged) C.S. Lewis quote because forgiveness and acceptance require that kind of shift and you can’t start with the hardest people. I took a meditation class from a man who had been robbed and injured at knife point. When he was at a retreat practicing loving kindness meditation, he said there was no way he was going to be sending loving kindness to those two men. However, after practicing on easier people and working slowly along the continuum toward more difficult ones, he was able, by the end of the retreat, to bring them into his mind and heart. It made him laugh so much and so

loudly that at some point all the people in the room were laughing with him.

My intention for 2017 is to promote that sort of kindness in myself and our good readers. It does not let people off the hook for heartless behavior. We must be outspoken and not passive bystanders. It just means we live in that “tragic gap” I’ve referred to in previous columns, where we remain fiercely stalwart in our efforts to make a difference, rather than being cynical/hostile on the one side and overly idealistic on the other.

In my early college days, I lacked the skills to be forgiving of my aunt for her dismissive and sometimes even hateful stereotyping of people; she didn’t realize her niece was one of “them.” Part of the irony of forgiveness is that sometimes we have to recognize our own part and allow others to forgive us.

My judgments against Aunt Ethel were ruthlessly simplistic. Mediators will sometimes notice that people come to mediation ready to forgive but not ready to be forgiven. I assume it is because they haven’t seen the role they played in the conflict. My shift toward loving my aunt came when I saw my stereotyping of her and allowed myself to focus on her other qualities. I wouldn’t say I was ever 100% there, and I had to work consciously on my attitude. Now, years later, I think of her when I wash dirt off a wall because every spring she cleaned every single wall in her house. And, wow, do I miss those chocolate cakes!

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The Life of Skye

By Dr. Barry Bacon, MD

She sits alone, neglected, dusty, forlorn in a quiet carport. A pack rat may have attacked her inner parts, a dog chewed around her edges. Born in the 1990s in Detroit, she has traveled over 200,000 miles across mountains and valleys, beside rivers, lakes and oceans, and provided a life of service and family fun. Now, it has come to this. A life of quiet decay and dormancy. Skye, the whimsical name given to this 1994 Plymouth Voyager, has no life, her value is minimal and fleeting.

Until now. Through a remarkable turn of events, Skye is about to receive new purpose to her life. You might say she is about to be resurrected.

One of our readers was moved by compassion, having read the story of a young woman who had experienced homelessness, published in the *Monthly* a few months ago. He has lived with great sorrows in his own life. He couldn't stand by while someone else was suffering, not if he could do something about it. He looked at what he had and thought, "What about Skye?"

Would this young woman find any help if I offered her my old minivan?" Here's what he wrote:

"I'm an avid reader of the Monthly, and seek it out each month. Barry Bacon's 'The Business Associate' has touched my heart. You see, my wife of fifty-two years is nearing death from brain cancer, and from this experience [I] have become very aware of the importance and significance to others that 'random acts of kindness' can bring.

"...Sitting in my carport is a 1994 Plymouth Voyager SE in excellent condition for its age, that I am willing to sell, for one dollar (\$1), to the business associate he writes of if she has need of it. I have been intending to put it on Craig's List, but frequent trips to Spokane hospitals and to Cancer Care Northwest, plus all the other attendant issues dealing with her care and trying to manage our property ... simply haven't enabled me to do so ..."

People like this inspire me, because such compassion is, I think, the distinctive mark of what it is to be human. Would the young woman appreciate such an offer, or just be annoyed? It's a chance that we take whenever we decide to

reach out to someone in need. Here was her response when I told her.

"I just read this and started crying. I absolutely have no words as I've been praying and praying for a vehicle for the children and I. Oh my goodness I can't stop crying."

Can you imagine? Skye will be given a new life. Her owner will refurbish her, have a mechanic look her over, make sure her parts are in good working order and sell her to her new owner for a dollar, all for the chance of making someone's life better, doing something beautiful and kind for a stranger.

What will her children remember of this kindness? When they climb into their distinctive and personalized family vehicle, will they ever stop remembering that someone thought of them, that a stranger came alongside them and answered their mother's prayers? Could they ever forget the names of their benefactor and his wife?

I asked the young mother if she wanted me to be the contact and do the footwork of getting the vehicle to her. You can probably guess what she said.

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Life Matters

"I would like to thank him in person and tell him how much this means to me. I will email him today. I just need to wrap my mind around how amazing this is and make sure to express how thankful I am for what he is doing."

This is a great story, but it's not the whole story. Someone else who also read the article phoned Gabriel, the publisher of the *Monthly*, who wrote to me and said she is part of a group that is wondering if the children of the woman in the article could use some quilts that they have made.

This group of compassionate people couldn't stand by when they learned of someone's suffering. They wanted to step in and offer what they had. Here's the young mother's response.

"I would absolutely love that! Homemade quilts are one of my favorite things and they bring such happy thoughts and feelings. I would absolutely treasure them."

Another reader got in touch in response to the article as well, asking if she could help the young woman and her children out during the holiday season, perhaps with a gift card for Christmas shopping and whatever else would aid in moving the young woman and her children toward stability and security.

I was lucky enough to be there for the transfer of Skye to her new owner. It was a bitterly cold day, almost Christmas, and Skye complained a bit about starting in this weather. I met her previous owner at the entryway to the apartment complex. He shook my hand warmly. "There she is," he nodded, with just a bit of nostalgia in his voice.

She was polished and clean, and her chrome sparkled in the waning winter sunlight. We stood gazing at her for just a moment. "Do you think that she will like her?" he asked. I nodded. "Yeah. She'll like her just fine."

We moved inside out of the cold. The apartment was modest, with all of the rambunctiousness of six small children cooped up too long from the frigid winter air.

The new owner walked out with us to view



Skye while my wife, Shelley, watched the little ones. The young woman looked radiant, like one of those game show contestants who can't stop smiling and jumping and wiggling. Her benefactor gently went over the quirks and flaws that are the nature of any older vehicle. The tear in the back seat, the missing pieces, the scratches and bruises. "This is wonderful, I am so happy," she exclaimed.

Within minutes, we returned to the apartment, nearly frozen by the chill. Papers exchanged, filled out, signed. She didn't have a dollar, so I loaned her one. Offers of help to get the papers transferred, questions answered, Christmas wishes exchanged, and we said our good-byes. On the sidewalk I stood just a moment longer with the man who had parted from Skye, just before he climbed into his friend's pickup and drove away. I asked him why he did it.

"You know, this means a lot to me," he replied. "My wife is dying. I know she doesn't have long. I needed this. I needed to do this." He held up the dollar bill. "I'm going to hang onto this, maybe have it framed," he laughed, "because of what this represents. A chance to help another person.

Thank you." I smiled. I didn't do anything except tell a story.

Maybe that's the point. It is in stories that we find meaning, because those stories speak to us in a way that nothing else can.

I know there is a lot of political turmoil going on. I know the world appears at times to be unraveling, spinning out of control. Racism, ISIS, poverty, violence, abuse, human and environmental suffering seem to occupy every headline that we see. Here's another that I would like you to consider. Write it big and stick it on your refrigerator. All is not lost. There are still good people doing extraordinary things in this world. They cannot stand by and do nothing when they have a chance to bless someone else with the resources that are within their grasp. A few scraps of cloth become beautiful quilts for children. When they cuddle in their beds, they will go to sleep each night knowing that their lives mattered to some kind strangers who invested time in them just for a chance to send a clear message: "Your lives and your comfort matter to us. You are not forgotten."

One more thing. If you happen to see a sky blue 1994 Plymouth Voyager minivan driving by, dusted off and given a new, proud, noble life, I hope that it will bring a smile to your face, and you will remember the kindness of one man and his wife. I hope that you will silently cheer for that young mom and her children. And then I hope that you will do one thing more. I hope that you will take the inspiration of that moment, and that you will pass it on. Because it matters.

Barry Bacon is a family doctor in Colville who specializes in full spectrum family medicine and works on health disparities in local communities and in Africa, and teaches family medicine in those locations.

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Buffalo Robes and the Renaissance of Plateau Bison

By Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

Deep in the Arrow Lakes valley at the upper end of the upper Arrow Lake, Sinixt people once lived in a village called Buffalo Robe. There the lake narrowed into river and the shoreline was steep, leaving little open land for grazing. A canoe paddled for part of a day upstream would lead to another Sinixt village, today known as the town of Revelstoke. A canoe paddled briefly east along the shoreline would arrive at Head of the Lake, the village that Nancy Wynecoop

described as the old headquarters of the Sinixt people.

The landscape was filled with caribou, bear, deer and other wild game. Salmon spawned in the river and huckleberries ripened in the summer. Old growth cedar, hemlock and fir towered toward the sky.

Some indigenous place names from long ago still make perfect sense, the moment one hears them. Noisy Waters, for the memory of Kettle Falls. Having Whitefish, a small lake near Nakusp. Much River Food, a large pool on the

Kootenay River, where the fishing was good. And my favorite of all the place names: Miraculous, a back eddy on the Columbia renowned for the many spawning salmon that could be harpooned from the shore.

Buffalo Robe, however, had me stumped. How could a village defined by water in a narrow mountain valley filled with old growth evergreens have any connection to the American bison (also called buffalo), a fixture of expansive grassland culture?

Over the years, as I puzzled over this place name, I developed a loose theory based on geography. It was possible, I surmised, that the Sinixt living in the upper Columbia village of Buffalo Robe could access herds of the animal by traveling east via Head of the Lake, crossing a portage to Trout Lake, paddling down that lake and the Lardeau River, entering Kootenay Lake, then climbing the Purcell Range over to the Rocky Mountain Trench. From there, it was a hop, skip and a jump over the Great Divide to the sea of grass where bison roamed. Traveling hunters living in that particular village could have brought robes made of tanned bison hide

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North of the Border

back from the long trek.

My theory discounted the yawning distance for foot travelers across the rugged, expansive terrain. It's easy to draw a map and a dotted line. I was also ignoring the dense web of inter-relationship among various upper Columbia River tribes. I was, and still am, an amateur when it comes to understanding the rich history of this place where I live.

According to researchers, some bison once roamed the eastern Plateau during the pre-contact period, though not in economically significant amounts. The Spokane, Kalispel, San Poil and even possibly the Lakes would have had access to this animal, rare enough to make bison a special resource. While grassland tribes used their plentiful hides to make tipis and *parflèches*, tribes on the west side of the Divide highly prized even a single bison robe or blanket. Said to be warmer than bear, the hides were also used hair-side-down as a blanket or saddle on a horse.

The last Plateau bison was reportedly killed around 1828 in Grand Coulee, a dry landscape now under reservoir water and known as Banks Lake. Tribal testimonies also indicate that sometimes, before and after contact, the Spokane, Coeur d'Alene and Kalispel tribes traveled east to join the Flatheads in a buffalo hunt in the grasslands on the east side of the Divide. These adventures were undertaken without children or elders, to allow mobility for the hunters and the women who came with them to process the hides and meat. (For more on bison culture, see John Ross's encyclopedic resource, *The Spokane Indians*.)

According to Ross, in the 1840s a Catholic missionary named DeSmet wrote that the "buffalo hunt is attended with dangers, but the greatest of these does not exist in the mere pursuit of the animal, but rather from the hands of Black Feet, who constantly lurk in these regions, especially when there is some prospect of meeting with the larger game, or stealing a number of horses." The advent of the horse had made hunts farther afield more regular, though not necessarily easier or safer.

Recently, I began thinking about Buffalo Robe again, when I took the Kalispel tribe's bus service from their reservation near Cusick, Washington, to Spokane. It was an icy December day with several inches of snow already on the ground. The sun shone brilliantly in a blue sky. Beneath the clear blue dome and in sight of the Camas Wellness Center, nestled together in the snow, was a herd of about 100 of the animals. They sported those thick, warm, brown hides and I was envious.

Inside the bus, on his way to Spokane, I found Barry Moses (*Sulustu*). A Spokane

language teacher, Moses confirmed what I had learned about the bison's cultural significance to his people. Then he taught me something new.

"I've heard a story about an old chief named *Plchmulexw*. He lived up your way, north of the border. Either in the Okanagan, or in the Columbia River valley. His name means 'rolling or folding over the Earth,' like a buffalo robe being folded over. I've been told he was related to the Spokane Tribe."

In 1841, Hudson's Bay Company governor George Simpson stopped in Kettle Falls on his trip around the world. There, he met the Salmon Chief *Kee-Kee-Tum-Nous*, with whom he had two decades earlier forged an agreement to allow the tribes to control the salmon fishery. Simpson was impressed by how the chief, "whose whole wardrobe was the hide of a buffalo," was able to recite their earlier agreement word-for-word. I was beginning to see a pattern, formed by these whispers from the past.

Living in the upper Columbia basin and being in possession of a buffalo robe suggested leadership and strength. These qualities, and the robes, may have traveled far more widely than the hunters from Buffalo Robe may have been able to do.

The Kalispel tribe acquired its first bison since European contact around three decades ago.



Today, a modest herd of the imposing animals roams across 600 acres of reservation land and provides enough meat annually for ceremonial and special occasions. Their renewed presence in the landscape is a reminder of how place names arrange themselves around culture, how they reflect the landscape's natural resources and how they embody the qualities of human individuals. People can be as esteemed, or as rare, as a lumbering bison in mountain terrain.

Eileen Delehanty Pearkes lives in Nelson, B.C. Her new book on the Columbia River Treaty, A River Captured, was recently released by Rocky Mountain Books. For more of her explorations of the western landscape, visit www.edpearkes.com.

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Boulder Drift: John Leiberg and the Ephrata Fan

By Jack Nisbet

John Bernard Leiberg was a Swedish immigrant who had educated himself in a wide variety of natural sciences by the time he arrived in Iowa at age 15. As a young man he picked up a job for the Northern Pacific Railroad and started riding the high line west from Minneapolis; during forays in the early 1880s he sent plant specimens back from several locations in the Dakotas, eastern Montana, and especially Hope, Idaho, on the north end of Lake Pend Oreille. Later in that decade he joined thousands of pick-and-shovel prospectors in the Coeur d'Alene Mountains, staking claims to what everyone was sure would be their main chance.

Like most of his peers, Leiberg failed to strike it rich in a variety of beautiful settings. But all along the way he continued to pursue his love of the natural landscape, especially concentrating on mosses and flowering plants.

With the support of his wife, Carrie, who happened to be a practicing medical doctor, John talked his way into serving as a field

biologist on an 1893 summer plant survey across the Columbia Basin for the United States Department of Agriculture. Leiberg and a colleague, University of Minnesota botany professor J. H. Sandberg, were instructed "...to make as nearly as possible a complete collection of the great [Columbia] plains, determine the eastern and western boundaries of the sub-arid, treeless portion, and afterwards to make the ascent of one or two of the high peaks in the Cascade Mountains." The pay was \$150 a month, real money in those days, even if Leiberg did have to wrangle two horses and a wagon to transport their gear.

The Sandberg-Leiberg expedition started in Spokane on May 15, establishing their first campsite six miles up Hangman (also called Latah) Creek in the vicinity of what is now a golf course. By mid-August, they crested Stevens Pass on our current Highway 2 and clambered up to the 9,415-foot summit of Mount Stuart.

Apparently Dr. Sandberg came up lame early in the trip and mostly confined himself to camp, caring for plant specimens. It was Leiberg who tended to the horses and wandered the countryside every day, collecting anything that grew as the expedition made its way across eastern Washington.

In addition to a plant list that recorded his gleanings, Leiberg kept a field journal to detail his movements. He made a point of chatting with local ranchers, sharing their concerns about a surprisingly rainy summer, obvious overgrazing, and recently introduced weeds.

During late June and early July, he visited the alkaline lakes of lower Grand Coulee as he moved the team from Camp Number 7, at the juncture of Crab and Wilson's Creek, to Camp Number 9, beside a lush spring at modern

Ephrata. On June 30, at some point between the two camps, the landscape changed.

"Crossing the creek we emerged on a plain covered with boulder drift," Leiberg wrote. "The boulders of very large dimensions and the drift composed of basalt and granite. This drift sheet has a northerly and southerly trend and where we cross it is about 4 miles in width. It appears to have come directly through the great fissure in which lies the alkali lake previously noticed in trip of June 26." The "great fissure" was Grand Coulee, and here Leiberg was recognizing, at the moment he passed through it, the end result of some sort of great flood event that had brought in granitic rocks from far away.

"The plain over which we were traveling abounded in long low ridges of drift gravel and ancient stream channels cut down 50 to 75 ft below the general level all forming part of some great stream which once flowed here from North to South," he penned in his journal.

What Leiberg experienced is now called the Ephrata Fan, a massive, expansion flood bar created at the end of the last Ice Age. The water flow here was complex, involving ice dams at the southern tips of both the Okanogan and Purcell lobes of the Cordilleran glacier, at a time gauged to be between 13,000 and 20,000 years ago.

During several different episodes the advancing Okanogan lobe rerouted the Columbia River east through Grand Coulee, scouring a route for future floods to tear through. More than a hundred miles to the east, the Purcell Lobe also crept south numerous times to cover all of Lake Pend Oreille, damming the Clark Fork River to form Glacial Lake Missoula. Each time that dam came apart, an immense

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wall of water roared out of the lake to flow west along the Columbia River. Much of it eventually flowed through Grand Coulee, creating Dry Falls and leaving behind a string of alkaline lakes.

After the floodwaters passed through the confines of lower Grand Coulee to reach more open country at Soap Lake and Ephrata, untold tons of boulders, rocks, gravel, and sand dropped according to weight and flow speed. At the very head of the bar, just east of Ephrata, house-sized boulders came to rest; anyone who approaches one of them today can tread in a distinct depression (called a scour hole) formed as rushing floodwaters carried lighter debris away from the upstream sides of the newly deposited monoliths.

A traveler who follows Highway 17 south to Moses Lake will see the flood droppings decrease in size to smaller boulders, cobbles, pebbles, and finally the sand dunes that used to circle Moses Lake and are mostly now drowned beneath the waters of Potholes Reservoir. When John Leiberg described "ancient stream channels" cut 50 or 75 feet below the "drift gravel," he was observing the late action of water cutting down through the lighter

material of the lower bar.

The Sandberg-Leiberg expedition did a good job of carrying out their instructions, and collected a wealth of interesting plants, both before and after crossing the Ephrata Fan. Leiberg's specimen list for those days includes late-summer desert beauties such as Richardson's and sand dune penstemons, blazing star, yellow bee plant, showy milkweed, and buckwheats galore. He pressed culturally significant plants such as yampah, sagebrush mariposa lily, and the aromatic mint that some tribal women call "sidehill tea." He drove their horse and wagon through greasewood, antelope bitterbrush, great basin rye, stiff sagebrush, gray and rubber rabbitbrush, silverscale, and purple sage. Yet these classic shrub-steppe displays halted abruptly at the flood bar.

"The vegetation among these masses of boulder and gravel drift was so far as the eye could reach west and south nothing but [big sagebrush], *Artemisia tridentata*," Leiberg observed. "Scarcely a tuft of grass anywhere. The small annuals dried and shriveled and unrecognizable."

Leiberg's observation makes sense, says geologist Bruce Bjornstad, because moisture

flows right through the coarse debris of the fan, draining downward so that it is available only to deep-rooted plants like the big sagebrush.

Today the dramatic "drift of boulders" that John Leiberg saw looks much the same. Cheatgrass has grown in solidly among the sagebrush, and you have to get there early in the spring to see a good wildflower display, but everything else is as he described it in his daybook. Even though geologists, beginning with Harlen Bretz in the 1920s, continue to this day to sort out the small details of those ravaging floods, the basic story remains visible for anyone to read – just as Mr. Leiberg did when he passed through in 1893.

Thanks to Bruce Bjornstad for the photographs and for his ongoing work on our flood-carved landscape, including his On the Trail of the Ice Age Floods guidebooks.

Bruce's spectacular drone videos of geographic features and much more can be found at <http://www.brucebjornstad.com/>

Jack Nisbet's latest work, Ancient Places, is now available in paperback wherever books are sold. You can visit him at www.jacknisbet.com.



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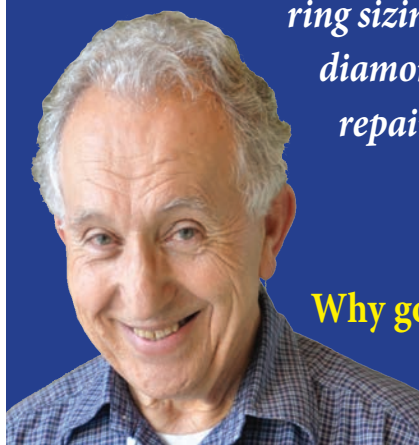
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Varied Thrush

Article & Photo By J. Foster Fanning

When wandering the forestlands of the Okanogan and Columbia Highlands we often take note of bird songs. I envy those who have developed the ability to identify our avian friends by their voices, calls and songs. If you, like me, are often clueless when it comes to identifying bird voices I recommend the Audubon Bird Guide phone app (for field use) or the website of Cornell Lab of Ornithology when back at your desk. Both of these references and many others have “hot buttons” that activate recorded bird songs as part of the identification packages.

Occasionally, around dawn or dusk, I hear a familiar, simple, sweet, echoing song; a short trill and a deeper churr, often followed by a series of low chest notes. And on a good day I can relate these calls back to a local woodland dweller, the varied thrush. The male varied thrush’s song is a whistled, flute-like, tone on a single pitch. They sing mainly in the morning and evening, usually from the top of live conifers. Each song lasts a couple of seconds, with a longer pause between songs. Successive tones may be on different pitches. This cycle is repeated for 10 minutes or more, until the bird flies off to a different perch and begins the cycle anew.

If you are hearing the songs, look to the treetops for this elusive member of the *Passeriformes* order. Otherwise your first sightings may well be a stocky songbird foraging on the ground (or at your feeder) with a profile like that of its more frequently known cousin the American robin.

Thrushes exhibit a flash of rich burnt orange body below a sooty, dark breastband. Look for orange legs and a dark bill with yellow mandible base. Males will show a darker blue-gray on the back, with both sexes baring blackish wings with two orange bars and orange trim on the flight feathers.



The varied thrush is predominantly a Pacific Northwest bird. While it may winter migrate to coastal California and parts of the Sierra Madre, this bird’s year-round habitat is Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and southern British Columbia with summer breeding ranges into western Montana and all the way up through Alaska, the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The varied thrush is listed as a short-distance, partial migrant. Coastal birds may stay in one place year-round, but the inland breeders tend to migrate south in winter. Northern breeding populations are known to “leapfrog” past southern breeding populations, wintering farther south. Varied thrushes are rare winter visitors to the Upper Midwest and Northeast.

This thrush occupies deep forests and forested river valleys of the Northwest foraging for insects and other arthropods from the leaf litter in summer, then switching to fruits and acorns in the late autumn and winter. Some of their typical winter foods are snowberry, apple, honeysuckle, mistletoe, dogwood, blueberry, huckleberry, salmonberry, thimbleberry and seeds, hence their presence at your feeders.

The twentieth-century naturalist and bird artist Louis Agassiz Fuertes described the varied thrush’s simple, contemplative song to his friend Arthur Allen (founder of Cornell Lab of Ornithology) “as perfectly the voice of

the cool, dark peaceful solitude which the bird chooses for its home as could be imagined.”

Occasionally in winter or early spring one might observe a “hermitage” of thrushes, a name for a collective group of these creatures, also sometimes referred to as a “mutation.” The global population of the varied thrush is estimated at 26 million and, according to scientists and academic observers, appears to be stable.

Varied thrushes are thought to establish monogamous breeding pairs, but how long a pair stays together is not known. If you are in the breeding grounds of this species watch for the males to arrive first. The males seek to establish breeding territories by singing. If that tactic fails they advance to threat displays, cocking the tail and turning it toward an intruder, lowering the wings and prancing. If the adversary remains unmoved, the displaying bird will face off, lowering its head, raising and fanning the tail, and spreading its wings out to the side. This display indicates things are about to get physical.

Occasionally, males peck at or lock bills with each other and the squabbling may result in combative flights through dense vegetation in the attempt to gain or secure nesting territory. It is also the male thrush who occasionally defends small sites around bird feeders in the winter while females appear to use alternative feeding sites to avoid the boisterous competition.

So, put on a pair of extra socks, lace up those boots, grab a warm jacket and while wandering the highland forests, take a moment, pause and listen for that whistled, flute-like, tone. You may be in the company of the elusive varied thrush.

Remember to sign up for the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), a free, fun event next Feb. 17-20.

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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A Few Predictions for 2017

By Loren Cruden

The Monthly Muse's crystal ball may be in need of a little Windex, but here are a few bold trend predictions for the new year.

Driverless Cars

The race is on to bring a successful autonomous car onto the market, but along the way there have been a few speed bumps. Pesky details such as vagaries of weather, non-straight/level roads, and places around the country where GPS signals are voided, present challenges.

Vehicles that split responsibility for control between car and driver have had their own disappointments. A multi-tasking driver, or one who abdicates driving tasks altogether, watching videos instead, risks lethal consequences, so the trend is toward completely autonomous autos. This allows passengers (formerly drivers) to blithely ignore their surroundings, passively trundled here and there like dolls plugged into their electronics.

A giddy relief, to finally toss aside all that tiresome honing of reflexes and attention. Cheerio to navigational skills and physical orientation. Free at last to let machines make ethical decisions for us!

For autonomous cars, of course, will be programmed with value-setting priorities pertaining to who does or doesn't get mowed down if life forms perilously appear in a car's path of travel. For example, should the autonomous car swerve and hit a tree (potentially killing its passenger) in order to avoid the old lady crossing the road? Should it prioritize children over adults, if such choices need to be made? Rate dogs more highly than squirrels? Recognize endangered species? Political affiliations? Brake for yard sales? Will families be able to sue car manufacturers (or software designers) for vehicular homicide? Interesting discussion fodder for engineers huddled around the office water cooler.

Movie Trends

As with current trends in literature, the film industry has issued a spate of end-of-the-world scenarios in recent years. Most portray either the early threat, the event in progress, or the event's results (caused by aliens, zombies, monsters, natural disaster, disease epidemic, nuclear disaster, industrial pollution, or global failure to diligently floss).

So now what? How will movies deal with the Next Step?

Even Star Trek appears to have reached the limit of where no [man] has gone before. Its 2016 offering had an old-fashioned 21st century theme – that of Career Angst – for the bad guys as well as the trekkers.

Maybe after gnarly survivors of the post-apocalyptic world finally cease their antics or are replaced by gnarly cyber-enhanced survivors who then bugger

off into space, the new earth genre to emerge will be post-post-apocalyptic. Titles such as *March of the Stinkbugs* or *Cockroaches in Love*; or avant-garde films focused on, say, a gnarly survivor ant's range of facial expressions while hunting gnarly aphids for two hours. Any post-post-apocalyptic movie so wildly optimistic as to include humans in it will no doubt feature men inventing a precursor to the Driverless Car.

Other Trends for 2017

Linked with popular end-of-the-world themes has been the current fashion evolution of cropped trousers for women. First it was just "boyfriend" jeans – rolled-up cuffs exposing the ankles. Then shorter and shorter lengths: cropped at the calf, then at the knee, then above the knee. As though adjusting for rising water levels as ice caps melt. Perhaps women are being more sensible than men in this, as men's shorts get longer and longer while women's trousers get shorter and shorter.

FLASH PREDICTION FOR 2017: Men's shorts will reach ankle-length as women's pants reach thigh-length, precipitating a retail slump as pants-shorts equilibrium is achieved, neither sex needing to increase its wardrobe. Women's shorts will double as pants and men's pants double as shorts.

Cruising on the high of this incandescent insight, the Muse further predicts a rise in Global Warming accessories: hat fans, neck water-cloths, fancy swamp coolers, UV-blocking and air-vented clothing, and my own idea – hat fans for pets.

We may also see personal inflatables for deployment on the coast and, for us inlanders, cheerfully decorated designer "shake-and-bakes" based on those used by firefighters. Firefighter outfits in general may become a trend here. Nostalgia items such as photos of glaciers, Pacific islands, and the continent of Antarctica could gain in value, as well as collector calendars depicting four seasons.

On the food front, poor people's foods continue to be trendy. Kale, turnips, okra, sheep and goat cheeses, and humble dishes like shepherd's pie grace the tables of the chic, though traditional poverty standards like Spam, blood pudding, powdered eggs, and pasta with ketchup haven't quite caught on yet.

New on the garden scene this year will be blue roses. (Perhaps named after B.B. King or Buddy Guy?) Also, spinach and lettuce varieties that will madly produce leaves during the weird spring temperatures we get, instead of germinating early and doing nothing until suddenly, stuntedly bolting on July first.

And lastly, revelation that the prediction for the big prize lottery number this year is – oh no! The Muse's crystal has fogged up! Sorry – gotta go! Happy New Year!



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APPENZ

Events

Jan 8: BINGO, hosted by the Northport Lions Club in support of Northport Dollars for Scholars at the Northport School Cafeteria, 1-4 pm. Doors open at noon, games begin at 1 pm. Early bird and regular games, fast pick and blackout Bingo with \$500 Jackpot! Must be 18 to play.

Jan 10, 17, 24 & 31: Digital Day Camp 2017 features classes in Managing Images (1/10), Facebook for Business - Basics (1/17), Facebook for Business - Advanced (1/24), and Use Mailchimp for Better Email (1/31) at the Tri County Economic Development District from 1-4 pm for \$15/class or \$50 for all four. Register online at www.putnewaonthemap.com. Space is limited. For more info, contact debra.hansen@wsu.edu or sstevens@teddonline.com.

Jan 14: National "Dress up your Pet day" is the perfect day to celebrate your pet's impeccable fashion sense. Join us at Parkview Senior Living from 1-4 pm for a free photo of your pet. Remember that your pets' garments should allow them to see, hear, breathe, eat, and relieve themselves comfortably. Please bring your pet's shot records (dog or cat) and have your pet on a leash, in carriers or cages. Also get a chance to win gift certificates! The residents will choose the cutest pet: 1st place \$40, 2nd place \$20, and 3rd place \$10! Please RSVP by Jan 12 at 509-684-5677.

Jan 14: Bingo Fundraiser for Emily Ryser at the Ag Trade Center in Colville, 4-7 pm.

Jan 16: Dr. Martin Luther King Day.

Jan 21: Republic Winterfest.

Jan 21: Deer Park Kiwanis WinterFest 2017 at the Deer Park High School. Activities include an art show and crafts fair, children's book give away, the Frostbite Footrace 5-K run, snow soccer competition, volleyball tournament, sanctioned dog pull competition, outhouse races, music and dancing, and children's activities. For more information please visit the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce website at deerparkchamber.com.

Feb 4: Foodstock 2017 featuring the Northern Aliens, Planetary Refugees, Chipped & Broken, Stazya & The Naturals, Kettle Creek, CrossCurrent and Checkmate Reality at Northern Ales in Kettle Falls from 3-10 pm. No cover, but all cash and food donations benefit the Kettle Falls Community Chest in memory of Bob Esvelt. Call 509-690-7162 for info.

Music, Dance, Theater & Film

Jan 7: *The Purple Pirate: Message in a Bottle*, an innovative theatre-style dance production that redefines what it means to be a Pirate of the Twenty-First Century teaching about the superpower of forgiveness, at the Bailey Theatre, 1501 Cedar Ave., Trail, B.C. from 2-3 pm. Contact info@trail-arts.com or call 250-368-9669 for more info.

Jan 12: Jazz at the Friff: Joy of Cooking. Led by guitarist Doug Stephenson, this ensemble is the very definition of cool, easy-listening jazz. Playing at the Muriel Friffiths Room, 1501 Cedar Ave, Trail, BC, 7:30-9 pm. Contact info@trail-arts.com or call 250-368-9669 for info.

Jan 13-15, 20-22: Park Avenue Players' presents *Harvey*, the 1945 classic comedy and Pulitzer Prize winning story of an invisible friend by Mary Chase at the Chewelah Civic Center at 7 pm and 2 pm on Sundays. Tickets are available at Akers United Drugs, Valley Drug, *The Independent*, R.E. Lee Shoe Co., and at the door for \$10. Invisible friends attend for free.

Jan 14: Film Showing: *Inhabit*, a documentary, 5 pm in the Community Connection Room at Meyers Falls Market in Kettle Falls. The film is a feature length documentary introducing permaculture, a design method that offers an ecological lens for solving issues related to agriculture, economics, governance, and more. Suggested \$5 donation at the door. Call 509-680-1480 for info.

Jan 20: *Baker's Dozen: 12 Angry Puppets* at the Muriel Griffiths Room, 1501 Cedar Ave., Trail, B.C., 7:30-10 pm. A single puppeteer transforms one puppet into twelve jury members, each struggling with our flawed judicial system, their own personal problems, their gnat-like attention spans, and their intolerance of other people (and of lactose). Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door. Contact info@trail-arts.com or call 250-368-9669 for info.

Jan 21: *Romeo & Juliette* at the Royal Theatre, 1597 Bay Ave., Trail, B.C. at 9:55 am. When Diana Damrau and Vittorio Grigolo starred opposite each other in *Manon* at the Met in 2015, the *New York Times* said, "the temperature rises nearly to boiling every time Damrau and Grigolo are on stage together." Now they're back as opera's classic lovers, in Gounod's lush Shakespeare adaptation. Bartlett Sher's new production has already won acclaim for its vivid

18th century milieu and stunning costumes during runs at Salzburg and La Scala. Gianandrea Noseda conducts the sumptuous score.

Feb 2-3: Colville High School Jazz Fest 2017. On Thursday, Feb 2, 5-7 pm, is the Senior Citizen's Ball: The CHS Key Club in association with Kiwanis of Colville presents an evening out for area seniors and their families and friends. This event is free of charge. Performing in the CHS cafeteria will be members of Colville Jr. High, Colville High School, and Jenkins High School jazz bands, with special guests from the University of Idaho. This year's theme is Candy Land. On Friday, Feb 3, 7 pm, Festival Concert: An evening of family entertainment in the Colville High School Auditorium. Colville High School and Junior High School jazz bands will open up for special guests from the University of Idaho. Our concert theme this year is How Sweet It Is. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$8 for students or seniors and are available at the CHS office or at the door.

Movie Day every Thursday, (starting Jan 12) at the HUB Senior Center in Colville at 1 pm. Free popcorn.

Music at Republic Brewing Company, 26 Clark Ave., Republic, republicbrew.com, 509-775-2700.

14th: Wild Mountain Nation 7-10 pm

22nd: Ticketed concert with Danny Barnes, 7-10 pm

28th: Scratchdog Stringband, 7-10 pm

Music at Northern Ales, 325 W. 3rd Ave., Kettle Falls, northernales.com, 509-738-7382:

12th: Michael Pickett, 6-8 pm

22nd: Raptor, 7-10 pm

Music at The Flying Steamshovel, 2003 2nd Ave., Rossland, B.C. Visit theflyingsteamshovel.com or call 250-362-7323 for more info.

13th: The Devils You Don't w/ The Whiskey Jacks, 9 pm

26th: Blizzard Music Fest presents: The Dudes w/ HighKicks & John Lee's Hooker, 8 pm

27th: Blizzard Music Fest presents: The Pack AD w/ Flatoutliers, 8 pm

28th: The Blizzard Music Fest presents: LONGWALKSHORTDOCK w/ Casio Co-Pilot, 9 pm

Dec 18: Dances of Universal Peace, 2-5 pm at the Colville Library basement. Donations appreciated. Potluck following. Call 509-684-1590 for more info.

Arts & Crafts

Students of Gail Johannes' have a Watercolor Show at Tri County Economic Development District, 986 S Main Suite A in Colville. Stop in and view the artwork Monday - Friday, 8-4.

Busy Hands Happy Hands, starting Tuesday, Jan 17 and every Tuesday after that at 1 pm. Bring a project and socialize. Repurposing, Thursday, Jan 19, 1 pm. Learn how to make a useful and colorful tote from feed sacks. No charge, supplies provided. Card Making, Thursday, Jan 26, 1 pm. Learn how to make handmade greeting cards. Free supplies provided.

Local Artists featured in the cafe at Meyers Falls Market in Kettle Falls.

Colville Piecemakers Quilt Guild meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Assembly of God Church in Colville at 6:30 pm. Visit colvillepiecemakers.webs.com.

Colville Valley Fiber Friends, (CVFF) meet every Monday at the Ag Trade Center, 317 W. Aster, Colville, noon - 3 pm. All interested in spinning, weaving and other fiber arts are welcome. For more information, contact Sue Gower at 509-685-1582.

Farm, Field & Forest

Jan 19: Northeast Washington Permaculture Guild (NEWPG) meets at 5 pm to network and share info at the Community Connections Room, Meyers Falls Market, Kettle Falls. Please park in back; bring a snack or dish for afterward potluck. For info, call 509-690-9826 or email kud427@gmail.com.

Wellness

Gentle Yoga for Seniors every Monday at the HUB Senior Center in Colville, 8-9 am, free. Class is taught by Care Tafoya and is sponsored by Parkview and Buena Vista. Please RSVP at 509-675-1479.

Leisurely Walk About Group leaves every Thursday at 10:30 am at the HUB Senior Center in Colville.

Narcotics Anonymous is a recovery group that meets every Monday at 215 S. Oak in Colville (County Commissioner's Building, brown door) at 7 pm and Thursday at 401 N. Wynne St. in Colville (The Youth Center) at 7:30 pm. The third Monday of every month, we celebrate "clean" birthdays with a potluck and cake at 6:30 pm.

Caregivers Group meets at Parkview Senior Living the last Thursday of each month, 3:30 - 4:30 at 240 S. Silke, Colville. Call Nancy at 509-684-5677 for info.

Friday Night Rebels has an AA meeting weekly on Fri. from 7 - 8 pm at the Providence Mount Carmel Hospital Health Education Center-lower level (1169 E. Columbia Ave, Colville).

Flu Clinic: 1st and 3rd Thursday from 8-3, Tri County Health District 240 E. Dominion Ave. Colville. Walk-in or by appointment. Adult \$20, child \$7.

Overeaters Anonymous meets on Mondays at 11:30 am at the Nazarene Church, 368 East Astor, Colville. Call 509-680-8674 for more info.

Colville Multiple Sclerosis self-help group meets the third Friday of each month in the lower level of the Providence Health Education House, 1169 E Columbia, Colville, at 1 pm. All those living with MS are invited. For info, call 509-684-3252.

Rape, Domestic Violence & Crime Victims, help is available. Confidential, 24 hours a day at 509-684-6139 or toll free 1-844-509-SAFE(7233).

Youth/Parenting

Parkview Senior Living announces its first annual "Buddy Bag" project. In coordination with Rural Resources Victim Services & Kids First, "Buddy Bags" are backpacks filled with items & given to kids in crises situations; to help them feel calm, to feel cherished, and to let them know that someone cares. Parkview is collecting NEW items to fill the backpacks with until Jan 8. Drop off at 240 S. Silke, Colville or call 509-684-5677. Age groupings will be: 2-5, 6-10 & 10-15. Ideas are: Small blanket, stuffed animal, toothbrush & paste, shampoo & conditioner, hair brush, a game or two like (memory) or Flash Cards, coloring book & colors, flashlight, sweat outfit or pajamas, or a Walmart gift card. Thank you for helping to make life brighter for a little one.

Girl Scouts is more than just cookies and camp! Girl Scouts offers activities for girls ranging from ages 4-17 and adults from ages 18-100. For information, call Debbie at 1-800-827-9478 ext. 246.

Looking for breastfeeding support? Reach out to a La Leche League Leader! Contact Courtney at 509-680-8944, crtslll@gmail.com, or on Facebook, "La Leche League of Colville."

Give a Preschooler a Head Start: Call 509-684-8421 or 877-219-5542. Head Start and ECEAP are programs of Rural Resources.

Miscellany

Jan 11: Northeast Washington Genealogical Society morning Computer Interest Group (CIG) will meet

Continued on page 18

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.

A Good Read

The Dog Stars, by Peter Heller

Reviewed by Loren Cruden

Either the Iowa Writers' Workshop only takes already good writers, or it has a devilishly effective instruction method. Whatever the truth of the matter, Peter Heller, one of the workshop's MFA grads, is another well-turned-out wordsmith.

His novel, *The Dog Stars*, is about a pilot (a young guy named Hig) and his co-pilot (an old dog named Jasper). Man and dog – what could be more wholesome, right? Only, Hig and Jasper live in post-apocalyptic Colorado where almost all of the population is dead.

Heller uses this scenario to make the man-dog relationship even more wholesome and relatable. “It caught me sometimes: that this was okay. Just this. That simple beauty was still bearable barely, and that if I lived moment to moment, garden to stove to the simple act of flying, I could have peace.”

Enter the third character in Heller's crafty plot: Bangley, whose aim (and arsenal) is dedicated not to peace but to violent survival. The interplay between Hig and Bangley wonderfully sharpens the plot, which might otherwise lull the reader with manly observation and poetic introspection. Bangley is poetry's bane. His idea of a positive outcome is to be the last

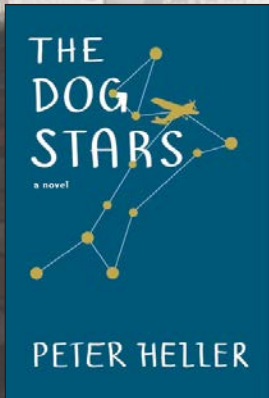
person on earth. Whereas Hig keeps casting about for normal ways in which to be happy and meet nice people while missing his dead wife.

Each of the men has an arena of competence. Hig's is flying his plane and excelling at outdoor activities. Bangley's is killing. They make an effective survival team – Jasper, too, contributing essential talents, not least his consoling canine presence.

The story is about resource: that of civilization, of nature, of relationships. A stripped-down world provides the perfect stage for revelation – what kind of stuff humans are made of and how that plays out when no one is in charge anymore.

Much of this is predictable, nonetheless exquisitely described, a pared poetry, and often funny. “Bangley made no excuses about knowing nothing of engines, wood, carpentry of any kind, agriculture, especially agriculture, gardening, cooking, especially cooking, languages, history, math beyond arithmetic, fashion, leatherwork, gin rummy, sewing, or especially rhetoric – the decorum, the customs of a respectful rhetorical debate. Spit it out Hig is what he liked to say...”

Many directions this story could've taken. Heller picked a sweet one.



Signs Preceding the End of the World,

by Gao Xingjian

Reviewed by Loren Cruden

Makina, the girl at the center of Yuri Herrera's *Signs Preceding the End of the World*, is a telephone switchboard operator in a Mexican village, a position that in itself suggests that Makina is a mistress of signs and signals. She speaks three languages: her native tongue, the “Anglo” tongue, and something that is a blend; and she “knew how to keep quiet in all three, too.” For the young, savvy Makina, “carrying messages was her way of having a hand in the world.” Herrera's novel, translated from Spanish, barely breaches 100 pages but contains a wealth of messages.

Traversing Mexico by bus, Makina is smuggled across the border carrying a message to her brother from her mother, and delivering a package handed to her by a crime boss in her village for a crime boss across the border. She undertakes this journey without hesitation, giving herself to fate, handling herself competently regardless of known and unknown hazards. She has a mission to accomplish, after which she intends to return home. On this journey she is aided by enigmatic guides, as in the old myths: She crosses water, she travels the underworld. Nothing goes as planned.

Herrera uses a verb translated for this book as “to verse” for ambulatory exits, such as “She versed to the street,” or “He'd only just versed from the water.” It made me think of “traverse,” but also suggested poetry or lyric: The story is a language allegory, life translated as lines are crossed – all kinds of lines yielding all kinds

of lyrics, where identity and orientation can vanish like the old man with a cane who is swallowed by a sinkhole in the story's opening paragraphs.

During Makina's border crossing she sees snowflakes for the first time and “...wondered how it was that some things in the world – some countries, some people – could seem eternal when everything was actually like that miniature ice palace: one-of-a-kind, precious, fragile.”

The city she reaches (places are never named; it is all a landscape of metaphor and myth-making) is full of the (negative) novelty of “Anglo” culture. “Signs prohibiting things thronged the streets, leading citizens to see themselves as ever protected...” She encounters her compatriots: “...fleeting looks of recognition quickly concealed and then evasive.” She discovers that “...their tongue is a nebulous territory between what is dying out and what is not yet born,” where “using in one tongue the word for a thing in the other makes the attributes of both resound...”

The known world becomes a new world. As always there is loss and gain; one may wonder who is qualified to weigh and judge these balances?

I admired this book – and also wished for a day when story characters of each culture can simply be – “one-of-a-kind, precious, fragile.”

Loren's fiction, nonfiction and poetry can be found at Meyer's Falls Market in Kettle Falls, and at lorenbooks.com.



LISTEN UP

Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm's Ascent

Reviewed by Michael Pickett

I first heard local artist Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm back when she was about 13 and she was already an incredible talent. Some years later, her music has achieved what seems impossible: It's even better.

While Pruitt-Hamm began to build a life of activism in Seattle and Washington, D.C., she continued her musical craft, only to have a series of health problems descend without warning. "I was living my dream life, trying to make a difference in the world while performing music," she said. "Then I suddenly started experiencing horrible pain in my hands and other joints, and having heart and stomach issues, and lymph node swelling after a bug bite in West Virginia that I got while camping, and my life took a dramatic turn. I was diagnosed with late stage Lyme disease that has been difficult to treat."

Even in the throes of pain and treatment, she created an EP called *Pillows*, leading off with the incredibly beautiful, haunting single "Thorns," which found its way into my inbox a couple days ago. Her vocal delivery carries a weight and beauty nothing short of Sarah Mc-

Lachlan or Moya Brennan, and the genius arrangements of "Forgot to Mention" could easily find their way onto a "Best of Clannad" album, with layers of Pruitt-Hamm's gorgeous soprano flawlessly breezing over stripped-down guitars and percussion.

I'm not making more than a mention of Kaeley's illness here because I don't want it to detract from how insanely great her music is. You should listen to it without further delay. But the fact is, she continues to battle this disease, and while we do see artists who become activists, we now have an instance where we as listeners can engage in activism by supporting a recording artist whose struggle informs her art, and whose art

helps support her in life.

I fully believe Kaeley Pruitt-Hamm will not only continue to make incredible music, but will completely beat this disease. Here's why: I heard her doing things that were nearly impossible for a 13-year-old so long ago. She was born to sing and play, and I think now that she was not only born to do that, but to achieve other previously improbable feats, including triumphing over this disease and showing others how to do the same, as the activist she is.

Check out her music right away, beginning with mind-blowing "Thorns," at: <https://soundcloud.com/kaeleyph/thorns-premastered/s-qN2x9>



Tony Bennett Just Getting Started

Reviewed by Michael Pickett

A year ago, I was doing online studies with former Chicago singer Jason Scheff. He related a chance encounter with the great Tony Bennett, where he said, "Mr. Bennett, I understand you vocalize every day." Bennett responded by saying, "It doesn't take much. Only fifteen minutes a day, and warbly singers should just stop, because they don't care anymore."

At the tender age of 90, Bennett's commitment to his craft continues to pay off. Surrounded by an all-star cast of co-singers like Lady Gaga, Billy Joel, Diana Krall and Stevie Wonder, *Tony Bennett Celebrates 90* is a kind of soundtrack (previously aired on television) for an event that not only

honors a musical icon, but underlines how to do it right as a singer and performer.

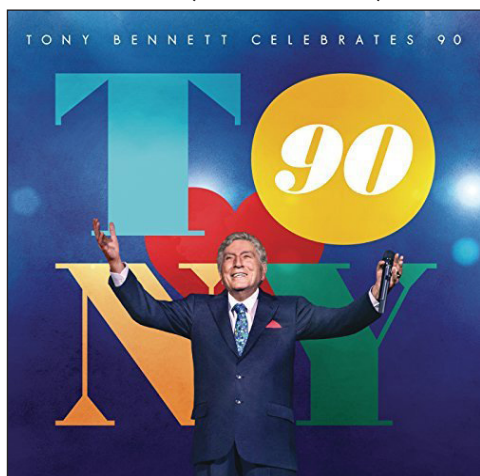
Leading off with a Gaga/Bennett whirlwind on "The Lady Is a Tramp," Bennett then makes easy work of "New York State of Mind" with Billy Joel and a long list of classics, before launching into a set of solo hits including "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" and "How Do You Keep the Music Playing?"

The entire album is nearly overwhelming in terms of content and star power. Ending with a Stevie Wonder-infused

rendition of "Happy Birthday," the event is really a great showcase for a singer who took his job seriously, but never let on the effort it

takes to really stay on top. Tony Bennett may just be getting started, and if that's the case, it will be great to see what he comes up with down the road.

Stream Pickett music free on Apple Music, Spotify, Rhapsody and Beats. Just search "Pickett magnetic feedback" and enjoy a whole album's worth of music!



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What's Happening... Continued from page 15

in the basement of the LDS Church, Juniper Street, Colville, at 10:30 am. Karen Struve, Vice-President of NeWGS will be sharing some useful tips to help you expand and share your genealogy through Pinterest. Lunch at Noon, then members and guests are encouraged to share special discoveries and successes they experienced recently. All visitors are welcome.

The Greater Springdale/Loon Lake Chamber of Commerce meeting is the first Thursday of the month at 11 am at the Stevens County Fire Protection District 1, Station #7, 52 West Aspen in Springdale. **The Chewelah Chamber of Commerce Weekly Meeting** is at 7 am at the Chewelah Casino, 2555 Smith Road south of Chewelah off Hwy. 395. **The Colville Chamber of Commerce** meeting every Tuesday at noon at the Eagles Lodge 608 N Wynne Street. Check the website for schedule of events

www.colville.com. **The Kettle Falls Chamber of Commerce** meets on the third Thursday of each month. For info, call 509-738-2300 or visit <http://www.kettle-falls.com>. **The Northport Chamber of Commerce** meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 pm at the Northport City Hall, 315 Summit Ave in Northport.

The Panorama Gem and Mineral Club meets the third Tuesday of each month at the Arden Community Center at 7 pm. Our website is www.PanoramaGem.com.

The Stevens County Veteran's Information and Referral Line is available Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays (except holidays) from 9 am to 3 pm. Call 509-685-AVET (2838) for more info.

The NE WA Amateur Radio Club meets the first Saturday at 11 am in the Abundant Life Fellowship, E. 2nd & Clay (basement).

Child Advocates Needed: Join Stevens County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) investigating child abuse and speaking up for a child's best interest in court. All training is provided. Call 509-685-0673.

Foster Parent Care Givers Needed: Children in Stevens, Ferry, and Pend Oreille counties are in need of safe, nurturing families. Contact Ruth Harris with Fostering WA at 509-675-8888 or 1-888-KIDS-414.

PFLAG: Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBTQ. People to move equality forward meets in a new location at the lower level of First Congregational United Church of Christ, 205 N. Maple, Colville on the last Tuesday, 6:30 - 8 pm. Call 509-685-0448 or email info@newapflag.org for more info.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the parties placing the *What's Happening* notice to keep the listing current. Notify us at ncmonthly@gmail.com or 509-684-3109 of any changes. This listing is provided as a courtesy to our readers and to event organizers on a space-available basis.

MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM

EAVESDROPS What people have written about the north Columbia region

"And isn't this what you had hoped to find? A quiet place where everything comes clear and the earth itself shows the way to the one thing."

Excerpt, Kathleen Dean Moore

Park Avenue Players' presents **Harvey** by Mary Chase

Did you have an invisible friend when you were growing up? The Classic '45 Pulitzer Prize winning comedy!

Performance dates are January 13, 14, 20, 21 at 7:00 p.m. and January 15, 22 at 2:00 p.m. at the Chewelah Civic Center.



Tickets go on sale in December at the following locations; Akers United Drugs, Valley Drug, The Independent, R.E. Lee Shoe Company and at the door. Tickets are \$10.00; however, all invisible friends are free during this production only. "Harvey" provided by Dramatists Play Service INC.



The Wild Eye



Field Notes from
a Wildlife Refuge

Lisa Langelier

Also available from:
Gray Dog Press, Spokane, Washington
www.GrayDogPress.com

The Wild Eye: Field Notes from a Wildlife Refuge is a collection of essays written during the time the author managed Little Pend Oreille and Turnbull Refuges in eastern Washington.

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Lisa Langelier is a former columnist for the *North Columbia Monthly* and a retired wildlife refuge manager who has been writing about the natural world for more than 35 years.

Along the Mountain Path

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

"Life is a mystery to be lived, not a problem to be solved."

~ Soren Kierkegaard

Happy New Year! It is January of 2017, and we are celebrating another circle around the sun. It is cold here. Many plants have gone dormant, saving energy in their roots for the coming spring. Cycles of seasons, cycles of plant growth, circles in the universe, spiraling energy in the cells of bodies, continuing circles and spirals in all of creation. We are a part of all that.

When we come to our mat to practice, we become still. At least, we believe that we are still, though there is the continuing dance of life going on inside of us. The very earth on which we have placed our mat is turning, circling and shooting through space. One of the central lessons of yoga is that everything is always changing. How do we come into awareness and acceptance of these changes? How do we act in harmony with the reality we find ourselves in? Yoga would have us begin by finding the truth in this moment, in this body. We engage the "witness" part of our mind.

The "witness" (vijnana-maya-kosha) is that part of our mind that is just a bit separate. It is the part that notices when the rest of our mind starts running wild, and says "Oh, no. We're not going there!" It is the center of our awareness. We can easily move into the witness consciousness by tuning in to our breath. Our breath moves

in a circle, rolling in and out like the waves on a beach. Our breath connects us to all living things. We all share the same atmosphere.

As we focus our awareness on the action of breath in our body, we become aware of the expansion and release of muscles and bones as we breathe. There is a dance going on. I like to remind students that we are alive, yet most of the time we fail to notice. Feeling breath move in the body is the experience of being alive. As we coordinate movement with conscious breath, we feel fully awake in the present moment. This is the feeling many people find in sport activities when they are "in the zone." It is simply being fully awake, but it is a wonder. The fact that we are alive and breathing is a wonder!

Being focused in our breath clears the mind of clutter so that we may respond in a manner appropriate to the moment. It may save our life in crisis situations, or simply give us the inspiration for action in our life. We may make plans, but often life unfolds in unexpected ways. It is useful to be able to take a breath and come into harmony with the new reality we may find ourselves in. We have to simply live it.

I like to think of making "New Year's Intentions" rather than resolutions or goals. Intentions are a way of aiming yourself in a direction

and then letting go. Intention expresses a desire without attachment to outcome. If you look back at your life, you may see that you got what you wanted, but not in the form you would have anticipated. Intention leaves room for mystery, and the way we are affected by everything else that is going on in the world. We can center in awareness, appreciate the fact that we are alive and breathing, aim ourselves in the direction of our intention, and give up the illusion of control. Step by mysterious step, the coming year will reveal itself to us. Meanwhile, we practice!

As you find your way along the mountain path, let your awareness rest in the rhythm of your breath.

Namaste

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



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From the Soil

By Louanne Atherley

In this largely colorless time of year there are still plants that give us a welcome bit of color. Among them is the staghorn sumac. The red, candle-tipped, graceful stems can be seen growing in roadcuts along the river. Those slightly fuzzy stems give the staghorn sumac its name.

I have a love/hate relationship with the sumac in my garden. Maybe it's more like your relationship with a beautiful and clever but naughty child, who you know you need to discipline but secretly admire for their beauty and spirit.

Fifteen years ago, when Ben decided to add a patio on the north side of the house, he dug into the hillside and moved in a lot of very large boulders. We wanted to landscape with something that would fill in around them but would require no extra water to maintain. We both love the red sumac in the fall and decided it might be a good choice.

At the time, our friend Doug warned that we might regret it because they can be invasive but we said, "Great – that's what we want." Well, we did get our wish.

We have several plants of three varieties; smooth sumac (*rhys glabra*), low grow (*rhys aromatica*) and staghorn (*rhys typhina*). They all spread by runners so I spend a lot of time each year cutting and pulling sumac from places where I don't want it, but they are easy to maintain without extra water and we do have a glorious display of red in the fall.

I was intrigued when a visitor to our home commented that she makes a drink that tastes like lemonade from sumac, and tucked that bit of information away for future reference. Last year when I saw ground sumac in the Huckleberry's spice selection at Super One I decided it was time to try it out. I have found it to be a delightful addition to my spice shelf. The flavor is tart like lemon or vinegar. It is traditionally found in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern recipes. Sumac is also high in antioxidants as well as vitamins C and A.

My friend Catharine, who said she was in-

troduced to sumac by a Turkish friend who often added it to tomato dishes, says she keeps a small bowl handy much as you would salt or pepper when she wants to add a little something, especially to salads or egg dishes.

If you are inspired to try harvesting local sumac, Catharine also sent me this information from a website called *Serious Eats*. According to the site, the author of the article, Tama Matsuoka Wong, is a corporate lawyer turned professional forager who supplies wild plants to chefs in the New York City area and leads events across the country about the deliciousness of wild ingredients. Along with chef Eddy Leroux, she is the author of the cookbook *Foraged Flavor: Finding Fabulous Ingredients in Your Backyard or Farmer's Market*. Here is what she says about drying sumac:

To harvest, find the most brightly colored clusters and use the finger test. You may feel a slight stickiness from touching the red cluster, and when you lick your fingers you will taste the tartness. Clip off at the base of the clusters with pruning shears as early in the season as you can, and dry sumac before it succumbs to insects or mold.

Right after harvesting, you can use the clusters as-is by dipping them in room temperature water overnight or until the water turns red, or you can make it into a spice that will last for at least a year. After drying, break up the clusters and toss the good ones into a blender. The blender will separate the fruit from the sticks and seed, then push through a strainer with mesh small enough to stop the seeds and sticks.



One of the easiest ways to enjoy sumac is to sprinkle it on hummus. It can also be rubbed on meat. I tried a recipe for a rub that combines it with salt and Aleppo pepper, which I just happened to have, but if you don't you could try substituting paprika or a mild crushed red pepper. It adds a little extra flavor.

If you haven't yet discovered roasted chickpeas, you might want to

give this a try. Drain a can of chickpeas, toss with a little olive oil, sumac and salt, and roast until crisp. The temperature isn't that important; lower temp equals longer roast time, higher is faster but you risk burning. I usually do something in the 300-400 degree range and keep checking on them. Some recipes suggest rolling the canned chickpeas first in a towel to remove the skins. I found that to be a lot of trouble and I didn't find the skins objectionable. Again, your choice.

Another way to enjoy sumac is in Za'atar, a blend that combines sumac with various herbs. As with curry, the mixtures vary. I tried one recommended by Tama Matsuoka Wong on grilled bread. It combines equal amounts of sumac, thyme, and sesame seed. It added an excellent flavor and definitely tasted Middle Eastern.

Winter is a great time to experiment with new flavors while you are poring through seed catalogs and dreaming of spring.

Louanne Atherley says, "I was born into a farming family and raised on a meat and potatoes diet, but exploring the diversity of foods from other cultures has been a lifelong passion."

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Editing Your Way to Excellence

By Linda Bond

Ask any beginning writer what part of writing is their least favorite task and the response will almost assuredly be: “editing!” It’s not surprising when the need to edit seems to indicate some kind of failure in writing the first draft of any project. And who wants to admit failure? So editing has a bad reputation. And yet successful writers know better. It is editing that moves the work from mediocrity (or worse) to excellence; from just barely passable to something that can be sold, or at least something to be proud of.

An Overview

If we want to present our best possible writing to others, it’s important to understand and apply several types of editing. This will include (but not be limited to):

- editing for correct spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as correct sentence, paragraph, and chapter structure.
- in fiction, making sure our characters are well designed and fleshed out, and that dialogue is handled properly for clarity and flow.
- editing our content to retain quality but managing the word count or length and style to fit the requirements of the potential publication or publisher.

One of the ways we secure a lean and muscular narrative is by trimming excess and choosing precise vocabulary, ridding our text of tired, overused words. It is possible to accomplish this without losing sight of our own unique writing style, flavor and tone. However, editing is not a simple process. It’s no wonder it can seem like a daunting task.

Although we may be capable of proofreading our work, it is important to be honest with ourselves to determine when we need help from others. This may come in the form of a good critique group, a trusted reader, or a freelancer.

The following professionals may be able to help. These are folks who work with you *before* you have a publisher on board. (At that point, be prepared to do more editing and learn a new set of definitions for these functions.)

Editors

Sometimes called content or developmental editors, these freelancers can make substantial changes in your text to improve impact, flow and clarity. Try to get samples of their work for others – or have them do a chapter or piece of your work – before signing a contract for this valuable service. Remember, you’re hiring them for their expertise and you have a right to ask for verification that they can help your document flow more smoothly, cut down on extraneous words and bring clarity to the writing. They can mark their changes for your consideration.

At publishing houses, editors acquire new works and “walk” them through all the stages necessary for publication, often suggesting changes to be made by the author, or seeing that those changes are made in-house.

Copyeditors

To copyedit a document is to correct errors in consistency, punctuation, spelling and structure, and make sure the document meets the requirements for publication; e.g., style should match what is expected at the magazine for which your article is intended. This person should have the skill of a proofreader and the instincts of a good content

editor. A copyeditor may offer fact-checking and the ability to make sure your use of names and other data is accurate.

Proofreaders

Proofreading is the process of ensuring that the final draft of your work meets standards for punctuation, spelling, and similar details. It is a skill that not everyone possesses, so again, ask for verification of ability before signing a contract. As a final step before going to print, publishing houses employ proofreaders, and companies that help with self-publishing offer professional proofreading services.


Contracting for Services

Each of these professionals will charge for services based on the level of skill required. Quality of service is imperative. It will do you no good to hire an editor only to learn later that the individual has not provided the advertised level of service you are expecting. So search carefully and choose the best person you can afford. Then make sure your contract contains a clear explanation of services to be rendered, timelines to be met and other pertinent details.

Above all, keep a backup copy of your work. You may need it!

Linda Bond is cofounder and leader of the Inland Northwest Writers Guild and Outreach Coordinator at Auntie’s Bookstore in Spokane, WA. Write to her at lindathewriter@gmail.com.

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Potato Peelings and Pig Tales

By Tina Wynecoop

You would think a pile of potato peelings wouldn't make for a story, but I know differently.

With scores of years, six brothers, cattle ranching, growing up during the Great Depression and World War II, mining, military service, college, and logging, my husband, Judge, experienced a rich life; his good memory is filled with tons of stories that show up at the most unexpected moments. He recorded many of them in his self-published book, *The Shooting Star: Growing Up on the Spokane Indian Reservation*. Until he finishes the sequel, this new story involving his mom, Phoebe, her pig, "Big Apple," and potato peelings, is worth sharing.

On a recent snowy morning Judge was peeling a bagful of russets for breakfast hash browns and a mashed potato dinner.

While his hands shaved potatoes the memories kicked in. "Mom would cook potato peelings with wheat or some other whole grain 'till there was a nice warm mash for her pigs. My Gosh! That slop smelled so good. We were well-fed-yet-always-hungry kids. Wig, my older brother, and I volunteered to help our mom by delivering the buckets of mash out to the pigs just so we could stop and eat some on the way.

"We lived in a log cabin on the northern edge of Wellpinit and the pig pen was away from the house

near a little creek between our and Aunt Christine and Uncle Roy LeBret's home. We went together because pigs can be unpredictable and we were cautioned to be wary of Big Apple. Later, in 1941, we moved to a large meadow on the south side of Wellpinit. Big Apple came with us."

I could almost taste the mash myself and I asked Judge if Big Apple was male or female. He couldn't recall, so I texted his three younger brothers and their wives – Chick and Lois, Dick and Kay, and Steve and Jeanette – to see if they remembered. The responses were fun and unexpected, especially since I used an old phone number for Steve and Jeanette who live in western Washington State yet received responses from someone in Alabama. Alabama was the first to text a reply:

Alabama: You got the wrong no sincerely ala

Kay: What a question!!!! He [Dick] is feeding [cattle] right now.

Lois: I'm going to see Chick in about an hour. I'll ask him.

Alabama: This is Alabama I used to raise pigs.

Lois: How fun! There seems to be no shortage of stories in Phoebe's family!

Kay: Dick doesn't remember.

Lois: What r u making with those potatoes?

Me: Fried potatoes for breakfast with fresh eggs from our chickens, orange juice, coffee, toast with huckleberry jam. The rest of the peeled potatoes will be mashed for other meals. Come on over!

Lois: Sounds good. I wish I could! [Chick and Lois live in Minnesota]

Kay: Me too! [Dick and Kay live on the Spokane Indian Reservation]

Lois: Chick says Big Apple was a boar. Mystery solved!

Kay: Who started this question this morning? I just read this to Dick – his comment: Big Apple wouldn't talk to anybody. He was just a bore!!!

Me: Wonderful pun. I have my answer. Thanks!

Me: Did any of the sows get named?

Lois: That is too funny! Chick doesn't remember their names.

Alabama: I was in 4H in high school and Future Farmers of America and then joined the Marine in the 70's.

Me: Thank you Alabama.

Alabama: no problem

So ... we have our answer about the gender of Big Apple and the peeling story is almost complete. In 2003, Brother Chick published his marvelous account of childhood memories in *The Way It Was: Growing Up on the Spokane Indian Reservation*. Older brother Judge just had to write and publish his version of the stories in 2010. Competition. Competition, humor and respect permeate their writings.

Chick has a pig encounter in his book that puts closure on my essay:

Riding Pigs

"Since by now, both horses and cows had nailed me, I was a little leery of them. But we also had several pigs that were worth experimenting with. We often fed the pigs, but we had been told never to go near the old boar. He was big and ugly and we had no problem with obeying that order. We gave his pen a lot of room.

"But one day we found one of the small pigs outside the pigpen. Wig and Judge jumped on its back and rode it a ways. Well, I thought that looked like fun, so at the next opportune time, I jumped on it myself.


"That pig took off like a shot, heading for the corral, while I tried to hold onto what little hair he had. I wasn't doing a very good job of riding him, and was about to fall off, when he suddenly went under the fence. The bottom rail pole peeled me right off his back.

I was willing to bet that if pigs could laugh, he laughed all night. For once, I didn't get cut or hurt, and it had been a real fun ride. But my head was spinning because everything happened so fast. Man, that pig was quick!

"I didn't realize, at the time, that I was riding on some pork chops, bacon and ham, but that fast pig sure tasted good several months later."

Peeling can happen in the kitchen or out of doors!

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By Alex Panagotacos

Waffle is a Bernese Mountain Dog training to be a therapy animal at Rural Resources Victim Services and Kids First Children's Advocacy Center in Colville.

I'm closing in on my facility dog certification test, so the humans are intensifying my training. Lately we've been working on the basic commands, but with added distractions. For instance, I know how to "go through" like a pro, but going through really tight spaces is not always appealing. So I've been practicing squeezing between and under all sorts of furniture. And I've been getting extra special treats for doing it well.

I've become rock solid regardless of what chaos may be going on around me. Well, almost. That's my goal.

I know that "down" means that I am to stay in a down until the humans say "free," but when something distracting happens, I often break the rule and get up. To help me work through this, the humans have me lie down and then fabricate distractions around me. As an example, I was lying down under the interview room table and the human banged on the table top. At first I was a little startled by this, but a piece of chicken appeared in my mouth almost immediately, so I

was okay with it. Then she told me how good I was being. So I got two forms of reinforcement: food and praise! When she started knocking books off the table I was again a little surprised, but then there was chicken and praise again.

When a child visits Kids First to be interviewed by the forensic detective, she or he is supported by a victim advocate who explains the process to the child and the family. Part of that process is that the child speaks to the detective in the interview room without anyone else present. The interview is recorded so that the child does not have to tell the story over and over again to people in the criminal justice system.

Even though the detective is trained to speak to children in a trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate way, it can still be scary. One of my jobs is to sit with them in the interview to help them feel safe and secure. The child might want to pet me or I might rest my head in their lap or I might just nap at their feet. I need to stay by that kiddo's side no matter what. That child needs to feel I can be depended on.

It is very important that I apply what I've learned when things are not predictable. I could be great at sitting and staying in a quiet room,

Waffle Watch

but when faced with a noisy courtroom, I might forget everything that I learned. I can't let that happen, though, because there are kiddos depending on me.

Children sometimes must testify in court and this can take hours. There might be yelling, crying, a gavel dropping, aggressive body language, arguing and a whole lot more. Now I don't know about you, but I think courtrooms are kind of intimidating. Now add to that being a child and having to talk about the abuse you endured.

While victim advocates do a wonderful job of helping children prepare for court, it can still be really scary. Having me there by their side can help, though. I need to be a source of calm security during what can be a horrible time for them. So that's why I'm working so hard on becoming a therapy dog.

For more information on Waffle and the work of Rural Resources Victim Services and Kids First Children's Advocacy Center, visit them on Facebook (@RuralVictimHelp) or call 24 hours a day 1-844-509-SAFE(7233). Rural Resources Victim Services provides support to survivors of violence and crime in Ferry and Stevens Counties. Services are confidential and free.

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