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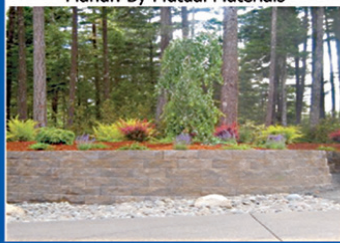


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MAY 2019 ISSUE DEADLINES

AD SPACE RESERVATIONS:

Friday, April 19th

WHAT'S HAPPENING LISTINGS:

Friday, April 19th



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- JOHN ODELL, WordsOfWords.com



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From the Publisher's Desk

By Gabriel Cruden

I joined a book club – a first for me. As a teen, I loved to read, literally burning the midnight oil as I read late into the night by the light of a kerosene lamp by my bed. Books were also a constant through college. I would get completely wrapped up in the stories that unfurled in my mind with the turning of each page, pulled along like YouTube's video auto-play. There is also the often-described appreciation of the physical aspects of books – how they feel, smell, look, and so forth – and the experience of reading them. I confess I am on that train, a library card-carrying bibliophile, if you will.

So, it came as a complete shock when, about a decade after graduation, I was struck by the realization that, while I still considered myself an avid reader and book lover, I hadn't actually read a book for enjoyment since college. I then proceeded to spend another decade bringing good books into my space, irrationally hoping that, somehow, some kind of proximal osmosis

might allow the contents of all those books to seep into my psyche.

I built an entire library in my office, stacked books on my desk, put books on my nightstand, and packed them in my luggage when traveling. It does still make me happy just to be around books. But, I must confess that the osmosis thing hasn't worked. In my defense, I have a great deal packed into my daily life. But still....

The reality of the situation became strikingly clear one day when, in an effort to rectify this dearth, one of my children saw me reading and exclaimed over the unusual sight. Ouch. That hurt. Especially the phrase, "I've never seen dad read, like, just to read..." It was clear indeed: I could no longer rest on the laurels of my past engagement with the written word, regardless of how extensive or ardent. Not only was it incumbent upon me to set a good example for my children about the importance and value of reading, but I needed to reclaim

my identity!

I have cheated a little, getting audio books to listen to in the car. And I still have books on my desk that I've not yet cracked the covers on. But, I've started in on the pile on my nightstand and I joined that book club and have even read the first book. Unfortunately, the club's meeting was canceled, but still, I am resolved.

Storytelling is such a part of our history as a species. And it is central to how I have structured the *North Columbia Monthly*. Bringing reading – that is not for work – back into my life is like remembering a story I grew up with and hearing it told anew. It does something for my soul in a way that carries meaning and import. I hope that the stories we share in the *Monthly* do that for you and our community too. Thanks for reading.

P.S. Speaking of telling stories, please see the notice below about the *Monthly's* 25-year anniversary!

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we invite you to join in celebrating our



by sharing a remembrance or
commentary on the magazine, its
contributors or publishers, or what the
North Columbia Monthly has meant to
you or to your community.

Submissions due by: April 14, 2019

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The Reality of Abuse Can Be Changed

By Christine Wilson

"The most painful state of being is remembering the future, particularly one you can never have."

~ Soren Kierkegaard

"I never told anyone because no one ever asked."

~ Male sexual abuse survivor

"The truth is, in order to heal we need to tell our stories and have them witnessed. ... The story itself becomes a vessel that holds us up, that sustains, that allows us to order our jumbled experiences into meaning. As I told my stories of fear, awakening, struggle and transformation and had them received, heard and validated by other women, I found healing. I also needed to hear other women's stories in order to see and embrace my own. Sometimes another woman's story becomes a mirror that shows me a self I haven't seen before. When I listen to her tell it, her experience quickens and clarifies my own. Her questions rouse mine. Her conflicts illumine my conflicts. Her resolutions call forth my hope. Her strengths summon my strengths. All of this can happen even when our stories and our lives are very different."

~ Sue Monk Kidd, *The Dance of the Dissident Daughter*

In my experience, our brains love to ignore things that are uncomfortable and our whole society sometimes seems to join in a collective avoidance of that which is painful. It doesn't help.

Reality, as Philip K. Dick famously said, "...is that which when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away." April is Sexual Abuse Awareness Month and across the land tireless advocates work to help us face our collective wish that this abuse not be real. These women and men increase awareness and support healing for victims and our communities in general. In my more optimistic moments, I

think we can eradicate it altogether. Most days, however, I think we can reduce it, educate people about it, and address both the victims and the perpetrators in a more realistic manner. In that, I think we start with giving a voice to the stories survivors have to tell.

Before I became a therapist, I wasn't trying to be oblivious to the reality of sexual violence. I just rarely thought about it, had no idea how common it was, and did not see the cultural pervasiveness and horrific damage. I didn't see the messages that we were creating as a society that kept it secret

and kept it happening.

The primary message I got in high school was that boys can't help themselves and girls are responsible for keeping the boundaries of decency intact. Before that, when my generation of girls were hitting puberty, we called our periods "the curse," which was our brutal punishment for being daughters of Eve.

As I became more aware, but was still seeing it as only a women's issue, I discovered that women in Congress had a list of creepy men to stay away from and they passed the list on to newer women as they entered those hallowed halls, because it seemed unstoppable to them and the responsibility rested on the shoulders of the potential victims.

It was my clients who taught me the powerful responsibility we all have to look hard at the reality of its cost on individual survivors and our society as a whole. The majority of sexual abuse happens to females, but I have worked with enough male victims to understand the universality of its pain. With the pressure for men to think they are supposed to be always strong, always knowledgeable, always savvy, never the victim, it can be a special kind of hell for them to be targeted for sexual abuse.

Having said that, I would never want any-



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Random Acts of Community

one to assume I am minimizing the effects of sexual abuse on women. It is one of the most devastating experiences a person can have, it can create a lifetime of problems, and we as members of our communities can intervene. We can do that by learning from the experts and taking personal responsibility for our community health.

Sexual violence is more common, as most of us now know, within known relationships. That image of the sneaky pervert in the park, waiting around for some stranger to show up, limits our understanding and our ability to believe and protect survivors of the more common perpetrators.

Here are some things we can all do:

Start by believing. Listen to the stories. Obviously, you don't want to intrude on personal privacy, but I can guarantee that you know people who have been sexually abused. They get to pick and choose who and when they tell, but if they pick you, consider it a sacred trust. It is an honor to sit with women and men who are willing to share their story. That listening can help them on the road to

recovery and can teach us what we need to know about our world.

I think it is important to recognize that people can have more than one aspect to their personality. They can be great in some way and yet perpetrate this kind of violence. As I have said many times, perpetrators do not get a pass just because they are nice or smart or do something decent in their world or have beliefs we agree with. As a society, we have been learning about that reluctance to accept reality, especially when the accused is someone we like. The reluctance we have to go through is difficult, but the survivors need us to remember that our minimizing prevents healing.

Sitting silently by when people make comments and jokes that belittle women or exaggerate the sexual nature of men makes it easier to lose our humanity and to fail to see the humanity of others. It becomes easier to excuse sexualized behavior if we don't see the real people we are objectifying. Comments that pressure men to believe they must be tough and hypersexual make it harder for

male victims to come forward and harder for other men to challenge men who are objectifying both men and women.

Being the bystander who says something takes an enormous amount of courage. There's a good chance that the person who speaks up will be criticized or accused of being too sensitive, of not being able to "take a joke." You have to believe that speaking up is more important than being approved of. I find that focusing on empathy for the victims can help. I admit that I have lost my sense of humor and my need to be accommodating. It is hard to be lighthearted when you have sat in that sacred trust with so many people.

Your awareness and courage might not eradicate all sexual violence, but I believe each of us speaking up and listening to the stories can shift the culture around us. It can foster a safer and more fulfilling way of life, not just for April but for the whole year.

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

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Raise Your Glass!

The Face of the Epidemic

By Dr. Barry Bacon, MD

"Bacon, can you come and take a look at this patient with me?" A colleague of mine was working in the emergency department, and I was his backup. "I'm really worried about him. He's not doing well and it looks like he may stop breathing any minute."

I assured the ER physician that I was on my way. By the time I arrived, the patient was surrounded by a team of healthcare workers. He had a tube down his airway and one of the providers was breathing for him. "I ran out of options," explained my ER partner. "He went downhill so fast."

I walked to the patient's side. Sores covered much of his gaunt face. His skin was pale and unwashed. His breathing was deep and rapid, his heart rate 160. Despite having a tube in his airway with 100 percent oxygen connected and five attendants at his side, he was teetering on the brink of death. His lungs could not exchange gases. He was 19 years old.

I brought an ultrasound to his bedside and looked over his vital organs more carefully. His heart was vigorous, had no fluid surrounding it, and showed no signs of failure. There was only a small pocket of fluid around his lungs, not enough to cause the distress we were seeing. But his lungs looked like liver. His lungs were failing to exchange gases because he had an overwhelming pneumonia on both sides. He needed to be in an ICU and on a ventilator.

He had been awake a short time before. His conversation was abbreviated but telling. "I told them I was sick," he had explained. The implication was that healthcare providers at another facility had made a judgment about him based on his appearance and had forgotten to really look at him. I looked at his arms. Telltale needle marks pocked the inner portion of his forearms and upper arm. He was shooting up regularly. His body clearly demonstrated a life spun out of control.

We prepared to send him on his way by helicopter. He would need the ICU and ventilator care for a while, if he survived...

My mind went back to the summer of 1987, when I sat in the office of a psychologist, an instructor at a major university in an eastern state. He was telling my wife and me about the results of a personality inventory that was to help us to know how well-matched we both were to our chosen professions. I remember him turning to Shelley and saying, "We have the results of your personality inventory, and I can say with confidence that you are a perfect match with your chosen profession of elementary education." Shelley smiled and thanked him. He sounded so wise.

Then he turned to me. "This inventory was prepared by someone with an IQ close to 200, so you know this test is highly valid," he reported. I was suspicious now. Anyone who thinks that a test has valid-

ity just because someone is smart doesn't understand some basic things about being human. Intelligence does not equate to knowing what you are doing.

"So, you know what I am going to tell you is highly accurate. And your profile doesn't match with being a physician at all," he went on. "You are suited much better to being a researcher in chemistry." I smiled and thought to myself, "Dude, you do not have any credibility with me. I will be a great doctor, and you and your testing can take a hike." Or something to that effect.

Now, 30-plus years later, I still smile at the absurdity of that profile. It is ridiculous to think that physicians come in one flavor only. Or that an introvert can't serve just as well as an extrovert in medicine, even if the majority of physicians line up with one particular personality trait. I suspect it is the same with any profession.

This week I sat in a room filled with people listening to and participating in a discussion about the opioid epidemic taking over our nation. I listened attentively and thought about how much has changed in the past two years. Less than two years ago, I begged my colleagues, my former bosses, the leaders of our community and our county to find options for the 95 patients under my care who were suffering from opioid dependency. I was heartbroken to see the lack of concern or commitment to finding a way for them to be cared for. There were, fortunately, a few who were willing to take a risk and care for them. But the majority didn't seem to want to be bothered.

Now, in 2019, these same folks were sitting around a room together, smiling and nodding their heads as though the therapy I had previously suggested was the greatest idea ever.

I cornered one of my colleagues during a break and reminded him of the resistance we had met two years ago. He laughed. "I think the difference you are seeing now is that the federal government is putting a

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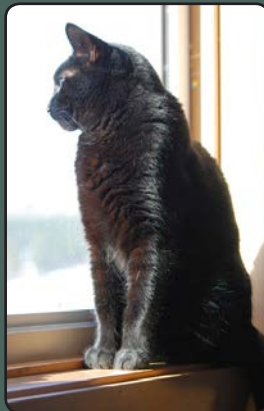
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lot of money into opioid treatment. It's a whole lot easier to do the right thing when someone gives you a million dollars."

It's hard to explain, but my assessment of the opioid crisis is that we, the healthcare industry, are the greatest barrier to providing care for people suffering from opioid dependency. It seems to me that we don't want to be bothered by their messy lives, so we write them off. We seem to want a neat and tidy practice rather than the messiness of treating folks who we perceive to be on the margins of society. In that sense, maybe that psychologist who pegged me as a crummy doctor was right. Maybe I don't fit the mold.

Narcotics addiction is a big deal. The number of prescriptions for narcotics is down considerably since 2012, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). However, the number of overdoses and the number of deaths from overdoses are up. This is, says the CDC, because the number of opioid-dependent individuals is still just as high. Many have switched to highly addictive and dangerous illicit drugs such as heroin and black-market fentanyl.

Opioid addiction is a deadly disease. As described in 2017 in the *British Medical Journal* and in other places, there is effective treatment that reduces the risk of premature death and overdose by 40-80 percent. There is help.

In the case of our patient waiting for transfer to the big hospital, what came to mind at that moment was that this is someone's son. Somebody loved this boy, someone wanted him, raised him for something better, dreamed for him and sang to him. He's not a throwaway life. If he dies, someone will weep over him, someone will miss him. Someone's heart will be broken. And because that is so, the doctors and nurses who worked on him that night treated him as if he was something precious, a life to be brought back from the edge of the abyss.

They are my heroes, working long into the night to save people who sometimes have treated their health as though it was something to be thrown away.

Did he make it? Last we heard, he had survived, and he lay recovering in a hos-

pital bed not far from here. Will it make a difference? I can't answer that. But what I can say is that if each of us took a long look in the mirror and saw there something precious and beautiful, someone of great value, maybe that would change things. Take it from one whom the experts said wasn't destined to be a doctor at all. When

I look at you, that's what I see. Someone worth saving.

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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Seeing Clearly

By Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

This winter, as my vehicle and I rambled along through the Western landscapes of Washington, Oregon and California, I began to take notice of a bird that I had little recognized before. Poised atop fence posts and roadside trees, hawks seemed to be

everywhere. Mile after mile, landscape after landscape, I was all but guaranteed a glimpse of this remarkable and yet common predator, waiting, watching, preparing.

Traveling and speaking about the Columbia River Treaty for work, combined with a rich array of family connections in California, have created a life that involves

lots of driving. I took note of the hawk's readiness with a combination of envy and desire. Oh to have wings instead of tires. I marveled at how this ordinary brown bird, so well-camouflaged in the drab winter landscape, could lift off from its perch so effortlessly. Sometimes it simply spread its powerful wings to rise skyward and glide on a current of air. Occasionally I saw it plunge, beak first, straight down to clasp its prey.

I've driven tens of thousands of miles over the years. Why, all of a sudden, was the hawk so noticeable? What was the bird's message to me?

One still, cold December morning, I was on a remote two-lane highway through a gently rolling oak savannah landscape. I was on my way to a ranch my great-grandfather purchased about a century ago. He had hoped the area would grow more populated. But another road was chosen as the main highway and the area became what it is today: an oasis of quiet pasture land, framed by the Santa Lucia mountain range. My cousins still own and operate the ranch, with memories and stewardship that span generations.

Ahead of me I saw a hawk on a pasture fencepost. Then another just beyond it. And another. I noticed as I passed that one had opened its wings wide, as if in praise of the beauty of the morning. The sunlight shone through the tips of the wings. I passed the hawks, pulled over quickly and stepped from the car. It seemed that something important was going on.

As careful as I was, my arrival scattered the birds. One resettled on a further fencepost. The other two swung up into the high branches of an oak. As I stood watching in the winter sunshine, one of the hawks up high in the oak again spread out his wings. Was this a mating exercise? Or was this bird offering more praise, for the freedom of a high branch?

Oh, that's how they warm themselves, my cousin explained a little later. We were sitting at her kitchen table, with its view across a pasture to the home ranch.

That made sense. I was mildly disappointed, but I needn't have been. Hawks kept appearing around me. A few weeks later, while staying with another cousin at

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a nearby hilltop ranch, I followed scant deer trails through the savannah and listened at night to the wind screeching through the canyon below the house. During the day, a hawk careened almost hourly across the winter sky, often circling above me. I figured the bird had its eye out for one of the many ground squirrels popping their heads out of ground nests and scurrying from place to place.

But often the wings were the only movement in the remarkable stillness of oak forests. High above me, the bird seemed to

be drawing circles around a way of seeing the world. It seemed to be carving a message about envisioning a broader, more expansive experience than those that exist within our own minds.

While the internet, my laptop and ever-present phone are all marvels impossible to measure, they do focus my vision too much sometimes on a world created by humans, for humans. Oh so quickly I can forget the shape and size of the world I inhabit. The way the Columbia River flows down from Canadian mountains and swoops out into

the broad Plateau before squeezing through the Gorge and spilling out into the sea. The way clouds scud across the skies. How the early spring sunshine can warm my limbs.

I can forget that we share this world with so many other inhabitants, creatures that are themselves carving out lives of rhythm, beauty and purpose.

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.



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Canine Constituencies

By Loren Cruden

This article had to be written secretly, out of sight of my cat Taliesin, as it is about a rival species ... dogs. It is a little bit about bears, too, about which Taliesin is also techy. The idea for it started with recollection of some of the dogs in Orient, where I used to live. These included three Akitas I once saw in a heaving mass of black fur atop the hood of a local's Jeep as he charged toward me down Rockcut Road.

Asked why the dogs were riding on the hood, he said, "So's they can jump off quick to chase bears."

Which reminded me of another local guy, whose young dog shot him – only clipped his ear, the dog not yet a good shot – when the guy got out of his pickup to pee and a bear came along, exciting the dog into jostling the loaded rifle in the cab's gun rack. Life in Orient was never dull.

Our dog Leo, when we lived on the mountain by Orient, was encouraged *not* to chase bears (or bear firearms), though she did go after an investigative bear that came into the house while I was still in bed one morning. This led to the dog chasing the bear and me chasing the dog, until everybody chilled out.

Leo was a noble dog, companionable, hardy and brave (other than in the face of certain insects about which she had a phobia). She looked after my son and me for many years. There was an incident, however, in her youth, when she was retrieving a Frisbee and suddenly needed to relieve herself. Setting the toy down, she hunkered over it and filled the Frisbee. Then stared at it in dismay. What to do?

Over the years Leo rotated through a large collection of

Frisbees. Sometimes we'd throw a blue one down the long slope into the woods and she'd come back with a red one we hadn't seen in months. Sometimes she had to hunt for them under the snow. Years after she died I'd come upon her lost Frisbees while walking in the woods, weathered and half-buried in forest duff.

Star, the canine of my childhood, a compactly-proportioned German shepherd whose favorite pastime – sticking her head underwater to pick up rocks from lake shallows, carry them to shore and drop them on the ground – was surpassed only by her herding devotion to my siblings and me. The origins of rock search-and-rescue are vague, but herding was in Star's blood. On the family's move north from Florida, when we stopped by the roadside to give Star

a break, she stared in astonishment at the cows grazing in a field – I don't think she'd ever seen cows before – and took off into their midst, trying to round up and herd them.

The cows were not amused.

Rounding up and herding kids, especially when we were swimming, was another futile exercise, so it's no wonder she focused on rescuing rocks.

In Florida when I was about eight, I found a greyhound wandering through our neighborhood one evening and coaxed him home with me. I called him Cricket. As we walked through the dusk, Cricket

looked weary, hungry, worried. I imagined his unhappy past as a racetrack dog (Florida had a lot of those) and his escape into a life with me. I imagined an ideal future together, running like the wind along the beach, joyous and free.

I can't remember exactly what happened after we got home, whether Cricket jumped the fence and ran away that night or was taken to the animal shelter. Either way, I didn't get to keep him. I came to understand that just because you name something doesn't mean its destiny is yours to claim. Though that didn't stop me from imagining.

These days, one of the dogs in my son Gabriel's life is his wife's English mastiff, named Bernie. (I don't know why the breed isn't just called "English Massive," like "Great Dane.") Bernie is about seven feet tall if standing on his hind legs, which, mercifully, he doesn't do, and is heading toward 200 pounds as he approaches full growth. Looking through my photo album the other day, I noticed that some portion of Bernie – a lionish paw, planet-like back or haunch, cable-like tail, or section of his Rushmore-sized head – appears in almost every recent indoor picture, simply because he fills so much of the room.

Fortunately, true to his breed, Bernie is sweet-tempered and slow-moving – though his toys are Terminator-proportioned and he gets pretty frisky swinging them around:



the Wrecking Ball, rubber Bone Crusher, and repulsively slobbery Unidentified Object that previously might've been a vital or beloved household item.

Unlike other of the family's animals – the horses, goat, chickens, cat, and the other (smaller) dog – Bernie is treated to a special cake on his birthday, all-around doting attention, and outings in the community. He's an innocent celebrity, however, his huge head unfilled with conceit.

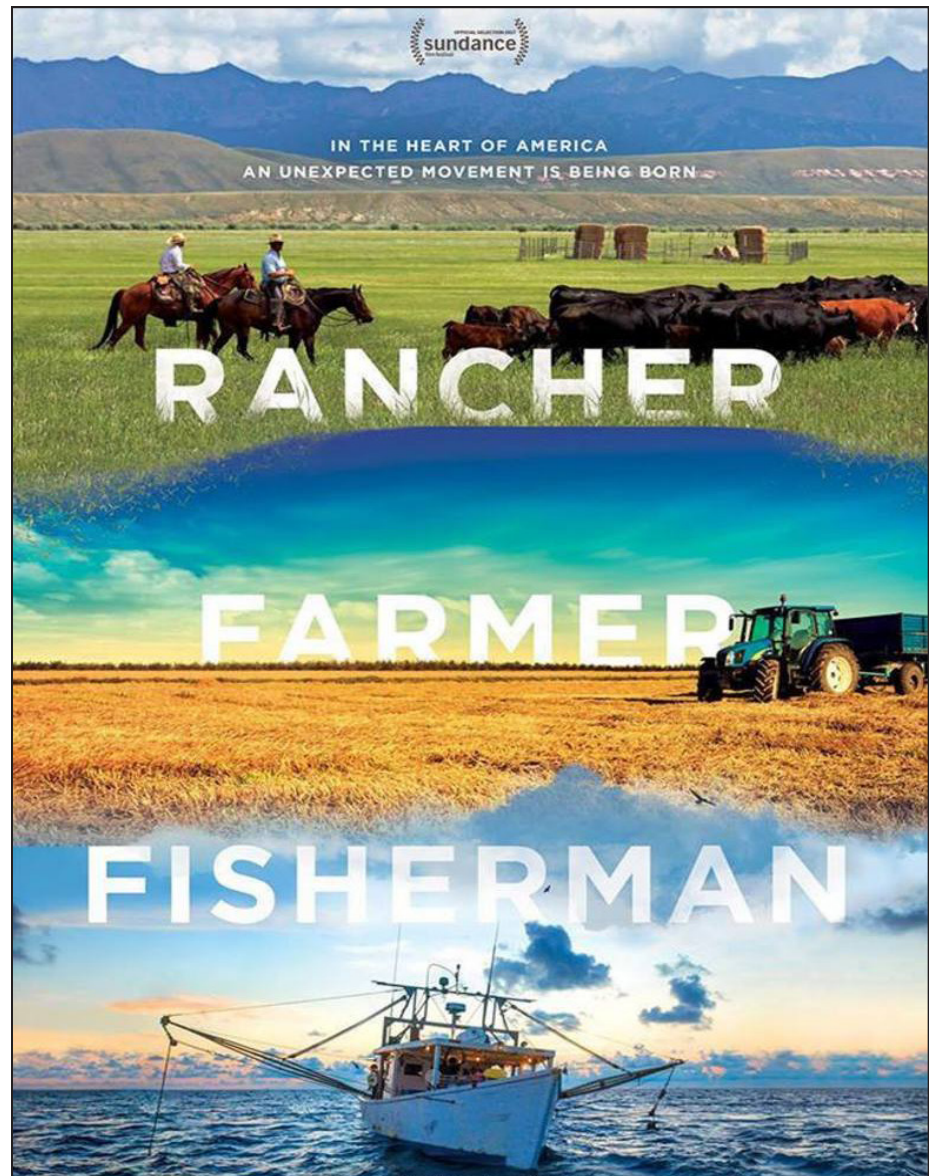
One day, Gabriel and I drove the celebrity to Orient, where he was needed as the centerpiece to my 11-year-old granddaughter's class presentation about English Massives (oops, mastiffs). Her classroom comprises fifth to eighth graders. Bernie ambled around the room greeting each student, knocking into desks, flattening backpacks, scattering papers with his wagging tail, drooling and distributing canine goodwill to all. Then stood up front, dwarfing my granddaughter, as she gave her 7-minute presentation and answered questions.

Afterward, Gabriel and I escorted Bernie to the younger-kid classrooms for brief

hellos. As each door opened, the dog was swarmed by wee children looking even wee-er beside the Massive who stood among them, gentle pleasure on his face, his waving tail occasionally whacking kids in the face. "Bernie! Bernie! Bernie!" they shouted, rushing forward, dozens of small hands fluttering, reaching, touching. "Bernie! Bernie!" like at a miniature political rally.

Then we drove home, the celebrity reclining in Massive fullness across the back seat; just another day on the canine campaign trail.

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.



Free Admission! • Friday, April 26 6:30 p.m. • Rendezvous Theater
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The Adaptable California Quail

Article and Photo by J. Foster Fanning

It was just a few years ago when I first started noticing the abundance of California quail throughout our highlands region. The range map shows *Callipepla californica* barely enters southern British Columbia, mainly in the Okanogan River Valley. But one thing that

happens as weather trends shift is that habitat changes occur. It's now an open-door question as to where you'll find this ground-dwelling bird in the New World quail family.

While the native range of non-migratory California quail was Oregon, eastern Califor-

nia and south through Baja, they have been introduced to eastern Washington, Idaho, Nevada and Utah. California quail were even introduced to Hawaii in 1820 when V. M. Golovnin, aboard the Russian vessel Kamchatka, presented a small flock to King Kamehameha. They now thrive throughout much of their introduced territory including the islands of Ni'ihau, Kaua'i, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawaii.

Topknot quail, valley quail, Catalina quail, crested quail – these and a number more are the localized names given to California quail, which is a popular game bird for some hunters.

These birds are easily recognized by the comma-shaped black plume, or topknot, that bends forward on an otherwise round head. The topknot is larger on the male of the species. This is a small, plump, short-necked bird with a small head and bill. And while the plume might appear to be a single feather, it is made of six feathers drooping forward, black in males and brown in females. The flanks of this bird are brown with white streaks. Males sport a dark brown cap and a black face with a predominantly brown back, a grey-blue chest and a light brown belly. Females and immature birds are principally grey-brown with a light-colored belly.

Don't let the round-bodied shape of this bird fool you; these critters are fast runners and can flush cover at nearly full flight speed in short, rapid bursts. They fly on short but very broad wings. The tail is fairly long and mostly square. Often, after those rapid flight



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In Nature

bursts, they will disappear into thick brush, blending in perfectly.

Territorially, California quail tend to live in groups called coveys that disperse for the non-breeding season. During the breeding season, coveys break up into breeding pairs throughout their established home range to nest and brood; there may be clusters of nests in close proximity.

These birds, like most of their cousins in the *Odontophoridae* family, spend the highest percentage of their time on the ground, walking, scratching and foraging in search of food. In morning and evening they browse beneath shrubs or on open ground near cover. Males are known to perch more than the females in brush or low tree branches, presumably on sentry duty and to give calls to the rest of the covey.

Pairs of California quail call antiphonally, meaning that the male and female alternate calls, fitting their calls into a tightly orchestrated pattern. Throughout the breeding season, males will issue loud calls to stake and defend territory. During courtship, the male postures with wings drooped, tail spread, head bobbing, and may rush at the female in question.

California quail are surface nesters utilizing shade areas of shrub foliage and brush piles, or next to a log or other overhanging cover, where they build a shallow-depression nest lined with grasses and leaves. Females lay and incubate a clutch of generally 10 to 16 eggs, but possibly 25 or more. Speculation is that these large clutches are the result of egg-dumping where females lay eggs in each other's nests. This technique works for the California quail as several broods may mix



after hatching, with all the parents providing care for the fledglings.

Another possible reason for the broad adaption and diversity of habitat of this bird is that, while the young are able to walk about and feed themselves almost immediately after hatching, both parents continue to tend to them, the female brooding them at night and in cold weather, and the male acting as a sentry, watching for danger, thus increasing the nestling survival numbers that achieve adulthood and become breeders themselves. Interestingly, adult birds that raise young this way tend to live longer than their counterparts that do not.

As mentioned in previous articles in the *Monthly*, through research of a species I often find unique survival strategies or traits that the animal has evolved, allowing it to fill a certain niche, or give it a better foothold in adapting to its habitat. The California quail has several, including a digestive system that processes vegetation with the help of unique

protozoans in its intestine. Although this trait is not passed on genetically, the chicks acquire these protozoans by pecking at the feces of adults, thereby enhancing their own digestive processes.

Another trait is an adaptation to living in arid environments. These birds can get by without drinking water for long periods of time, obtaining their moisture from insects and succulent vegetation.

In Washington, California quail rely heavily on seeds, particularly those from legumes. They will also forage on annual weeds, eating the seeds, leaves and fresh shoots, as well as acorns, berries, flowers, bulbs and insects.

Spring is in the air! It's a great time to lace up those boots and leave some tracks out there.

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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This Great Big Bruised Life

By Tina Tolliver Matney

It's not easy to conjure up an image of spring when just a few days from the vernal equinox I'm lying here wrapped up in ice packs from my shoulder to my knee because I took a hard splat on the ice. My ego is bruised right along with my shoulder and knee because I spent this entire winter being ever so mindful of my safety outside.

I didn't want to fall, knowing the only help nearby would be a dog that might keep me warm and awake by dropping a slimy wet Kong ball on my face repeatedly until someone out there missed me enough to check on me. So, I took small intentional steps on every trip to the barn and back. I used my car to drive to the shop and back on garbage days because the driveway is nothing but a sloped ice rink. I wore my best boots that have excellent traction and dressed in layers for warmth. I was so careful and chose to be mindful of my pace and my balance even when I was in a hurry, which ... let's face it ... is probably 99 percent of the time.

But yesterday my intentions to step carefully flew out of my head as fast as my purse flew out of my hands. Falling is dangerous for anyone, but for those of us who have bones and joints that have already seen a little or a lot of wear and tear, a fall can be serious.

Luckily, I had my whole right side to cushion the blow, not just one joint or bone. I say that only partly in jest because I really believe if I hadn't put my arm out to stop the impact, I would have hit my head hard. So, consequently, my body now feels like it was hit by a truck. But I'm still here and it doesn't feel like anything is broken ... except perhaps my pride.

Asking for help is not a strong suit of mine. I tend to believe I can do just about anything if I try hard enough. And sometimes that belief gets me into trouble and is probably the root cause of why my bones and joints are a little on the battered side. Lately though, I am be-

ginning to realize that I'm not doing myself or anyone else any favors by being so stubborn and independent. Often, now, I wonder if maybe being independent is really just the same as being stubborn.

This winter has not been easy for anyone I know. While the recent arrival of the swallows says that we have finally turned the corner toward warmer springtime, many of us have fields of snow and ice that may just stick around for weeks and weeks to come. This was my first full winter of living on my own. And, while I knew there would be some challenges to face, I doubt any of us expected our weather to escalate to a downright dangerous level like we endured in February. But it was, again, through the hardest moments that the love and support and extra help came to me, and I imagine to many others, in unexpected ways.

Close friends and family came out of their way to help restock my wood stash and keep my driveway cleared of the never-ending snow. Another close friend showed up after a long day to fix a frozen pipe before it burst. I have been reminded that I am truly fortunate to have friends and family that "have my back" and that I'm really not on my own. I am surrounded by people with good hearts.

Life felt a little bit lonely during those times when I tried to prove to the universe that I've got my own back. But the universe certainly doesn't care if I can chop kindling or split wood. Truth is I should never have an axe in my hands. Chopping kindling is not a skill I seem to possess, and instead of splitting wood I just smash it. I simply take a swing or two at a chunk of wood with the axe. If I embed the blade in enough for it to stick, then I basically just smash it to the ground repeatedly until it falls apart. Trust me, splitting wood and smashing wood are not the same thing. But thankfully my son and grandsons make sure I have ample kindling on a regular basis. And while I smashed enough wood to get through

this winter, I plan to pay a little extra to have my wood pre-split into smaller pieces I can handle easily for next year.

I look around at this place where we all live in northeastern Washington, these small communities and rural areas we call home, and I see and feel the generosity of so many people. We are good people. We are there for each other to lend a hand, give a hug, make a meal, split kindling, or smash wood. Today I am watching the swallows while I feel some warmth in the sunshine as I sit here icing my shoulder and healing my pride. This morning my heart felt full after my good friends reached out to see if I needed anything, even if it's just a gentle hug.

But I don't have time for a busted-up body, so I will do my best to slow down and heal. There is no glory in living life in such a hurry. Besides, I want to be strong and healthy when it comes my turn to lend a loving hand to anyone who needs to know I have their back too.

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



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APPENZ G

Events

Mar 31: Dances of Universal Peace, simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural dances, 2-5 pm at UCC Church, lower level, 2nd and Maple, Colville. Donations appreciated. Potluck following. Call 509-684-1590 for more info.

Mar 31 - Apr 6: Dollar for A scholar” at Super One Foods in Colville. All fundraiser proceeds go to local students.

Apr 4: First Thursday Art Walk, 5:30-8 pm, downtown Chewelah.

Apr 5: Boards in Gear nonprofit training by Washington Nonprofits. Learn about the five main areas of strong board practice, 8:30-12:30, WSU Extension, 986 S. Main, Suite D, Colville. \$20 (\$15 members), Visit washingtonnonprofits.org/northeastwa for more info.

Apr 7: Northport Lions Club BINGO at the Northport School Cafeteria, Noon-4. Early Bird, Regular, Fast Pick and Blackout with a \$500 Jackpot. Proceeds benefit Northport High School Baseball. Refreshments available. Must be 18 or older to play. Call 509-690-2158 for more info.

Apr 10: Emalee Gillis reads from her new book, *The Other Side of Madness: Adventures on the Path to Living Well with a Mental Illness*, followed by an open discussion, Spark Central, 1214 W Summit Parkway, Spokane, 7:30 pm.

Apr 12-13: Junk Drunk Vintage Market, N.E. WA Fairgrounds Ag Trade Center. Featuring 40+ vendors for 2 days of vintage, retro, cool junk, salvage, upcycled, repurposed goods shopping! Early bird shopping Friday 4-8 pm, \$10, (also good for Saturday admission), Saturday, 9-4, \$5, kids free!

Apr 13: Huckleberry pancake breakfast with eggs and sausage, 8-10 am, Quillisascut Grange on Pleasant Valley Road near Rice. Call 509-738-6041 for info.

Apr 13: Kitten Shower at Colville Valley Animal Sanctuary, 2 pm. See ad page 16.

Apr 13: Northern Dance Theatre's Student Showcase, 7 pm, Colville High School auditorium, free! See ad page 26.

Apr 13: Bridges Home concert, Pend Oreille Playhouse, 236 Union Ave., Newport, 7 pm. Call 509-447-9900 for more info.

Apr 14: Cutter Theatre volunteer appreciation reception and annual membership meeting, 2 pm, 302 Park St., Metaline Falls.

Apr 20: Northport Lions Club annual Easter Egg Hunt, Northport City Park. Bring your own basket, ages 0-10 welcome. Arrive by 11:45 a.m., hunt starts at noon.

Apr 20: Colville Easter Egg Hunt, Northeast Washington Fairgrounds, 10 am. Ages 0-10 in three groups, bring a basket. See ad page 30.

Apr 20: Newport Easter Egg Hunt, City Park, 10-11 am.

Apr 20: Public Policy Forum, Book Review: *Whose Land Is It Anyway? A Manual for Decolonization*, Peter McFarlane and Nicole Schabus, 2017, and *Studies In Classic American Literature*, D.H. Lawrence, 1923. In association with St'al-sqil-xw, Veterans For Peace, Poor Peoples' Campaign and Kettle Falls Public Library, 12-4 pm; pot-luck lunch and snacks offered, non-alcohol beverages. Email info@stalsqilxw.org for more info.

Apr 21: Easter.

Apr 22: Earth Day.

Apr 23: Panel and conversation about the Opioid Epidemic (rescheduled event), 6 pm, Rendezvous Theater at Spokane Community College, Colville Branch, 985 S. Elm St, Colville. This event, hosted by Colville AAUW and free to the public, will feature panel presentations by Dr. Caleb Holtzer, Matt Schanz, Lynn Guhlke, Brad Manke, Gina Tveit, and neighbors who have been directly affected by the Epidemic. Mary Selecky will MC, and there will be an opportunity to broaden the discussion with questions and answers. See ad page 26.

Apr 26: Film showing: *Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman—Conservation Heroes of the American Heartland*, a Discovery Channel film, 6:30 pm, Community Colleges of Spokane, Colville Campus, 985 South Elm, post-viewing discussion. Supported by the Vinson Fund and the Community Agriculture Development Council. See ad page 13.

Trail & District Arts Council calendar of events. Details available at trail-arts.com.
2nd: Ô-Celli: Cello Octet, 7:30-9:30 pm
16th: Pipe Bands Anniv. Celebration, 7:30-9:30 pm
26th: The Best of Songs & Stories of White Buffalo Storytelling, 7:30-9:30 pm
27th: Trail Harmony Choir Spring Concert, 7-9 pm

Music at Northern Ales, 325 W. 3rd Ave., Kettle Falls, northernales.com, 509-738-7382:
4th: Sara Brown, 6-8 pm
11th: Justin Johnson, 6-8 pm
18th: Jim Murphy, 6-8 pm
19th: Open Mic, 7-10 pm
25th: Dave DeVeau, 6-8 pm
26th: Borderland Blues Band, 7-10 pm
27th: Raise Your Glass, 5-10 pm

Music at Republic Brewery, 26 Clark Ave., Republic, republicbrew.com, 509-775-2700.
6th: Reverend Justin Hylton, 7-10 pm
14th: Tony Furtado (ticketed concert), 7-9 pm
19th: Winnie Brave, 7-10 pm
26th: Claude Bourbon, 7-10 pm

Meetings & Opportunities

Apr 10: Northeast Washington Genealogy Society meeting, 1 pm, LDS Church basement, Juniper Street in Colville, entry at the back of the building. Visit newgs.org for more info. All visitors are welcome.

Library Events: Check out the extensive calendars of library events at ncrl.org (Ferry Co.), scrld.org (Stevens Co.), and pocld.org (Pend Oreille Co.).

Celebrate Recovery, a 12-step program, meets Fridays, 5:30 pm, Mt. Carmel Health Education Building, 1169 East Columbia Avenue, Lower Level, Colville, WA (across street from emergency room). A light meal is served. Call 509-935-0780 for a ride or more info.

Notice: Water will not be available at the following campgrounds during the 2019 summer season: Kettle River, Snag Cove, North Gorge, Marcus Island, Kamloops Island, Cloverleaf, Hawk Creek, Haag Cove. Bring your own water.

Deer Park Business Referral & Networking group, Tuesday mornings, 8-9 am for breakfast at Paulines, Deer Park. 509-276-8556.

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

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

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

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.

Narcotics Anonymous recovery group meets Mondays, 215 S. Oak, Colville (County Commissioner's Building, brown door) at 7 pm and Thursdays, 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.

Colville Multiple Sclerosis self-help group meets the first 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.

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).

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

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

Fire District 10 volunteer firefighters, 1st Tuesday of the month, 7 pm, FD10 Fire Station on Aladdin Road. FD10 Commissioners, 3 pm, Friends of FD10, 4:30 pm at the Station on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Visitors and new volunteers are welcome.

Camas Valley Grange No. 842, second Saturday at 5:30 pm at the Grange in Springdale.

The NE WA Amateur Radio Club, first Saturday at 11 am, Valley Fire Training Center.

The Panorama Gem and Mineral Club, third Tuesday of each month, Arden Community Center, 7 pm. www.PanoramaGem.com.

North East Back Country Horsemen, third Saturday, potluck, 6-8:30 pm, Clayton Grange. Visit NEBCHW.com or call 509-598-0333.

MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM

The Northport Times

NORTHPORT - APRIL 2019: As we look about the Town and countryside, it is apparent that Spring has arrived. Many aspects that no other time of year can compare are present. While Winter can be cold and cause discomfort, snow is still much easier to traverse than the mud so prevalent, which we encounter every time we step outdoors. Mr. Howard rode into town today to get supplies with his sleigh. Not realizing that the snow had melted so quickly, he presently got so stuck that it was necessary to ride his horse home and fetch his wagon. Shopkeepers have the daily struggle to maintain a cleanly appearance in their establishments. Just yesterday, one of rancher J. Murphy's expectant cows suffered an almost tragic misfortune by slipping in a boggy pond and getting stuck in the mud. It took him most of the day along with the help of a kind neighbor, Mr. Leadan, and his team of horses to free the poor beast. Springtime is not completely deplorable although the muck may at times be simply overwhelming. The Spring Ball and Seed Exchange held in the Kendrick Ballroom offer a much-needed respite from the sloppy mixture of soil and melting snow, offering to sufficiently satisfy the element of refinement desired by all those battling the mire.

—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

Avril Lavigne and Adulthood

While Alanis Morissette's massive vocal sound ended up taking the Dave Matthews Oversaturation Award for being irritating in the '90s, Avril Lavigne certainly gave the Canadian anger-pop queen a run for her money. Then Lavigne disappeared for the better part of five years in the throes of Lyme disease, with at least two of those years mostly bed-ridden, wondering what the universe had in store.

While fellow Canadian Shania Twain found herself struggling to rediscover her gorgeous vocals while suffering at the hands of the disease, Lavigne seemed to use the years of downtime to grow from a lyric-spitting, angry pop-princess into a golden-throated goddess, and now *Head*

Above Water has her soaring over down-right cinematic productions.

Cuts like the riveting title track, the stripped-down-but-expansive "Goddess" and "It Was in Me" move the album away from a "market-y" songwriting approach. I could live without any song featuring Nicki Minaj (forever, actually), and some of the album drops into a radio-friendly patch.

What Lavigne does now is easily fall in line with someone like P!nk, and she has the ability to not only tell a story but do

so within incredibly well-written music that you can hear 100 times and not feel

pushed to change the song. That's where she needs to go, and she needs to do it without apology.

To come back from Lyme disease and sing this well is an opportunity that needs to not be missed or diluted by management or re-

cord-label execs. Here's hoping the sequel to *Head Above Water* has Lavigne telling her story with her whole heart, soul and new-found voice.



Gary Clark Jr.'s Two-Fisted Anthem

Blazing vintage guitar sounds (that don't feel like gimmicky '90s records) and vicious, arresting lyrics are the fuel behind Gary Clark Jr.'s new studio album, *This Land*, and an unrepentant indictment of modern America.

While the guitar and vocal roar are all on display, the album seems a little less focused than *The Story of Sonny Boy Slim*, with bare-knuckle elements of rap and reggae finding their

way into pieces like the title track and the slammin' "Feelin' Like a Million."



Still, Clark's passion manages to ground the whole affair and while his political work is also personal (he cites interaction with a Texas neighbor and a maddening racist mindset as the underpinnings

for the album), songs like the horn-stung "Got to Get Up," the surprisingly positive

"The Guitar Man" and the jaw-droppingly vintage "Dirty Dishes Blues" stand strong on their own.

Clark manages to juggle a kind of activism and superior musicianship without letting one element undermine the other. Although *This Land* feels disjointed at times, it tends to only add to the seething, unsettling vibe that Gary Clark Jr. sets out to nail on this latest offering.

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A Good Read

Reviews by Loren Cruden

Immigrant, Montana, by Amitava Kumar

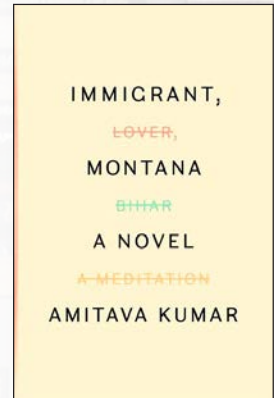
The story in Amitava Kumar's *Immigrant, Montana* is part fiction, part autobiography and almost no Montana. Its chapters are oriented around protagonist Kailash's love affairs as a student. Kumar scatters photos, anecdotes, clippings, quotes and footnotes throughout the text, referenced from his journals. His character comes across as smart, well educated, a little brash, a little at sea, emotionally undeveloped but looking for love – or just sex. Arriving from India as a grad student in New York City, Kailash has the usual student worries about money, but in general nothing awful precipitates or accompanies his migration or his new life in America. He follows his bliss: academia and academic girls.

Woven through Kailash's observations of student protests, class discussions, political issues, blunders with girlfriends and memories of childhood is an (unsurprising) idolization of one of his (true-life-based) professors, an East Indian who embodies the charisma, ease in his skin, erudition, connections and style Kailash would like to emulate. "He had been tried for having conspired in a plot to kidnap Kissinger! How could I not look up to him?"

Though occasionally confronted by ignorant or spiteful

racial/cultural slights, Kailash seems to endure far less insult or real harm than do the women in the story, whether they are white or of color, American-born or immigrants. This is so clearly, though probably unintentionally, conveyed that there's a sense of more divide between male and female (and class) experience than between cultural or racial perspectives.

Wherever he is, whatever he is doing, Kailash is at a remove – can't help journaling in his head instead of just experiencing what's going on. This distancing from the present moment is realized in other ways also. "What I was learning in America was new and illuminating but it became valuable only when it was linked to my past." And, in the other direction: "As grad students we showed ourselves eager to understand contemporary life, but in reality, we were proclaiming our place in the future."



The Ha-Ha, by Dave King

The central character in Dave King's debut novel, *The Ha-Ha*, is a boy, interrupted: Sixteen days after arriving in Vietnam, eighteen-year-old Howard's life trajectory is blown apart by a land mine that leaves him disfigured and unable to speak, read, or write. His life stalls.

Thirty years later, Howard's ex-high-school-sweetheart, a cocaine addict, asks him to look after her nine-year-old son Ryan while she enters rehab. Howard must somehow break out of his frozen isolation and find ways to communicate – build relationships.

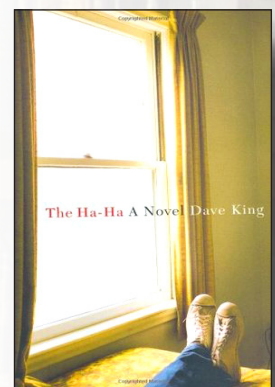
Howard, reminiscent of the lead guy in the TV show *Rectify*, is an appealing character. Though understandably at odds with society, Howard's soft heart is forever trying to correct that view. He has a natural buoyancy sometimes enabling him to transcend his rage and bewilderment. He can despair ("This is how to become one of those *frightening* vets: demanding, insufferable, unmoored and unloved.") yet still plant flowers. ("Tomorrow, I think, I'll rig up a trellis of strings. Maybe Ryan will help – or I can do it alone. We needn't do everything together, I guess, but it's good to have something to tend to.")

Three renters live at Howard's house – a Vietnamese woman from Texas and two frat-type dudes referred to as "Nit and Nat" – all of whom get involved with Ryan's care. Ryan is a mixed-race boy and his stay in Howard's household is a mix, too.

Additionally, there's a silly dog and Howard's handyman work for a bossy nun: this could've been a sappy story – but is not. "I thought Sylvia would wait for me; I thought the doctors would make me new. I thought time would pass and I'd adapt; I waited and waited for everything to be all right." But everything isn't all right.

Dave King, a painter and poet before becoming a novelist, portrays a man who, in the last moment of normality before the mine explodes, is about to ask the name of a Vietnamese flower; and who, thirty years later, still has the heart to plant morning glories. A stubborn, self-aware man: "I remember how I contemplated taking off with Ryan, going camping and driving until we were tracked down and captured; and I'm impressed by how bold I was, how wide my sense of possibility."

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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Traps

By John Bowlby

The measure of anyone's success and their kids and kin,
is reduced by the number of traps they have fallen in.
In this reality, it's very easy to be trapped.
And then, one day, to figure out your life is being sapped.

Entrapment is illegal, like the courts and lawyers say.
But money lenders tempt and tease with high interest to pay.
Credit card debit is injurious to your way of life,
and to the relationship of a husband and wife.

Some are trapped by R.J. Reynolds, some their gambling love.
Some are trapped by John Barleycorn, some all of the above.
And if those were not enough traps, your phone will often ring,
and a voice will try to trap you with some kind of thing.

Some will ask for money, to help your needy brother.
But if you give a dollar, he'll come back for another.
Whether, or not, they're worthy of they simply want to bilk.
If you give a mouse a cookie... he'll want a glass of milk.

I.

By Raining Tree (for "Em")

It was the work of an artist
- to never be done -

Sprinkled around in
constant fun.

Let the bookshelf
Be your easel!

Sock drawer
Or memoir...

And I have certainly heard

Plenty of
Happenin
Shower studio
Vocals

To tickle the
Artists' toes and

Soul
Silverware
Drawer
Or memoir...

Spring Yet?

By Loren Cruden

A gusting night – spring yet?
The fire has gone out, wind
peers down the chimney.
I fill the stove, send smoke,
give the wind a taste of
cedar, larch, fir,
seasons condensed like the
winter count of the Lakota.
The fire kindles, crackles, billows,
tree memories rising,
snatched by hungry wind,
carried off under its arm.

Gold Dust

By Loren Cruden

Beside the Columbia waters where
salmon once surged north like
Olympians toward a gold-medal podium;
along this river's shouldering banks each spring
the pines fling wide their pollen,
each gust of wind firing off dense yellow
barrages like silent fireworks or clouds of
salmon milt, spring exploding profligate and
egalitarian into our colonized human moment in time.
Each morning I sweep layers of gold dust
from the deck, the windshield, sills and siding, glad
the pines still think wild of tomorrow.

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The Backyard Philosopher

Feeling Home

By Linda Bond

The other day, I got to thinking about where I live – my home, neighborhood, city, even the surrounding North Columbian region of Washington. And I love it! Where else would I find the beauty of tree-filled mountains rising above the channeled scablands, hosting the powerful Columbia River and its tributaries. Then there's the people I know. Kind, thoughtful, willing to help out their neighbors. There are things to do, nature to enjoy, and people to love.

I'm sure you have feelings about your particular community and, if you're fortunate, your feelings are positive. I say fortunate not just because it feels better to like where we live, but because that can mean a greater chance for good health, joy, and the openness that allows us to grow, to look for new opportunities. At least that's true for me.

Then I got to thinking about the many

ways that I can be "at home." For instance, I am at home where I live, but I am also at home in my own body. And I am at home in my thinking and my emotional take on life. I am "at home" where I work each week, among a special family of co-workers, engaging in activities that feel worthwhile and challenging.

That's not all. I am also frequently at home in my imagination. When I read a really good book – one that contains an intriguing mystery, or one that carries me into another world in time and space – I can be absolutely submerged in that alternate reality. I can be so engaged that I forget about my "real" life and feel as though I am at home in the book's story.

We can all think of ways that we might feel at home. Perhaps in the company of a close friend, or at a coffee shop where we've spent many hours conversing over our favorite beverage, or even if we go back to our old high school for a grand reunion. No doubt you can add to this list from your own experience.

Of course, there is an opposite to these good feelings. I used to travel a lot – first when, as a child, our family moved frequently. In those days I could sleep anywhere, at any time. But later, as I began to travel for work, I discovered that I felt uncomfortable trying to sleep anywhere other than in my own bed at home. Just being in a different climate could cause a bad reaction. Feeling out of my familiar surroundings brought on a bit of

tension and just plain creepiness. Over time, I managed to spend less time overnight on my trips, and finally to stop traveling altogether.

But I am left to wonder what it is about a place and its surroundings that makes it feel like home. I imagine familiarity must contribute to my sense of well-being. And if a place has proven itself to be safe, then security adds to my feeling that all is well. Do people who live in unsafe conditions still feel at home? I imagine that familiarity provides at least a semblance of safety if we know what to expect and that there will be no surprises.

In addition to familiarity, though, is the idea that I belong. I think of home as a place where I am accepted and, hopefully, wanted. A place where I enjoy company at dinner, even if it is only the company of a pet. Where neighbors greet me on the street. Where my possessions are gathered around me. Where I have the freedom to come and go at will, and to invite others to join me.

The more I think about it, the more I realize that, on some level, I am at home almost all the time, since I carry it around with me in my thoughts and expectations. Time and space cannot separate me from my home so long as I have it in my heart. Another take on the old saying "Home is where the heart is." I couldn't agree more.

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 lindathewriter@gmail.com.

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A Year On the Farm

Spring Animal Decisions

By Michelle Lancaster

Spring, a time of birth, may seem like an odd time to bring up the topic of culling animals. Culling is the process of removing animals from your farm in order to maintain a proper balance between animal numbers, housing, and available land and feed. I find late winter and early spring to be the perfect time to think about which animals will be staying on the farm for the next year and which should move on.

Why so early? People spend the winter months thinking about what to change on their farm. By advertising animals early, I have found we often get a front seat in the market – all the people looking, but hardly anyone selling yet. Once summer comes, people are outside and busy working, less likely to be browsing online. If they want animals to graze their pasture, then they want those animals to have arrived before May or June when peak growth of grass hits. By the time fall arrives, everyone has their hay supply calculated for the long upcoming winter and adding a mouth to feed, whether a hundred-pound ewe or a thousand-pound cow, can put a wrench in the winter farm plan.

Why sell at all? I can think of many reasons to sell or cut down on animal numbers. Primarily, selling extra animals prevents overcrowding, one of the most serious contributors to animal disease. In spring, sheep multiply fast – often having twins or triplets. Very quickly, a five- or six-sheep flock can become twenty. Our barn holds a max of ten sheep, so the rest have to be

sold or slaughtered each year. Similarly, our egg-laying hens have a relatively short functional lifespan of two to three years of peak performance. After that, egg production declines significantly. As an egg producer, I want young hens in their prime, so each year we sell a group of chickens to people that want a few hens for their kids or grandkids or just need a few eggs without the hassle of raising chicks. Win-win!

Who stays? An animal needs to have a purpose on our farm. That is my primary consideration. Cats save us a fortune on feed by saving our vegetables and fruit trees from gophers and protecting the chicken grain bins from mice. We have unusually low predation rates from wild animals, which I attribute to our Akita dog. The livestock have obvious purpose – eggs, meat, milk, fiber, manure fertilizer, income from offspring. The livestock are the easiest to justify keeping, although culling and sales are still very important among livestock.

Who should be culled? Age is one of the top reasons for culling. We work diligently to maintain the healthiest animals through organic practices, but they all do age eventually. My cow's reproductive functions ceased, her milk production declined, and her udder health got to the stage that at 15 years, she had met her productive capacity. So, we matched her up with a family that needed hamburger. Sounds heartless, I know, but I firmly believe in practicality with farm animals. I cried when she left, but I am glad

she went for a good purpose.

Who should NOT be sold? So often people keep animals that should be culled, or worse they sell the problem down the road. I believe that selling a problem animal to an unsuspecting customer is unethical. Dogs that bite, cows that attack people, animals sick with disease – those, in my opinion, should not be sold without full disclosure.

The guilt of culling. Sometimes, the daunting responsibility of care keeps us from making decisions. Some assume no one else can take as good of care of that animal as they can or form unhealthy attachments to an abundance of animals. If you are like me, we might like to think no one could possibly love an animal more than us, but there are many cases where loving homes are just waiting for the right animal.

The health of your animals is structured around what you can provide for them. Selling animals becomes a particularly emotional topic when thinking about sweet baby lambs or a young cow of special breeding raised by hand. We look at it as a way to provide the best care for the animals on our homestead while providing opportunity to share our animals with others. We found many friends through initially selling animals to them, and the enjoyment of seeing how they work to build up their herds and flocks is one of our greatest joys.

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

Winter Road Sports

By J. Merrill Baker

Our winter road looks like the luge. This Winter Olympics sport involves an impossibly long ice-lined tube-like structure where people wearing aerodynamic spandex lie down in flat sleds and race downhill rapidly, up to 85 miles per hour. Athletes do it for fun and sport, and even medals. We do it simply for survival; to get to the post office in time, or the bank for cash and those shopping sprees to refill our larder. Now, we do not go down the mountain at 85 m.p.h., although some of the neighbors think that some of us do. It IS a long driveway.

Heading out involves planning our “exfil,” as they say in the military (at least in the movies) when considering an exit from an operation. Our exfil must be masterminded ahead of the snowstorms. One neighbor would keep his snowmobile parked in a lower area and swap it out for his mini-truck. Our snowmobile was in for repairs. Our winter operations include me having chains for the vehicles, and a wire tow rope when the vehicles get stuck in the berm is easier to use when you have a hook welded to the vehicle frame. Front and back. Oh, and a “come-along” just in case.

The boots and gloves and hats and snow shovels all helped when we got the freshly repaired SUV stuck and had to walk home to retrieve the tractor. But alas, nothing could help when the tractor, parked on a slight hill above the SUV, slid oh-so-slowly on the ice under the snow down into the beautifully replaced driver’s side front panel. Gravity worked. We have a dent there. And that happened on the way home from the repair shop. Sigh.

Neck rubs matter, because often it is necessary to drive our tractor downhill backwards with the blade reversed in order to shave the top off the towering ice berms, or to widen the berm if they are not glaciated yet. You will know if they are hardened when you snap off a tractor pin or hitch pin.

On our luge, expertise includes a bit of familiarity with the rocks embedded

in the road ... rocks that can bounce and jar your plowing blade, or snag you and spin the tractor around! When you see these rocks, you can steer around them, but in the snow? One summer I sprayed these boulders with neon green glow-in-the-dark paint. It worked for one season. Some of the neighbors ran over them anyway, too late to steer clear, or the weather wore off the paint, I don’t know. I was trying to help. I’m like that.

So was Bob, who came up with his excavator to work on a water ditch for a neighbor. Bob had encountered one of our fluorescent – and especially troublesome – rocks, about a foot across. This rock was an unfortunate chunk of granite that had been protruding dangerously on the uphill turn located on a hill we call “K2.” You hold your breath going up that curve and up that road.

Yes, we name our roads for reference, and the neighborhood gets a hand-drawn map because then we all understand what we are speaking of when discussing plowing and repairs, complete with highlighted areas to avoid getting stuck on that two-mile driveway.

Bob had good intentions. Bob was able to remove several of these rocks, including the K2 rock, which he had excavated by mid-afternoon. It turned out to be a five-by-six-foot boulder. He then filled in and repaired the road. Whew! “Bob’s Favor” is a famous lesson for doing good deeds. He did get a bottle of his favorite libation for his troubles and much gratitude and thanks from the neighbors.

Still, placed right on the corner of the “Y” in the road, it was a challenge to not slide down into said boulder on an exfil, coming down the mountain. This was remedied when the nearby property was being logged by some experienced equipment operators who also enjoyed a libation occasionally, and the husband was able to entice the team to relocate “Bob’s Favor” to a more reasonable observation point. Whew again!

While we are not winter-sport people,

unless by accident, we do use ski poles on our walks and hikes, along with those spikey rubber shoe things to keep us vertical. We also keep a snowmobile around, remembering a winter when there was no getting around without one!

In the summer, grandkids love to ride in the open air in the pickup truck with the pruners, bowsaws and other assorted trimming devices while their grandparents drive slowly along in the front seat, keeping an eye out for the service berries. The kids get the high, larger berries the bears haven’t trimmed off yet.

We do need to prune the overgrowth year-round. But in the winter, forgetting to keep a pair of tree pruners in the vehicle, I forget to trim the branches that stick out onto the road. Once on a side road, a rather larger branch went through the windshield of the snowmobile being driven by our athletic son who managed to bail, just in time, thankfully! Limber! He would probably enjoy the luge in a flat sled, and at 85 miles per hour, maybe even spandex. But I won’t ask.

J. Merrill Baker, *Winter recluse and Grateful Ruralite.*

EAVESDROPS

What people have written about the north Columbia region

“There is a tendency among residents of the western side of the Cascade Mountains to lump all the geography east of the Cascades into one immense piece of bland real estate ... that is a woefully inadequate way to describe, or dismiss, some of the most varied topography in the entire Pacific Northwest.”

~ Archie Satterfield, Backroads of Washington

Backyard Biochar, *by Joe Barreca*

Most days lately I look out my window and don't think twice, it's all white. But actually, if you can get out in this snow comfortably, it is a great time to make biochar. And biochar is black! Besides that, it is good for your soil. So good in fact that all of our local northeast Washington state politicians have signed on to a memorandum listing the virtues of biochar. House

Joint Memorial 4000 State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session states: "WHEREAS, People working for the United States Forest Service, the Washington State University, the University of Washington, and the Washington State Department of

Ecology have been researching the use of biochar and found that several potential markets exist for the product, including as agricultural soil amendments, reforestation treatments, pollution remediation, animal feed, and landscaping material;... decrease fuel loads... increase soil carbon, soil nutrient content, and plant productivity..." It goes on and on, but you get the idea.

Suddenly biochar is cool, mostly, I think, because there is money to be made selling it. But there is also money to be saved by

making it. (It costs \$60/yard from Pacific Biochar with a 40-yard minimum – and that's the wholesale price.) I already have a lot of dead ponderosa pine that leaves a lot of ash and clogs up the chimney when I burn it in the woodstove. So, I mostly burn fir and larch for heat. I used to burn a big pile of "agricultural waste" every year. It was spectacular, but not productive. Now I burn small batches of pine to make biochar and, after a lot of trial and error, feel like I have a good system.

You can make fancy biochar reactors. I've tried my hand at that. A good one is shown in the Fall 2015 issue of *The Natural Farmer* in the article about David Yarrow's



Terraflora biochar cone.

biochar reactor. The objective of a biochar reactor is to use the flame from the volatile gases to drive all the volatile resins out of the wood while creating very little smoke and then allow the oxygen to be cut off from the charcoal before it turns to ash so you can harvest the biochar.

There are two big problems with that method for me. One: even simple reactors are complicated and expensive to build and a little tricky to use. Second: once your biochar is cooled, you need to unload the reactor and start all over

again. Instead, I make "Backyard Biochar" with virtually no expense and by a semi-continuous process. I owe a lot in this endeavor to Gloria Flora and a simple dish that she developed as shown on her blog, <http://terraflora.us/blog/>. It is a cone about three feet across and made of sheet metal. It has a flat bottom and is held together with pop rivets. The first advantage is that in a cone, the embers concentrate at the bottom even though the pieces of wood are stacked up like a classic bonfire. The second advantage is that the cone is light and has chain handles, so once the embers are quenched, they can be emptied out into another container. That being said, you can do essentially the same thing with a little fireplace made out of concrete blocks and a flat-nosed shovel.

In a standard cycle, you get a big bonfire going of wood that is fairly uniform and not over three inches thick. Any bigger and the piece will not burn through. Much smaller and there will be hardly any charcoal left when it stops flaming. You want the whole fire to get burning at once. It takes 30-45 minutes usually to burn down to charcoal. You can tell because resins flame yellow but charcoal just glows red or has tiny blue flames. When most of the wood has turned to charcoal and just a few pieces are still burning with yellow flames, you make your move. I use a pair of log tongs from a fireplace tool set to move the burning pieces off of the charcoal into a little stack, usually on top of a piece of bark. They keep burning. Meanwhile, especially with snow around, you can shovel some snow on the charcoal embers. It will melt and you can mix it in. (Later in the spring a hose will work as well.) I do that a couple times until there is some moisture left on the bottom of the cone. Even though it may still steam, the charcoal is ready. I dump it into an apple bin and reload with the still-burning pieces I set aside and new wood.

The whole cycle takes a little over an hour. You can cycle five or six times a day and still have some time for other chores in between quench, dump and reload steps. After it is cooled and dried out a bit, I run it through a shredder. (If it is too wet, it will gum up the shredder).

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For most uses, people till about 10-15 percent biochar into the soil. Some benefits have been shown for direct use as a “soil amendment,” but I think that is a mistake in both thinking and practice. Soil is a whole biome of living organisms. It includes fungi, bacteria, worms, insects and year-round cover crops. Every part of it has a role that benefits the rest. Plant roots feed sugar to those organisms. When you till, you break up the hyphae, the branching filaments that make up the mycelium of a fungus. Those filaments bring water and minerals to the roots of the plants. Once broken, they take time to reform and the soil is less alive. You also break the roots of the cover crop that feeds sugar to microbes.

Too often, I think, we isolate some ingredient, (nitrogen, carbon, sulfur, potassium...) and think that adding more of that part will help the whole. An article in *The Natural Farmer*, “Biochar: A Critical View through the Ecosystemic Lens,” cautions: “In sum, the biochar fad seems to

be one more of the increasing number of wishful attempts to prolong the inevitable decline of the industrial way of life. Biochar is promoted as one more technological silver bullet. Seen through the ecosystemic lens, silver bullets don’t exist.

Seen through the ecosystemic lens, we do not have a shortage of anything, we have a longing of expectations.”

The best thing, in my opinion, for new organic growth is old organic growth, dead or alive. I mix the biochar with leaf compost, shredded branches, potash and grass mulch and spread it on top of the ground. Existing fungi and microbes move into the mix and integrate it into the soil. Biochar reverses carbon pollution because it is inert and sequesters carbon. But



Charcoal ready to quench.

it also entrains carbon by promoting more carbon-based life in the rest of the soil. Alan Savory in his book *Holistic Management*, warns about the dangers of growing a crop that will be removed from its own soil, burned and changed so that it will not be recycled back into living organisms. So, go ahead and make biochar in your backyard. But proceed with caution.

Joe Barreca makes maps, grows grapes, makes wine and posts blogs on BarrecaVineyards.com.

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Four-Legged Mindfulness

By Darla Girard

When you think about dogs, what is the first thing that comes to your mind? Is it their breed, size, color or demeanor? I find I ask those questions a lot: what breed or mix of breeds, weight, age, friendly or not, trained...? I do this because I run a dog retreat and these questions help me socialize and match up dogs so that they can be free to play together.

As humans, I sometimes think we tend to need a description of something for our minds to accept an image or thought. It helps me to connect with the people who bring their dogs to the retreat. Being mindful and respectful of a dog's space and using my senses to observe, I can connect with a dog's energy. When I stand quietly, watch intently, and make no eye contact, I allow a dog to show me who he or she is. In my experience, dogs pay attention to our faces, read our body language, and understand the tone of our voice.

Like humans, dogs are unique and individual creatures. Sure, they have characteristics specific to their breed, but that alone, does not necessarily determine who that unique creature is.

I work with many people who just want their dogs to get along with other dogs. This is a task I take to heart and, mind you, it is not for the faint of heart! Sometimes I can introduce dogs and have them romping and playing together within minutes of meeting. Sometimes it can take a day or two before I can confidently allow them to run as a pack. When the owners arrive to pick up their

beloved dogs, they are usually surprised at the happy-go-lucky nature of their pets playing and running together.

A lot of folks are wary of having their dogs mingle. I feel that their fear of letting their dog run with others is usually only within them and the dog senses that feeling. Because of the energy being put forth, the dog may act out, by attempting to intimidate or respond slightly aggressively to protect the insecurity of his or her human.

That's what I see dogs do – sense our energies. They know what's happening before we even react. So, rather than being allowed to run with the pack, the dog is inclined instead to protect its owner from the pack. Almost every time, once the client has left, the dog's idea of protecting his or her human immediately subsides.

Dogs are typically not looking to be aggressive or fight. Dogs will mainly use their senses, especially smell, to determine submission, aggression, or playfulness in other dogs or humans. Eventually they sort out who runs the show, and who is just happy to play among the pack. Part of my work involves observing a dog's body language while they interact as a pack. I use very calm actions or voice to keep them playing well together. Of course, there are times when I need to step in and redirect their energy toward being a more productive part of the pack and stop bullying. It is just like kids at the playground: Someone is always trying to be the leader.

When dogs meet dogs, don't be fooled, they know what to do. Maybe our human species could learn something from dogs!

Recently I had the pleasure to have a big ol' 150-pound Leonberger at the Retreat. He was new to the area and had never really had the opportunity to socialize with other dogs. It took him some time to figure it out – I pictured wild thoughts running through his mind: What are these dogs doing bowing at me, sniffing me all over and licking my face?

He whined a lot the first couple of days, then a light turned on and, it seemed to me, he realized he was a dog, not a human. It was truly an honor to see him begin to jump, play bow, and interact with the other dogs. He played with crazy, high-strung puppies and found great respect for a 6-pound Chihuahua. He was trained as a service dog and that's what he knew: lead and guide humans around. This was a whole new world for him – his inner nature was set free.

Here are some things I think about for building relationships with dogs. I stop, breathe and take a look at my energy, how I am feeling when I approach a dog. Am I anxious, tired, angry, nervous, exhilarated? Or am I calm and acting like a leader or guide? Whatever the energy, I keep in mind that the dog will likely respond to me with the same energy that I bring. In my experience, dogs are not likely to follow or respond to unstable energy or an unruly, off-balance leader. They favor balance and harmony.

So, I tune in to dogs, try not to treat them like they are human, see them for the amazing, intuitive animals they are and watch the relationships flourish!

Darla Girard boards and socializes dogs using mindfulness techniques in Onion Creek.

"If you are really aware, every soul is a mirror and a teacher." ~ Author Unknown

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BRING A BASKET

The Personal Signs of Spring

By Karen Giebel

For many years now, my husband has declared the first of March to be the final day of winter. Mind you, he does not say spring has arrived, but for him at least, winter has been given the boot!

March 1st says to him that the worst is over and no matter the weather in March, it will continue to improve until once again we will feel the warmth of the sun. He does have a point. Even the hardiest of us cold-weather lovers start looking out our frosted windows and remark, "Goodness, it's 6 p.m. and it's still light outside!" Or, we note that we no longer check and re-check the Sherman Pass WSDOT website for road conditions before heading out. We know that no matter what the road conditions are, they are still better than they were in January.

Even I, who apparently enjoys winter more than my spouse does, start to get a little antsy. I have been known to head outdoors to the flower garden, furtively glancing about to make sure that I am alone before kneeling down and digging through the snow, looking to see if the crocuses are poking their heads up from the frozen ground. I'll do the same in my herb garden. Did the thyme survive? How about those sage plants? It is decision time for those seed catalogs that we have been perusing for weeks. Do we order the same bean seeds as last year? How about we try adding eggplant this year? I want spinach and romaine. He wants Swiss chard and corn. How much room do we have and when should the potting begin?

Spring comes hard up here in the "Back of the Beyond" in Ferry County. Winter does not give up its icy grip easily. March always promises wind. Lots of wind. But I like to think the wind is blowing winter into the past as it ushers in the warmer breezes of spring.

Occasionally in March, we will have a warm day and by that I mean a day of 50 degrees. We both will stand on the front porch, taking in a deep breath while marveling at how good the sun feels on our faces.

March means the raucous calls of the first birds to return, the red-winged

blackbirds. I have a love/hate relationship with them. They decimate my bird feeders and frighten away the sweet little chattering black-eyed juncos and tiny chickadees that I have faithfully fed all winter. But on the other hand, the red-winged blackbirds truly are a harbinger of spring, and for that I welcome them. In March we wonder when the first goldfinch will return, and how about those hummingbirds? Should we make a wager?

Losing a layer of clothing is something I truly look forward to in March. Winter means a down-filled jacket over a down-filled vest. March means I can finally rid myself of that vest and maybe even the wool socks. The heavy ski gloves I wear for outdoor chores are replaced with lighter-weight, really dirty, tan leather work gloves. In March, I allow myself to THINK about wearing sandals and shorts instead of, is this a low-boot, medium-boot or high-boot day? Hubby wonders if maybe he can wear a pair of regular jeans and not the flannel-lined ones.

Our barn cats start to venture forth in March. During the coldest months they huddle in their heated kennel or sit on the heated mat outside the kennel in the barn. Bored, they look forward to my daily visits to break up the monotony of winter. And besides, I bring them a nice warm breakfast every day. Now I look out the window and watch Sylvia, Rowdy, Shadow and Mayhem pussyfooting across the pastures in search of a fresh mouseie treat. They seem very happy for the ending of winter!

Dan will trudge through the drifted snow to the orchard before reporting that, yes indeed, there are buds forming on the apple and pear trees. I watch him walk from cherry tree to plum tree to apricot tree and I can almost see the wheels turning as he plans out another season for his fruit trees.

No matter the season, the weather, the temperature or my mood, I walk the dogs every single day. Hotter than Hades days, or rain, sleet, snow and ice, we head off down the road. But winter's cold and

ice are the most challenging of times for us all. I don't want either myself or the dogs to fall and break a hip. Two weeks ago, our oh-so-very-much-loved German shepherd, Gracie, went to that old Rainbow Bridge and our hearts are broken. But my old boy, 13-year-old Otto, who misses his best friend so much, still loves his walks. And as he ages, he appreciates the melting of the snow and ice and the promise of walking the soft dirt of our road as we adjust to our new normal without Gracie.

So this year, I was with my spouse in declaring March 1st was the official end of winter. By the time you read this, we will have journeyed through into April. And just like that ... it really, truly and blessedly is spring!

Karen Giebel is a "happy, optimistic retired RN living out my dreams with my husband Dan in the back of the beyond in Ferry County."

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By Gabriele von Trapp

My new husband and I began to discuss our future together and we agreed it was time for a new start and a new direction. We decided to sell my home, purchase land, and build a home together, as

The acreage was split by the highway with 25 acres to the south and 25 acres north of the road. The southern acreage was open range land, the north portion timbered and hosted the homesite. The middle fork of the Chamokane Creek ran through the southern portion and fed an impressive beaver pond. It was not unusual to see a moose or two standing in

As more time passed, my weary children and I became disenchanted with



Inner Landscape

building and the unforgiving conditions. The dream was not yet a nightmare, but it was soon to be.

After more than five years, the house was not yet habitable. The building fund had run dry long ago, and materials were purchased using credit cards – twelve of them! We had grossly underestimated the cost of building a home and were knee-deep in debt. We could not keep up financially, struggled to meet the minimum payments, and still had a long way to go to make the house livable.

I was beginning to panic and took on more work to keep up. I was exhausted, my family was falling apart, hostilities ran deep, and regrets began to rear their ugly heads. There was no light at the end of the tunnel. I was in a desperate state.

In the spring of the next year I had taken time to visit with friends who lived in the area. I was not shy to share my predicament with this couple in an effort to find solutions, relieve a degree of anxiety, dispel my hopelessness and gather witnesses to my collapse. I was on the brink of losing it all and my sanity as well.

My friends were familiar with the lay of my land and told me about a program offered through the Department of Agriculture which converts farm land back to wetlands by easement. I inquired about the program and soon met with an agent who assessed the southern 25 acres. There were many conditions the land had to meet to qualify. Some were met but not all. The agent encouraged me to apply for the easement but told me the likelihood of acceptance was minimal.

I posted my application without expectation.

After several months, I had not heard news as to the status of my application and thereafter put it out of my mind, permanently.

After more than a year, I received a call from the agent. He said, "I am not sure how this happened, but your application ranked seventh out of the hundred that have been accepted." It was a miracle!

I completed the process and soon received a significant check for the easement. I still owned the land, could use the land for non-intrusive purposes and was free to sell the land and easement. The only restriction was that no future owner could build a permanent structure, so a sale of the property was unlikely. I was content with the terms and relieved to have reduced a good chunk of heavy debt. But, we still had a long way to go to be in occupancy.

By chance, I met an out-of-town family who had purchased land adjacent to the parcel I had converted. They used their 40-acre parcel for get-togethers, camping and hunting. In the conversation I mentioned (out of the blue) that I would be willing to sell the 25-acre parcel abutting their land should they be interested. I didn't expect they would be, but I received a call several days later; they were willing to pay the price. I was stunned and jumped on the opportunity.

Proceeds of the sale eliminated all of our debt. I couldn't believe that I was able to sell the same piece of property twice ... legally! I counted all my blessings with

fervor.

The home was eventually finished and we moved in. I had one child left at home, a teenager about to graduate from high school, and she was itching to get the heck out of Icebox Canyon. She left soon thereafter.

I continued to live there for several more years but eventually sold the homestead. The proceeds of the sale later found another opportunity in Deer Park. My daughter and her husband and I pooled our resources and invested in a lovely 20-acre farm with two houses (already built!). We hope to live here for evermore and happily ever after, although I would not turn my back on another opportunity should one be willing to meet me.

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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Cabin and Other Fevers

By Becky Dubell

Editor's note: Article begins in February, for reasons that will become clear upon reading.

Oh ... What to do? This house is about to drive me crazy! Not as bad as the "fever" I would suffer through in Alaska but still ... I used to spend time going through drawers and closets drooling over the warm-weather gear that was stuck under/behind the winter gear. Warm-weather gear also meant longer daylight hours and Cupid was about to hit us with his arrow of love.

Let's see what fond memories people in our neck of the woods have about Valentine's Day and how they deal with this fever that pops up each year.

Luan: Business paperwork, since it is the slow season, and then grab a book, a cup of tea and chill out. Making Valentine's boxes for the kids to take to school. The smell of Elmer's Glue still brings back those memories.

Gordon: Open all the shades for the light and play a lot of video games. Roses of all sizes and material (fabric, clay, metal, etc.) given over the years.

Paula: Tea and a book to "embrace the fever." Dinner at Lovitt's with a special table set by Kristen.

Loretta: A good book with tea by the fireplace – electric or wood, it does not matter. Valentine's Day fancy party for single women at the church, complete with a driver to pick you up at your door and return you home.

Karl: Get outside to snowmobile, ski and

shed hunting.

Personal: 43 years ago Jim asked me to marry him. It was supposed to be on the 14th but we played cards too long so it was about 12:45 a.m. on the 15th. What was I supposed to say when the statement was, "You can have this if you say yes." He was holding a nugget/diamond necklace! What can I say – I love nuggets! So, it was yes before the question was asked. That yes was the BEST!

PUT ON THE BRAKES! Life happens while you make plans to get this article finished and out to the editor. DO NOT get pneumonia! Not the recommended way to lose five pounds or to take a month's "vacation" from work. You won't remember much from the month except maybe visits to the doctor and ER (thanks to my friendly drivers) with a stop on the way home at Ronnie D's for the chicken strips, which, if memory serves me correctly, I ate a bunch of 'cuz they tasted sooo good slathered with BBQ and tarter (even had kids and sister-in-law bring some to me).

Also, note to self (and you): While sick, do not walk down 14 stairs to the basement and then look up (while huffing and puffing) to try to figure out how to get back up those stinking stairs!

Thank you to all the readers that let me know they turned through all the pages and missed not having an article from me. I'm getting my breath/strength back finally, though there are still nights of over 10

hours of sleep. I've been told to listen for the sound of crackling tissue paper while breathing, which is an indication of pneumonia. Believe you me, I'm going to do that for sure! Well ... enough about me.

May you get out and enjoy the melting snow (only three more snow berms 'til AntMan [Becky's three-wheeled motorcycle] can get out of the barn), jump into the mud puddles to make big splashes (JJ loves it), dig those trenches to get the water out from in front of the shop, finish (or start) the plans for the garden, finish fine-tuning the garden/lawn equipment (mechanical and muscle-powered), get ready for those garage sales (quit taking stuff back out of the garage sale pile) and plan your camping / fishing / boating / hiking / chilling out / etc. excursions for the season!

P.S. Thank you Don for letting me know that the check-up you decided to do caught a problem that would not have been noticed if not for the check-up. Soap Box: PSA blood test!

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MLS# 36422 \$135,000

This log home sits on over 4 acres of natural beauty! Gently rolling grassy front yard, creek flowing through, natural wooded area behind the house. Fenced raised bed garden area and a chicken coop. Storage container, with covered area. Full, daylight, walkout basement has large cargo doors, perfect for use as a workshop. Or turn into living space.



MLS# 36485 \$142,500

Mobile home sits on 4.58 acres of park-like setting with a very nice shop/garage, plus a shed. The home has a nice deck facing the water with a dock on the water. There is a tip out to make more room. Well taken care of for its built year.



MLS# 35707 \$199,900

Country living close to town! Incredible view of Colville Mountain from this 3 bedroom, 1 newly remodeled bath, on .74 acres just outside of Colville. Completely fenced with 2 car garage with attached work shop, New double RV carport, additional 5-room outbuilding with carport and another outbuilding with attached chicken coop and stalls. Basement is clean and tidy for your workout room, storage or cooling room. Also has a private well and septic.



MLS# 36042 \$209,000

Manufactured home over daylight basement on 7.5 beautiful acres. With some standard updating this home will shine again! Large rooms and plenty of space to make it your own. Fenced garden right out your basement door. Nice 2 car attached garage with door to covered patio, cool room for canning, automatic standby generator. Several outbuildings for storage and a shooting range make this a country home you can't live without.



MLS# 35557 \$249,000

Nestled gently in the mountains, bordered on two sides by year round creeks, is this picturesque country home. Large bedrooms, open floor plan, lovely kitchen with stainless appliances. Chicken coop, 8-stall barn and large detached shop. Fenced garden, pasture, and landscaped yard. Fully fenced with New Zealand fencing. Wired for generator. 48X30 shop 1/2 has concrete floor and is fully insulated. 2 wells, with 2,000 gallon holding tank. Handicapp access. Large garden is deer fenced. Pasture with barn is fenced and cross fenced. Chicken coop can accommodate 50 chickens. Large bedrooms 15X15'. Master is located on main level with open kitchen living area and laundry. Water and power at barn.



MLS# 36052 \$225,000

Beautiful views of Lake Roosevelt from this wonderful one-level custom built home. It is move-in ready. Large, open living, dining and huge kitchen with expansive counter space and perfect for all your entertaining needs. Great eating bar and dining area. Large covered patio and extra large garage/work shop. Plenty of garden area and minutes to the French Rocks boat launch.



MLS# 36061 \$349,000

Commanding Views of Lake Roosevelt from this 1310 waterfront home that has been completely updated. The views are amazing from the family room, kitchen, kitchen nook and completely fenced back yard. The kitchen has all new appliances including a wine/beverage fridge, pull-out drawers, blind cabinet pull-out, solid surface counters with integrated sink and under-cabinet lighting. Brand new, sparkling, modern bathrooms; new flooring throughout; new furnace and water heater; central vacuum; pellet stove; custom Anderson Windows; cold-storage basement; extra deep 2-car detached garage with new doors, openers and a work bench; fenced garden area and apple trees. A must see home!



MLS# 36203 \$299,000

Great Investment or Multi Family set up on 19.54 acres, minutes from Colville. 3 buildings: Main House with 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, and lots of open space for growing; Cabin has large open concept studio with 1 bath; Guest House has a large living area with 3 sleeping rooms and 1 bath. End-of-the-road privacy and usable acreage. All 3 units do have separate electric meters.



MLS# 35792 \$250,000

Privacy in the heart of Colville. This 4 bedroom, 2 bath, 1 level home on 1/3 of an acre is secluded with amazing landscaping and fruit trees. Recently updated throughout with custom touches. Large, open living, dining, and kitchen make this home easy to entertain. Explore the possibilities with the large sunroom off of the living room. Large carport with easy circle drive and large garage with entry to the back yard. You have to see this to appreciate all the amenities.



MLS# 36364 \$219,999

Beautiful 1990 Webley log home on 2+ acres, recently updated, with awesome views. 3 bedrooms and 3 baths. Main floor has 1 bedroom and bathroom. Newer vinyl windows and finished basement. Lots of garden space and room for your animals. There is a separate fenced yard off the kitchen with a playhouse. Outbuilding has a separate room and fenced yard attached. Shared well (\$25 a month) and a separate, drilled well for irrigation. This is a warm and comfortable home that's minutes from town.



MLS# 36550 \$115,000

Comfortable Colville home with nice open floor plan. 1 bedroom on the main floor & 2 more upstairs with large open area. Don't miss the partial basement that can be accessed via the lift-up door in the laundry room - lots of storage down there. Has a newer furnace and heat pump.



MLS# 36101 \$199,000

Are you looking for the authentic log home, off the grid but with all amenities? Large rooms, wrap-around deck and amazing view of Lake Roosevelt on 20 acres, with fruit trees, grapes vines, walnut trees, raspberries, ponds, outbuildings, detached 2 car garage, RV trailer set up for guests and a gazebo with a hot tub? Here it is! This home has so many unique features and room to roam. Bring your tool box and make the improvements waiting to happen and projects to take on that you will never be bored.