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What's Inside

- 5 **From the Publisher's Desk**, by Gabriel Cruden
- 6 **Random Acts of Community**, by Christine Wilson
- 8 **Life Matters**, Dr. Barry Bacon
- 10 **North of the Boarder**, by Eileen Delahanty Pearkes
- 12 **Conversations**, by Loren Cruden
- 14 **The Macaroni War**, by McLean Taylor
- 16 **This Great Big Life**, by Tina Tolliver Matney
- 18 **In Nature**, by J. Foster Fanning
- 21 **Rotary Page**
- 22 **Whole Tuna, No Bulls**, by Karen Giebel
- 25 **Stanley's (Very) Little Known Animal Facts**, by Stanley Carruthers
- 26 **What's Happening**, Arts, Music, Dance, Events & More
- 28 **Listen Up**, Music Reviews by Michael Pickett
- 29 **A Good Read**, Book Reviews by Loren Cruden
- 30 **Living in NE WA: Lessons Learned**, by J. Merrill Baker
- 31 **Mountain Meandering**, by Patricia Ediger
- 32 **Green Blanket Feet Walks On Through Her Lineage**,
by Marsha McInnis and Tina Wynecoop
- 35 **Life's Stretch**, by Brenda St. John
- 36 **Chips in the Woods**, by Joe Barreca
- 38 **Backyard Philosopher**, by Linda Bond
- 39 **A Year On the Farm**, by Michelle Lancaster
- 40 **Camradery in Denali**, by Joanie Christian
- 44 **Green Medicine**, by Faye Stewart
- 46 **Inner Landscapes**, by Gabriele von Trapp
- 49 **Family Ties**, by Becky Dubell
- 50 **Dining & Lodging Guide**



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NOVEMBER 2019 ISSUE DEADLINES

AD SPACE RESERVATIONS:

Friday, Oct. 18th

WHAT'S HAPPENING LISTINGS:

Wednesday, Oct. 23rd



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- JOHN ODELL, WordsOfWords.com

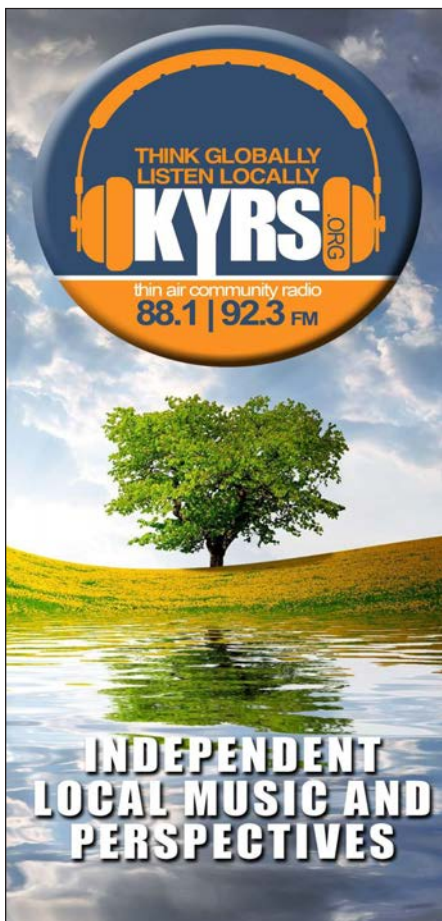
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From the Publisher's Desk

By Gabriel Cruden

I consider this a remarkable edition of the *North Columbia Monthly*, for several reasons. It is 52 pages long – a new record. There is a four-page spread – another first – which seemed necessary to match the description of an epic journey by four women to the land of North America's highest mountain. There is a story of family discovery that spans several generations and is told by more than one narrator. There is a new writer recounting a vivid piece of our region's history with an article intriguingly called "The Macaroni War." And then there's this:

I took part in a poetry workshop in Kettle Falls recently, put on by local poet Lynn Schott and Washington State Poet Laureate Claudia Castro Luna. The workshop is part of a larger project Castro Luna has embarked upon that takes her to various communities along the Columbia River over the next seven months. The *North Columbia Monthly* will be following her journey and publishing accounts and poems produced along the way. In this edition you can read an interview with Castro Luna to kick off the series.

One of the activities at the workshop was to write about a memory of the river. If you will indulge me, here is what I wrote:

I am just from a day in the city. My clothes don't hold the fibers of the fir amphitheater of my home on the Columbia. My shoes are not for shedding the blown shards of alfalfa thrown to the horses against the evening breeze. The breeze that carries the smell of evening's sigh into night. The night that deepens the mountains to slumbering shoulders along the dreaming flow of the riverbed. And it's to

the river I detour. Before the pasta-steamed windows. Before the youthful clamoring of the day's stories. Before the warm kiss of reunion. It's to the river I go to crouch on the water's edge, its stillness seeping into my shoulders, the water reflecting black to indigo to the clarity of stone in the shallows, each a colorful,

tumbled story. I float my hand on the tension, as if I could hold myself suspended. And then I reach into the water, the cool water that holds all that finds its way there, and heft a heart rock from the gently shifting shoreline, the red and gold lines of it pulsing with the river's story, in my hand.

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Lessons of Life - Not Always Easy

By Christine Wilson

"Life is good but not always easy." ~ Joseph Marshall III

"Pleasure and pain, it's like profit and gain. Sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. Be kind to yourself when you're tired of yourself. Don't go mixing the reds along with the blues." ~ Sandy Denny

It's a sweet benefit of aging that I can recognize the lesson sung by Sandy Denny. For one thing, I can now make sense of the fact that we all have an aversion to discomfort but that it is inevitable and can be faced with resilience.

I am pretty sure that in my youth I thought there was a binary choice between good and difficult and between pleasure and pain. When things got hard, life wasn't good anymore. Where there was pain, there could be no joy. I suppose it is the innate entitlement of youth to believe that we deserve for things to be easy and that

easy is the principal definition of good and pleasurable.

With any luck, as young people come upon the disappointments, hurts and vagaries of life on planet earth, they will have mentors who help them navigate their way into an understanding of this good and difficult life, of the mix of pleasure and pain.

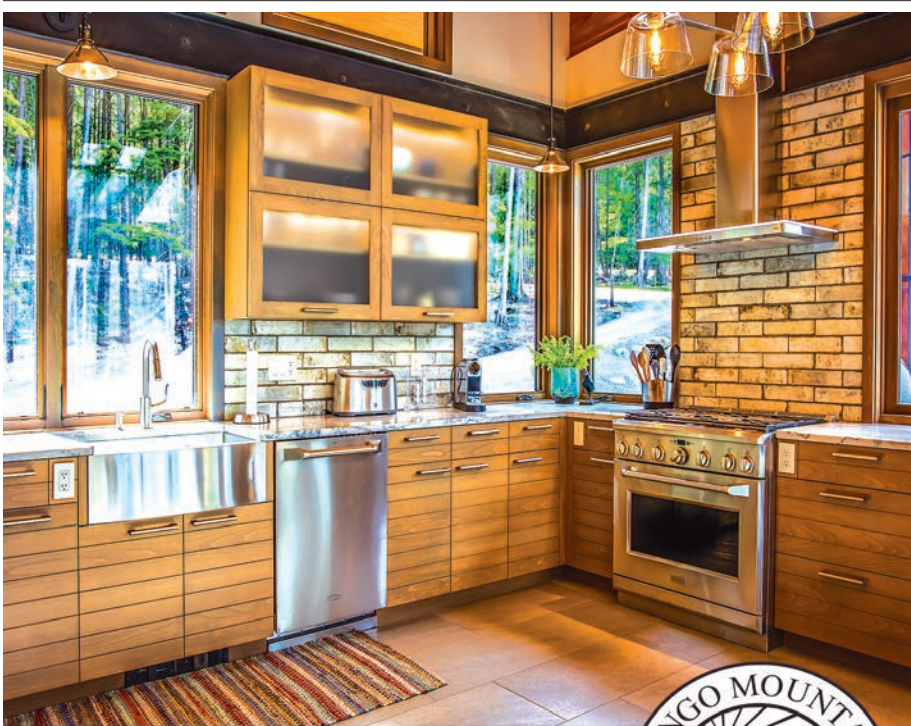
For those of us who missed the lesson earlier on, there are mentors everywhere at whatever spot we find ourselves. The double benefits of absorbing this lesson are (a) the brilliant skill of feeling peaceful in the midst of strife and (b) the equally brilliant skill of

getting back to peace when we forget part a.

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor recently wrote a book called *Just Ask*. She has type 1 diabetes and has for years. She gives herself insulin injections before she eats a meal to manage her blood sugar levels. A few years back, she was injecting herself in a public bathroom and was accused of doing drugs. She wasn't asked if she needed help. She wasn't asked if she was OK. Instead of curiosity there was judgment. Somebody saw her, was uncomfortable, and made an assumption. Added to the fact that she had a difficult medical diagnosis to face daily, she had to endure the disdain of strangers.

Sotomayor did not collapse into rage or despair or resentment. What she did instead was work on her resilience. Eventually, she wrote a children's book designed to help kids feel better about their unique way of living in the world. It can help children and hopefully the adults who read it to them to be more able to manage the non-easy aspects of life, no matter what their circumstances are.

It can go both ways: The person delivering the affront and the person on the receiving end both have a chance to manage their experience in a deeper and more helpful



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Random Acts of Community

way. Joseph Marshall III is an author and Lakota elder. He believes we are all born with the ability to be strong. We get insulted, we get triggered to pass out insults to others, and yet we all have what we need to manage it. It is not easy and that is why we can find ourselves way out of our window of tolerance. We can be steaming mad or want to run away or be too numb to feel anything. That's where the skill of pulling ourselves back into a calmer place comes in handy. It would be easier if no one ever triggered us. However, back on planet earth we humans tend to be a contentious lot.

So what is to be done? How do we manage all that contentiousness? There are a bazillion books, podcasts and training sessions on this, but I would say it boils down to a few basic principles. In my childhood, my family culture included the message that I was fragile, other people were fragile, and relationships were fragile. It took me years to see the pure hogwash of that unholy trilogy. We are all much stronger than we realize, as Joseph Marshall III says. We get weak, in my observation, when we are treated as if we are hothouse plants.

That is not to say people have permission to be mean. Make the effort to find balance. Positive emotion gets our attention better than negative emotion and is therefore a better teacher. We tend to shut down when things are too negative and people who are shut down have trouble learning.

Way back in the day, when I was in graduate school, I was taught about "I messages" versus "you messages." An "I message" is basically a description of your own experience in the moment. A "you message" is an accusatory affront to the other person. Knowing the difference can help your message be received well. Do the best you can and repair things when you mess up.

I'm fond of quoting a mediator who said that people often come to mediation ready to forgive but not to be forgiven. It makes me laugh to picture myself or someone else getting all gracious about forgiving someone else and then finding out the other person might have something to forgive us for. That is a bit harder to be gracious about.

Atisha Dipankara Shrinjnana was a Buddhist teacher from India who moved to Tibet to teach *tonglen*, a meditation on

loving kindness. He was worried about thinking too highly of himself or getting too much praise so he wanted to bring his irritable servant with him as a preventive measure. This was about a thousand years ago, so there may be some mythology involved. However, it is said that after being there a while, he discovered there were plenty of people who challenged him and

made him look more honestly at himself. We don't have to thank those people and circumstances who make us uncomfortable but we can learn to be grateful for the wind in our internal hot house.

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

A colorful advertisement for China Bend Winery. At the top, a yellow banner with black text reads "China Bend Winery". Below the banner is a circular illustration of a vineyard with a river and mountains. To the left of the circle is a glass of red wine. Below the circle is a small yellow house icon. The background is red with a green vine border. Text in the center reads: "Tasting Room Open Thru October", "Open daily Noon - 5:00 ~ Closed Sundays", "~Sample our Delicious Organic Sulfite-Free Headache-Free Wines", and "~Enjoy our Beautiful Winery Estate on Lake Roosevelt". A yellow box on the right says "Fall Harvest Season Special Wine Sale Happening Now 25% Discount". A green oval at the bottom right says "Bed & Breakfast at the Winery". At the bottom, a yellow box contains the address "3751 Vineyard Way, Kettle Falls WA 99141", the location "On the Northport-Flat Creek Road along Lake Roosevelt", and contact info "(509)732-6123 ~ www.chinabend.com ~ winery@chinabend.com". An illustration of a woman with blonde hair holding a bottle of organic wine is on the left.

End of the Oxford House

By Dr. Barry Bacon, MD

I'm chairing a meeting about homelessness for our Hope Street group, working on the challenges of helping people who are living without shelter. We have two young guests with us this afternoon, occupants of the Oxford House for women, in Colville, the only such clean-and-sober-living option north of Spokane. We're listening to the report from the director of our newly-opened Hope Street Rest Stop.

The numbers are astounding: 23 days open. 92 different homeless individuals. 365 visits. 358 snacks. 134 showers. 75 loads of laundry. 162 visitors from the community.

As she completes her presentation, I pause for a moment and ask everyone to reflect on the significance of these numbers. These are not idle tales. These are stories of people who have suffered as a result of whatever life threw at them. We should not underestimate the meaning of these numbers, I suggest. They are shouting to us the need that is present here in our place on the globe, and the life-changing power of offering people kindness, lifting their humanity, giving them a place to have dignity. Yes, our director reflects. One of the guests said it this way: "This is such a warm place to be."

I glance across the room at our Oxford House guests. One of them is sobbing. I am puzzled. I don't know how it is that

she is overwhelmed in this way. Does she identify with the homeless people? Or is it something completely unrelated? We don't know.

We wind the meeting down, and the young women stay by. There is something they want to say to me. I dismiss the majority of the taskforce, though a few linger. One of the women from the Oxford House comes over to talk with me. She is young, gracious and friendly, with dark hair and eyes. She wants to tell me thank you for the gift that my wife and I have given the community. She wants to know how she can be part of this project, to give back in some way.

I want to know a bit more about her. Where is she from and what is her story? She's a transplant from Arkansas. Why, I wonder, did she decide that this was a good place to move, and how did she find out about the Oxford House?

From a friend, she explained. She has been a professional person but fell into addiction. Now she has been clean and sober for several months. This was a chance to move away from the chaos of her life elsewhere and start over. She and the other women at the home are a delight to know, and they wonder how they can give back to the community.

I'm still puzzled. Why this place? Why northeast Washington, and Colville? Was it the physical beauty, the mountains, the weather? No, she explained, it was the people. She saw it most clearly when she

went with a friend to a doctor's visit. The doctor was kind and compassionate to her friend and seemed to genuinely care for her patients. The woman pointed out that she hadn't seen this elsewhere. That one singular event seemed to be what solidified her decision to make northeast Washington her home.

It got me to thinking. What is the one thing that stands out to me about our region of the country? Have I been treated consistently kindly, with grace and compassion? As I reflect on my own experiences here since arriving in 1990 (29 years still makes you a newcomer in these parts), several striking encounters come to mind. I recall events that brought deep pain, and just as easily I remember people who gave me more than my share of grace.

There was the man who approached me unsolicited, and said, "Barry, I'd like to go with you to Ethiopia to help you build that medical school."

And the woman and her husband who stepped up and said, "We'd like to lead out in running the Hope Street Rest Stop for homeless people."

Then there was the man who came to me and said he wanted to buy the property to develop permanent housing solutions for the community. What if he financed it and we filled it? Would that work?

I marvel at our community. Many of you have stepped forward, offered your time, your money, donations of soap and

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clothes, food, supplies and water. Every time we have mentioned a need, someone has stepped up.

I have had devastating, mind-pummeling disappointments here as well. But here's the thing. It's hard to ignore the amount of grace that we have received from so many. The truth is that every time someone calls me a dweeb or thinks I'm a flake, three people step forward and stand with me to demonstrate that what we are doing is right.

So when I consider what this young woman is saying to me, knowing that this is the last month that the Oxford House will be open, there are tears in her eyes as she thanks me for the gift we have given to the community in support of clean and sober living.

The Oxford organization feels that the Colville House is not economically viable, so they have decided to no longer support it. We are saddened because many wom-

en's lives have been changed significantly by its presence. We sympathize with this young woman and her friends, hearing the concern in her voice as they scramble to find alternative living arrangements in order to avoid becoming homeless themselves.

I invite the two women to take a short walk with my wife Shelley, a couple of board members, and me. We peek inside the donated tiny house destined to be put on a foundation and completed for someone this fall. We walk around the yard and view the site where a donated house will soon stand to shelter another family. We pick fruit from a large plum tree and talk about the future of Hope Street. Would these women like to be part of what we are doing? Would they like to be involved in making these homes beautiful places for someone to live? Give someone else the chance to thrive? They nod enthusiastically.

I can't help but smile. If I took all of the sorrows of my life and pulled them all together, piled them in one giant heap, it could not compare with the joy of listening to this one human being standing before me thanking me for the unsolicited kindness we have invested in her life by giving her a place to live. In fact, at this moment, that heap of troubles has faded into oblivion. I can only feel the joy of being part of someone's life transformation.


The women linger for a few moments longer, reluctant it seems to go without saying thank you a few more times. We cannot help but wonder if this is really the end. Or perhaps this is the beginning of something better.

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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Humility and the Headwaters

By Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

On Sept. 12-14, 2019, three hundred Columbia Basin residents and stakeholders and government officials gathered in Kimberley, B.C., for the sixth trans-boundary forum on the Columbia River. Over the past few decades, the forums have been hosted jointly by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (U.S.) and the Columbia Basin Trust (B.C.). Designed to foster a sense of community in the vast watershed, they are always interesting.

This particular forum was different from any I have attended in the past.

Arts and culture and indigenous people played a more prominent role, with a visual art exhibit, short films, music, tribal ceremonies and traditional storytelling. The conference also took a field trip to the headwaters of the Columbia River, where participants crowded onto a narrow wooden bridge that spans the spring that feeds Columbia Lake. There, people from across the Pacific Northwest watched the water bubble up gently from its underground aquifer and begin its journey to the sea. Small beginnings, large outcomes.

Later that day, in a ceremony led by Ktunaxa (Kootenai) chief Joseph Pierre, several tribal leaders attending from across the basin paddled a canoe into a symbolic arrival ceremony at the shores of Columbia Lake. After stepping from the canoe, all the tribe members formed a unity circle, sang, prayed and drummed together. Increasingly, the tribes are unifying across



Sylvain Fabi (left) speaking to Canadian indigenous leaders while John Harrison of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council looks on.

boundaries as they press governments to support salmon reintroduction.

For me, a personal highlight was being able to listen to Canada's chief negotiator, Sylvain Fabi, who delivered lengthy remarks about the negotiation process. Fabi was surprisingly open, jovial and relaxed, departing frequently from his prepared text. In the few years since he took over this file for Global Affairs Canada (the equivalent of the U.S. State Department), he seems to have come quickly up to speed on the human and geographic complexities of the treaty.

"We want to make sure we are in the Basin as much as possible," he said of the decision to attend the open forum immediately after the closed eighth round of

formal negotiations (completed in nearby Cranbrook, B.C., the day before). "Because this is where it all happened."

His posture was a startling contrast to Canadian government attitudes and behaviors during the treaty formation in the 1950s and '60s. Then, leaders and bureaucrats in both nations' political capitals made major decisions to flood communities and destroy ecosystems without consulting local people. The signing of the treaty took place in Washington, D.C., far from the river itself, and did not include the indigenous nations.

Then, I would say, the Columbia River was but a place on a map for those in power, those who designed a massive system of flood control and hydropower efficiency.

Now, as the lead diplomat for Canada, Fabi made direct reference to the recently completed eighth round of negotiations, calling it "fruitful." Canada's indigenous leaders (Ktunaxa, Secwepemc and Okanagan Nation Alliance) sat at the table, supported by some U.S. tribal leaders (Kootenay Tribe of Idaho, Umatilla and Colville) who gave technical presentations on salmon re-introduction. There was, Fabi said, a "positive spirit of collaboration." The issues "are so technically complex," he said, that the negotiators are still engaged in a great deal of prep work on how the system works, to "make sure that conversations can go well."

Perhaps most remarkable was to hear Fabi refer frankly to the process that led to Canada inviting indigenous leaders to the

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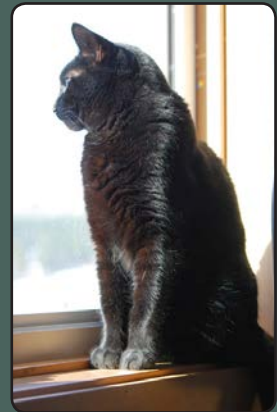
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Tribal leaders attending from across the basin paddled a canoe into a symbolic arrival ceremony at the shores of Columbia Lake.

table, a precedent that he said was “long overdue.” When staff members from Global Affairs warned him of setting a precedent in doing so, his response was that this was precisely the point. “We want to be on the right side of history,” he said. To *not* invite tribal leaders would be to “miss the boat again.”

Katherine Dhanani, the U.S. consul general based in Vancouver, spoke immediately after Fabi. She also had a relaxed, open air. While acknowledging that the international boundary is a “recent development” in the history of the region, she also stressed that though “Canada and the U.S. are good friends ... we are different.” “I need to be humble,” she said of her recent years in Vancouver, working with Canadians.

While Jill Smail, the chief negotiator for the U.S., attended the negotiation session, she did not stay on for the forum. Speaking in her stead, Dhanani’s remarks were less immediate, “less granular” as she put it, but nonetheless revealing. Generally, she acknowledged that ecosystem function was “a new focus” for treaty discussions. Unlike Fabi, she specifically mentioned the importance of flood risk management, but did not refer directly to the tribes.

For the U.S., it appears, changing the flood control provisions in 2024 has largely moti-

vated their strong interest in renegotiation. The two countries are still jostling about what, exactly, flood control will look like, and how much it will cost the U.S. to secure it. Dhanani said that the “information being exchanged” by both countries “continues to refine our understanding of what ‘equitable benefits’ means.”

The next day I stood on that narrow wooden bridge spanning the headwaters, leading a historical tour. Nearby was a high-level bureaucrat from Canada’s Global Affairs, part of the negotiating team. As I watched him stare down into the river’s bubbling source, I realized that he would take back to Ottawa a memory of the great river’s humble groundwater, and that this connection could change in large or small ways how he did his work.

By the time the conference drew to a close, it was clear that winds of change are ruffling the surface of treaty reservoirs. River operations as we have known them for over 50 years are bound to be different. The people who oversee the river of our future will be, too.

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.edpearkes.com.



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Claudia Castro Luna: One River, Many Voices

By Loren Cruden

In September, Washington State Poet Laureate Claudia Castro Luna embarked on a seven-month project. She will wind her way along an intermittent series of stops tracing the Columbia River's route through the state, to the ocean. Best of all, from our point of view, she launched this epic project in iconic Kettle Falls.

No stranger to winding journeys, Claudia was born in El Salvador, fleeing the war with her family in 1981 when only 14 years old. She arrived in the United States bearing much trauma and no English. Her accomplishments since include an MA in urban planning, a teaching certificate, an MFA in poetry, and many awards and literary honors. These days she writes and teaches in Seattle.

The results of Claudia's One River, Many Voices project with its poetry workshops and readings along the Columbia route – and its emphasis on local writing – will be added to www.rivervoiceswa.com, and selected poetry to her Washington poetry map at www.washingtonpoeticroutes.com. Visitors to this map can click on a dot and read a poem from that location. Her intention throughout the project is to encourage new poets and highlight the relationship between people and place.

I caught Claudia in the midst of her busy schedule, which included events in Colville and Inchelium as well as at the Kettle Falls library, where we met. She

graciously made an early exit from the workshop she was leading in order to speak with me, leaving local poet Lynn Rigney Schott ably in charge of the workshop's in-flow poet participants.

I launched into conversation with Claudia by asking what the first poem she wrote was about.

"Well, the first poems I wrote I never shared with anybody, but my first published poem was about my father, who lives in El Salvador. Living in the U.S. never worked for him, really, so I conspired to send him back. Later, I went to visit him in the small town where he lives, 12 miles from Guatemala. Houses there are dark inside and made of adobe to keep them cool, but in the middle of them is a garden. When I walked into the garden at my father's house it was just exploding with flowers – vines and roses and mallows and huge leaves, a riot of green and color. And as soon as I saw this, I understood that it had been the right choice, to force my dad to go back. The garden showed me something about him, mentally and spiritually. So the poem was about that."

Q: In what language did you write it?

Claudia: In English. I have poems in Spanish and I'm trying to write more. But because I live in English – most of my life is in English – my head is in English. Some of my earliest poems (the ones I never showed anybody) actually were in French. I was studying French and living in France. My life was in French then. I

think the loneliness of being on my own, with my family across the ocean in the U.S. – our second country – compelled me to write.

I asked Claudia about differences she notices when writing in various languages.

"The Spanish-language poems end up being a lot more musical. They fall into rhyming schemes I never use in English. It is just the nature of the language."

"Like a song?"

"Yes, like a song. English, to me, is a language of reduction; this is why it is so good for poetry, which is a reduction of feeling and thought. The English language is very conducive to that. Spanish is not, at all. It is more expansive."

Switching direction a little I asked if, working with youth, Claudia noticed common themes in their writing.

"There are themes of not knowing. Of not knowing things about being. I think adults tend to distill more experience and memory whereas kids are more about questions – the big questions – and not knowing."

Q: Do you see a difference between what urban kids and rural kids write?

Claudia: Rural kids write about nature; nature features greatly in their poems: trees, mountains. This is much less so with urban kids.

Q: At the poetry reading you said, "Place impacts people and people impact place." How does the impact of your two lives – in El Salvador and America – inform your writing?

Claudia: It informs *everything*. Somebody at the high school yesterday asked me, "Where to you feel more comfortable?" which to me translated as "Where is your home?" I've thought a lot about that question.

When I was visiting my father in El Salvador, I was looking at his flowers. A gust of wind came and it was a familiar wind – the smell, the way it moved; everything was so familiar, the childhood memory. My father is from this town: all his family is from two blocks in this small town – his mother, his sisters, his uncle, his cousins;



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Conversations

everybody lived in these two blocks, for generations! People there know me.

There was a moment when I felt that if I was on the edge of a cliff, with my back to the cliff, and I fell, I would be caught. Caught by the language and the people, dissolved in them. I look like everybody there – no difference between me and everything there.

That feeling was revelatory, because I don't have that feeling here, at all. Ever. And yet I am neither of there nor here. My children are of here. It is a kind of splintered existence, so there isn't really a physical home place. People wonder why I'm so invested in getting people to write about place – their stories of place – and I think it is because I don't have that.

Still, I feel very much part of the U.S.; I'm not going back to El Salvador. But the closest approximation I've got to a sense of belonging is anchored in language, for me, much more than in place. I speak German and French also but the two homes for me are Spanish and English. They each have limits. In English I'm a certain way, and Spanish gives me something else that English can't offer.

Feeling the River

Encouraged by the transient intimacy of where we sat talking in the Saturday-closed library, I asked Claudia if she would say more about an experience she'd referred to at the reading, about putting her hand in the Columbia during a previous visit here and feeling the river speak to her. I wondered if anything like that had ever happened to her in Seattle, where she lives.

"Not like that," she said, leaning forward. "It was almost scary – to put my hand in the river and have that sensation. What I felt was dark. It was not life. It was sadness and I pulled my hand out and thought, 'What was *that*?' It was interesting. I wondered if maybe my head had been distracted, somewhere else, and I was mistaken. So I put my hand in again and it was clear, the same feeling was there. I went home to my husband and said it was odd, what I felt; it wasn't at all what I expected. But I feel compelled to tell about it."

During Claudia's event the evening before, she'd presented her first public

reading of a long poem she'd written about the Columbia. It was incantory, building to something almost anthemic, powerfully moving – and wonderful to hear debuted at such a place as Kettle Falls, which has such significance in the river's history and to the region's tribes.

Q: Your focus on this tour and with your online maps is on place, something that seems to go against the internet's tendency to make place irrelevant. Can you speak about this?

Claudia: That's true! The internet exists in a kind of space-less way, but we are fixed in space – we live in reality. We want to be told stories about ephemeral things but that's not life.

Life is based on relationship and on walking along a river, jogging in a park – that's what's real; we are embedded among each other, in a landscape. To pretend otherwise is a huge mistake. I feel no ambivalence about this. Maybe I'm just from an older generation, but I prefer human contact. In El Salvador people live with a lot of lack, but they also live very meaningful lives. They have connection with each other – not sitting around alone online.

Q: Poetry, art and music have always played a major role in social justice activism. Is this role at the core of your own work?

Claudia: My work is very much about those things. It is who I am; I couldn't write any other way. Being engaged with the public, and being a poet, go together for me. I turn to the collective in my writing: poems of awareness, of social or ecological injustice. I don't write about romantic love (or dissatisfied love). My concerns as a writer are more social.

To end our conversation, I asked, "What one word distills your sense of the Columbia?"

"One word!? I think it would have to be 'majestic.' The beauty and power and majesty of this river are just overwhelming. All along the river, it carries this majesty – there is no 'little' to it; you can't ignore it.

"I'm full of gratitude for spending this



Claudia Castro Luna

time here, feeling welcomed. This is a rural project; this is about people telling stories about themselves in a part of the state that we don't often hear from. This place, Kettle Falls, is the beginning for me; this is where it all starts."

Harvest

By Claudia Castro Luna

This morning we go blackberry picking
where brambles bubble up
like water from a fountain
and thorny limbs howl
to and fro in foggy wind

The low branches are for Lucas
the youngest of my three children
Sofia beckons me to pick for her
and Amalia, the oldest, licks
from a pricked finger, blood and fruit, red

We pick and pick, fill jars,
feast on late summer's grace
we pick until sun chases fog away
and flattens shapes at midday
berries to make jam,
to taste the rain, the sun, the wind
back home, on cold winter days

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

The Macaroni War

By McLean Taylor

The Gulch is still there. On one side, tiers of homes crowd the hillside; on the other, an old wooden staircase rises to the smelter on the ledge above. Until the late 1800s, freight and passenger traffic from Rossland, B.C., snaked down the mountain road through the Gulch to Trail Creek Landing.

In 1894, plans were announced for a railroad from Rossland to a new smelter in Trail, eliminating the need to ship the raw ore all the way to Butte, Montana. Italian immigrants needing work flocked to the area and settled in the Gulch. The rivalry between two of these immigrants is remembered as the Battle of Macaroni.

Isaaco Georgetti, from Tuscany, had worked in the smelters in Butte and Anaconda before arriving in Trail in 1895. Disliking the long hours and the smoky environment, he cast about for better conditions and discovered an untapped business market in the Gulch. The smelter hired new men every week and those new men required temporary housing. The shrewd Georgetti persuaded the smelter company to finance his venture and his native countrymen to construct it. By the time his new Montana Hotel opened, all the rooms were rented.

The Tuscan worked hard for his success. The hotel saloon provided an escape for smelter and railroad workers where they could relax, speak their native languages, and read letters from home over a shared bottle or a bit of tobacco. Profits from their parched throats poured into the hotel.

In 1901, Camille Lauriente left his hometown of Agnone, Italy, and immigrated to Canada, where he worked for the Canadian Pacific Railroad during the Slocan Valley silver boom. Four years later he moved to Trail. He was promoted to section boss, a position that earned company housing, allowing him to send for his family in Italy.

Needing extra money to support his family, he purchased a used sewing machine and began tailoring. Working two jobs, he made enough money to indulge himself by ordering his favorite foods from Italy. Visitors to his home were overcome with

joy as they savored the delicacies from their homeland. They begged him to order for them, too, and his personal whim sparked a future business.

When his tailoring income could support his family, he purchased a house on Rossland Avenue, quit the railroad, and opened a grocery store in his front room.

One night, Lauriente entered the Montana Hotel. Looking around he saw the saloon was full as usual. "Ciao Georgetti, business is good!" Sliding a ten-dollar bill across the bar he ordered a round of drinks for all, drew deeply on his Havana cigar, and blowing smoke over Georgetti's head, told him to keep the change.

"Buona sera, Lauriente. Si, business is good." Georgetti's smile hid his irritation. The next day, huddled over cups of espresso with his friend Dominic Priore, the hotelier commented, "If Lauriente can afford Havana cigars and rounds of drinks he must be getting rich." Priore pointed out that the Montana Hotel was a success, but Georgetti decided they could also duplicate Lauriente's success. Georgetti and Priore became partners in a new grocery store.

What a wonderful sight! Prosciutto, capocollo, mortadella and salami hung overhead. Cans of olive oil and anchovies stood near sacks of macaroni: rigatoni, conchiglie and fusilli. Pungent aromas emanated from the wheels of romano and the gourds of provolone cheese. The store was ready; the Gulch was full of customers. The proprietors opened the doors in anticipation.

Reality was startling. Eager shoppers did not stream through the doorway. Whereas the Montana Hotel had filled a gap in the community, the new grocery store competed in an established market. Taken aback by the reaction, the two developed their first battle plan.

Georgetti tracked Lauriente. Shortly after his adversary's horse and delivery wagon departed a customer's house, Georgetti appeared on the doorstep. With a wide smile, he greeted the housewife. "Buon giorno, signora." Commenting on her recent delivery, he launched his campaign. "We have those too. And I can give you a much better deal."

Georgetti trailed his competitor through the Gulch, quoting lower prices for purchased items. Suddenly, Lauriente's "overpriced" deliveries were being returned. He fought back.

Sale signs appeared in both grocery stores' windows. If one advertised mozzarella for 40 cents, up went a sign at his rival's, "Mozzarella, Special Today, 35 cents." Minutes later a new notice appeared at the first store, "Good Quality Mozzarella, 30 cents."

With prices rapidly fluctuating, inhabitants of the Gulch stood by in amused anticipation. When the flurry of sign-switching abated, the customers left the sidelines and bought all they could at the lowest price.

The tailor/grocer decided to decimate the largest profits of the hotelier/grocer: the liquor and wine sales. But even with a lawyer and a list of future clients, Lauriente was unable to break the coalition mounted by Georgetti. Lauriente's liquor license petition was denied.

Battles can be won or lost by unforeseen opportunities and fortunate timing. Such an event presented itself one evening as Lauriente chatted with Mike Semich, the owner of the thriving Austrian Hotel. Although successful in Canada, Semich confided his desire to return to Italy. Immediately Lauriente proposed a purchase, agreed on a price, and signed the papers. To prevent his antagonist from trumping his offer, Lauriente awakened the bank clerk to certify the check and hastily concluded the deal. By sunrise, the new hotelier had crafted his offensive.

Freshly painted and draped in Italian flags, the Austrian Hotel re-opened. Music from a hired orchestra drifted up the hillsides, inviting everyone to join the party. Not only did the Austrian Hotel prices undercut those of the Montana Hotel but also, on opening day, lunch and the first drink were free! The residents of the Gulch, even those who didn't frequent saloons, came to the festivities. Wandering through the crowd, Lauriente heard his own unspoken question whispered, "What will Georgetti do now?"

The answer was quickly forthcoming. Down the street came the challenger pushing



a wheelbarrow holding a keg of beer and glasses. "Free beer, free beer," Georgetti shouted. "The beer is on Isaaco Georgetti." His good-natured acceptance of defeat elicited a roar of approving laughter from the crowd.

The ceasefire was short-lived. Six months later, discovering he didn't like the hotel trade, Lauriente sold for a profit. Preferring to concentrate on his grocery business and knowing the rivalry would intensify, he expanded his vision. There were plenty of Italians in the region. He would supply the Kootenays!

The first loaded boxcar arrived at Crowsnest Pass, Alberta, where many of the Italian families were from the Naples area. When the macaroni was offloaded, including the Neapolitan regional specialties mafaldine and tortiglioni, memories of the warm Mediterranean sunshine enveloped the dingy coal towns. Consequently, three-quarters of the carload remained with the local gro-

cers; the remainder was freighted to other Kootenay towns.

Noting their opponent's success, Georgetti and Priore decided they too would offer macaroni from Naples. Orders from Italy took a long time but they were resourceful and found a distributor in Seattle. A boxcar full of macaroni arrived quickly, accompanied by a freight bill that left them speechless. Convenience had its price! Nevertheless, they had the product. Following their previous pattern, Priore tracked Lauriente as he traveled the region. This time the ploy failed. Lauriente's product was clearly less expensive.

Shaken, the partners scouted for another opportunity and found one – tomato paste. By purchasing 7,500 cans from a Montreal importer, they obtained the franchise for Sun brand tomato paste. With the wholesale cost at 30 cents a can, they set the retail price at 50. Georgetti was certain he had bested his competitor. Plus, he expected Lauriente

would be forced to purchase his tomato paste stock through Georgetti's franchise.

Prudently, Lauriente ordered his Sun tomato paste from Genoa, Italy. It cost him 15 cents a can; he sold it for 25. As usual the customers were the winners.

Realizing the perpetual expenses of their continual rivalry, the Italian warlords held a parley. A deal was struck: Georgetti and Priore bought the groceries; Lauriente purchased the clothing and dry goods. The Macaroni War was over.

Always friends, despite the business battles, they were founding members of the Cristoforo Colombo Lodge in Trail. The lodge is located in the Gulch on Rossland Avenue next to where Georgetti's Montana Hotel once stood.

Taylor moved to the North Columbia-Kootenay region 20 years ago and discovered a history of interesting and intriguing characters and believes their stories should be shared and celebrated.

Taking the Gentle Approach

By Tina Tolliver Matney

Lately it seems everyone around me is finding joy in digging out the flannel shirts and warm sweaters. I hear chatter about pumpkin-spiced everything while I'm over here hanging on to every last bit of summer that Mother Nature can hand us while I do my best to get ready for winter. And by get ready for winter I mean that I have been working hard to give attention to matters that are screaming "fix me!"

So many things around me and on me have been falling apart. Maintaining this old house and body is a lot of work and I admit I have fallen behind in some areas. The house needs a good power washing and a coat of shake and shingle oil. And parts of myself have become a bit "wobbly."

This became glaringly obvious to me when I stood in the dressing room of a favorite clothing store a while back, listening to the

music that I wished they would turn off and dreading the "trying on" of things in the bad lighting and lingering perfume of whoever left behind the hideously loud shirt that was still hanging by the mirror.

I lifted the tiny top to move it outside of my similarly tiny dressing room when I noticed the tag. It made me snort a little. Size 0. Zilch. Nothing. I didn't know there was such a thing. I wondered if the lingering perfume cost as much as the tiny shirt someone chose to leave behind. Was it the color she didn't like? I couldn't imagine it would look lovely in any other color but then who am I to judge, because when it comes to shirts, I generally choose white.

I carefully placed it on the hanger outside the door, hoping the sales lady would happen by and just take it ... and not ask me if I needed another in a different size. Is there a size below nothing?

Anyway, it wasn't that tiny rejected blouse

that started me on a journey to fix myself that day. What began as just a simple desire to find a few new tops to freshen up the white side of my closet ended with me sitting on the bench in the dressing room doing my best not to cry out in pain because my shoulder had a come-apart while I was trying to pull a sassy little number over my head. My shoulder has been a bit touchy since I broke myself on the ice late last winter. It was at that moment that I stood up and really saw the state my shoulders and upper arms were in. My entire right side was a mess. The reflection I saw sent me to tears as I realized it was time to really heal myself or seek help.

In my mind seeking help would possibly mean surgery and I wasn't ready to go down that road. So, the very next day after this defining moment in the dressing room I made a plan that began with clearing out my spare bedroom. And by "spare bedroom," I mean a blow-up bed in a bag in the corner



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This Great Big Life

of the room with a set of crumpled sheets on top of a pillow because I hate folding sheets.

With the help of my partner I turned this sad excuse of a guest room into a lovely space for exercise. Now it is home for my exercise bike, yoga mat and television with a DVD player sitting atop a throw rug tossed on the floor to cover the 30-year-old carpet. (The blow-up bed now lives in the closet with the crumpled sheets.)

That same afternoon I rolled out the yoga mat and began to fix my whole self with strength-building exercise. After just five weeks of a three-week yoga program I was feeling so much stronger and my shoulder had recovered nicely. I finally felt like I didn't have to tiptoe around my collarbone like it was going to snap every time I lifted a coffee mug or tried to put on my mascara. I felt better and stronger than I have in a long while.

However, never one to just live life on an even keel, I decided to step my daily routine up a notch. I dug out a video series that is a fairly intense 60-day program to get in tiptop shape. By "fairly intense" I mean it's basically

a 60-day trip down a dark road of pain, sweat and charley horses.

Days one and two were a piece of cake and I was feeling pretty proud of myself for getting through the 25-minute routines and doing side plank like a rock star. Then came day three, a 50-minute routine aptly named "Sweat." Let's just say I now look at 60 days as a very long time and I'm beginning to wonder if I'll even make it to week two.

There was no exercising yesterday because I left work feeling exhausted. I felt grateful to simply make it home without having to pull over for a nap. One can't pull over for a nap in Ferry County without everyone in the county knowing you were napping before you even get home. The terms "napping" and "passed out" would likely get interchanged and soon there would be confusion and possibly an intervention.

I saved the napping until I got home, where my couch and warm blanket became my sanctuary for an hour or so. I was relieved that a good sleep and lots of water was all it took to make me feel better.

I guess what I'm learning here is that I need to listen to my body and possibly take a gentler approach to taking care of myself. Sure, wobbly arms aren't going to go away without a little work but there has to be a balance. We all need to be gentler with ourselves, I believe. And while I do feel grateful that exercise and determination have helped me heal my shoulder and gain strength, I know that for some, medical intervention is sometimes necessary. Staying strong is important because this great big life gets messy sometimes.

With common sense, I feel pretty confident that I'll figure this out. After all, there's a lot of bending and stretching, kneeling and reaching while one continues to get ready for winter. And if you see me napping on the side of the road, just honk. I'll be alright.

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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The Adaptable American Kestrel

Article and Photo by J. Foster Fanning

Previously, I wrote an article about raptors and, as always, I learned a number of things. One of which is that there are way too many raptors and accordingly more information regarding them than one monthly column could cover. So I saved one of the raptors for this month's article – the American kestrel, sometimes colloquially known as the sparrow hawk.

This smallest of falcons, thus the most diminutive of diurnal raptors, it has many nicknames, including grasshopper hawk,

killy hawk (after its “killy, killy, killy” call), short-winged hawk, windhover, house hawk and rusty-crowned falcon. The only kestrel found in the Americas, it ranges from the lower reaches of South America to the northern boreal forests of Canada and is abundant here in our own highlands region.

What I've come to generally understand is that when a bird has such broad reaches of habitat it is usually associated with an evolved adaptability for temperature gradient and diet. The American kestrel

is no exception. In fact, it might be one of the best studies in the field of adaptability. Its diet usually entails grasshoppers and a multitude of other insects, mice, lizards and small birds, primarily urban sparrows (which are heavier and a tad slower than their back-country cousins).

It is common to observe an American kestrel hunting in energy-conserving fashion by perching and scanning the ground for prey to ambush. Its airborne technique is to hover in the air with rapid wing beats while homing in on potential quarry. In contrast to us humans, birds can see ul-

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In Nature

traviolet light. This evolved feature enables kestrels to make out the trails of urine that voles, a common prey mammal, leave as they run along the ground. Nothing like having a neon diner sign highlight the way to a scrumptious meal.

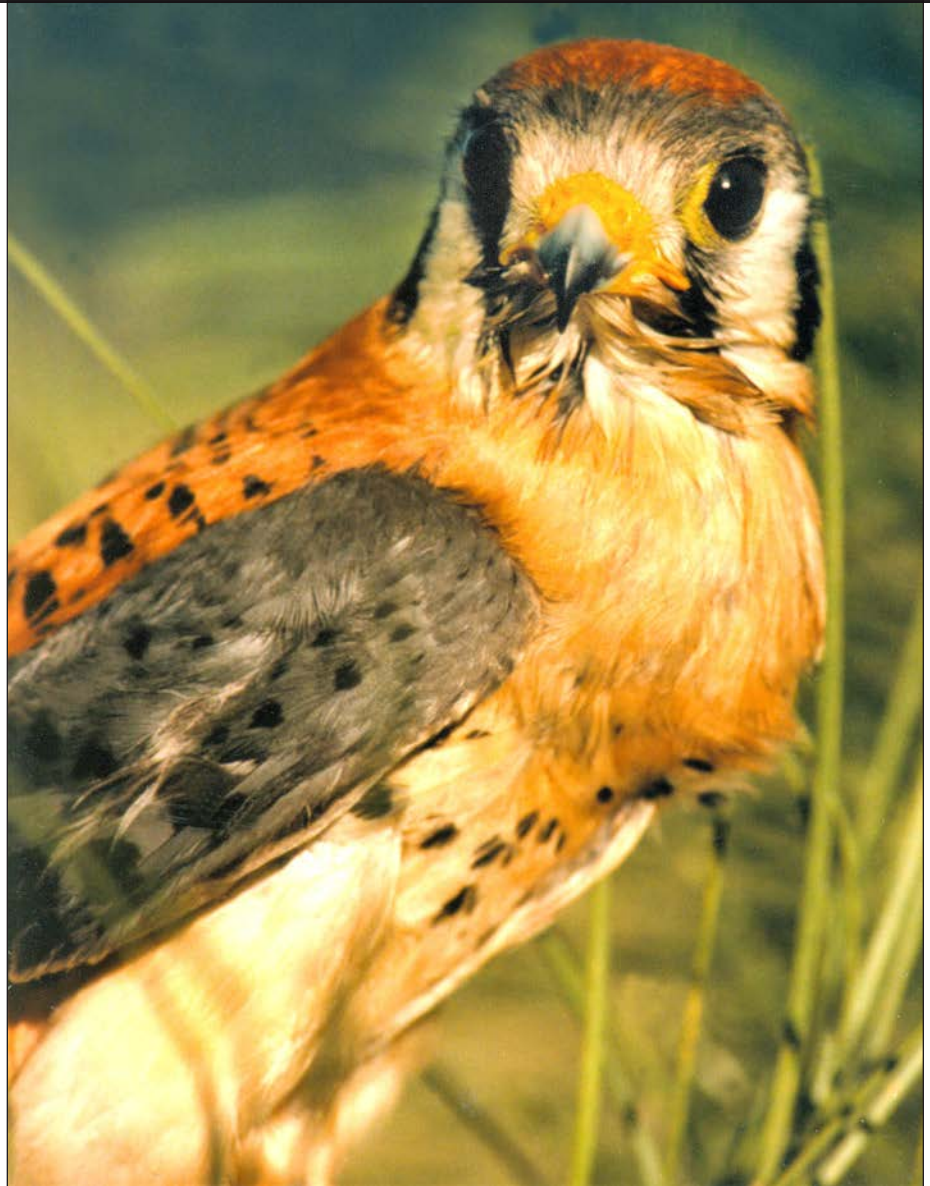
Unique to kestrels, the male delivers food for his family to a site near the nest, then calls to the female, who then leaves the nest and retrieves the food for the nestlings. Frequently the male will cache food near the nest to aid in the distribution process once the young are growing and relentlessly hungry. The parents continue to nourish the juveniles for several weeks after they have fledged.

The American kestrel is a slender bird, roughly the size and shape of a mourning dove, although it has a bigger head, lengthier, narrower wings, and a long, square-tipped tail. Kestrels appear whitish when seen from below. They have rusty brown spotted backs with black highlights and a black band close to the tip of the tail. Males have slate-blue wings; female wings are ruddy brown. Both sexes sport pairs of black vertical slashes on the sides of their otherwise pale faces; these markings are occasionally referred to as a “mustache” and a “sideburn.”

Years ago, I discovered a kestrel nest by first coming across the deceased parent bird. Then, from inside an old shed, I heard the faintest of squeaks, which emanated from the only surviving chick of three hatchlings. The rescue of the baby bird was successful and a few months later I was able to reintroduce it back to its natural environment. The experience endeared this species of bird to me, although now if I found one in like shape I'd call my friend Tina at the Kettle River Raptor Center, which is a state- and federally-licensed nonprofit organization.

The American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) is the most common falcon in North America, varying in size from about the weight of a blue jay to a mourning dove. The adult averages 12 inches long and has about a two-foot wingspan, but generally weighs only three to five ounces. The smallest of raptors is truly a quarter pounder with attitude.

This bird is a well-established species that has evolved 17 subspecies adapted to different environments and habitats throughout the Americas.



Nesting in cavities found in trees (especially in abandoned woodpecker holes) and cracks or narrow holes in cliffs and canyon walls, buildings and other structures, the female lays three to seven eggs, which both sexes help to incubate. They take readily to nest boxes. We can help by putting up nest boxes that contain a small layer of wood pellets and shavings.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology tells us that the oldest recorded American kestrel was a male at least 14 years, 8 months old when found in Utah in 2001. He had been banded in the same state in 1987.

The American kestrel packs a predator's fierce intensity into its small body, but even so, American kestrels sometimes end up as prey for larger birds such as northern

goshawks, red-tailed hawks, barn owls, American crows, and sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks, as well as rat snakes, corn snakes, and even fire ants. Consequently, this little bird is on guard 24/7 and fiercely defends its territory.

Kestrels are out there hovering over the meadows, catching grasshoppers and caching food now. It's a good time to lace up the hiking boots, grab the camera and head into the great out-of-doors. See you 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://foster-fanning.blogspot.com>.

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One Day, One Focus: Ending Polio

By Adenea Thompson

October 24 is World Polio Day and the Rotary Club of Colville is taking action with the Colville Fired Up Brewery to raise awareness, funds and support to end polio, a vaccine-preventable disease that still threatens children in parts of the world today. Join us Thursday from 4-8 p.m. for a cause worth drinking for. In addition to brews, there will be music, door prizes, raffles and competitions.

Poliomyelitis, or polio, is a paralyzing and potentially fatal disease. Poliovirus invades the nervous system and can cause total paralysis in hours. It can strike people of any age but mainly affects children under five. It takes just two drops of an oral vaccine to prevent polio. Polio can be prevented, but it cannot be cured. Unlike most diseases, polio can be eradicated. It doesn't have an intermediate host, it can't survive for extended periods of time in the environment and, while it is contagious, its infection period is relatively short.

"The world's progress in fighting polio might be one of the best kept secrets in global health," noted Bill Gates. In 1985 Rotary launched PolioPlus and in 1988 helped establish the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which today includes the World Health Organization (WHO), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF, and

the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to immunize the children of the world against polio.

Polio used to paralyze 1,000 children every day. Rotary and its partners have made great progress against the disease since then. Polio cases have dropped by 99.9 percent, from 350,000 cases in 1988 in 125 countries to 33 cases of wild poliovirus in 2018 in just two countries: Afghanistan and

Pakistan.

Local Rotarians participated in National Immunization Days (NIDs), including Michelle Lee (at right in picture), who responded in Ethiopia in 2013 when there was an outbreak of polio in the Horn of Africa. After the two oral drops are administered, the child's pinky is colored purple as identification of being vaccinated. In 2010 Jackie, Rick and Emily Nance, along with Michelle Lee, her daughter Dana, and Dirk Boswell, went to India to do an NID. During that year, India was added to the WHO list as polio-free. Polio was considered eradicated from India!

The top five reasons to eradicate polio now:

- To improve lives. 16 million people are walking today who would have otherwise been paralyzed.
- To invest in the future. If polio isn't eradicated, within 10 years as many as 200,000 children could be paralyzed by it each year. A polio-free world will be a safer world for children everywhere.
- To improve child health. Polio surveillance networks and vaccination campaigns also monitor children for other health problems such as vitamin deficiency and measles, so they can be addressed sooner.

- To save money. A polio-free world will save the global economy an estimated \$40-\$50 billion in health costs within 20 years.

- To make history. Polio eradication would be one of history's greatest public health achievements, with polio following smallpox to become only the second human disease eliminated from the world.

With polio nearly eradicated, Rotary and its partners must sustain this progress and reach every child with the polio vaccine. Join us October 24 at Fired Up Brewery, starting at 4 p.m., and participate in the movement to consign polio to the history books.



Whole Tuna, No Bulls

By Karen Giebel

Really and truly it sounded like a good idea at the time. Sometimes Dan and I just look at each other, scratch our heads, look all serious, then burst out laughing saying, “What have we gotten into this time?” Back in May, after a strenuous alpaca show, we headed over to the coast and Westport, Washington, for some R&R. Then, this happened.

The tuna fishing industry is big in Westport and we wanted to buy a couple of whole albacore tuna, have them bled and filleted to be ready to can when we got home. Fresh, home-canned tuna is amazingly good. Did that happen? Well, no, not exactly. All the available whole tuna was deep frozen and weighed about 15 pounds per fish. The fishmongers could thaw it, remove the blood line and fillet it, given 24 hours’ notice. We of course only had 12 hours.

So, the fishmonger told us we could take home the whole frozen 15 pounds and fillet it ourselves. That’s 15 pounds of tuna and we took two of them! He also said we could watch YouTube videos on how to fillet them, but “watch your hands. If you run your hands up the fish instead of down, you will be impaled with incredibly sharp bones.” Us: “Sure, we can do this.”

Since the end of May we have had these tuna in our freezer, because how in the heck do we unfreeze them? These fish are three-and-a-half feet long! Bathtub? No.

Alpaca water troughs? Are you kidding me? So we have \$75 worth of albacore tuna in our freezer with no clue as to what to do next. I suggested throwing them in Curlew Lake and taking a photo of Dan reeling one of them in. That may happen yet.

But the tuna situation is just a prelude to the real “what have you gotten us into now, Ollie?” story!

When the kids were here recently, we took them out to our friends’ ranch. Kathy runs a working guest ranch and raises Longhorn-Watusi cattle. We showed the kids the lodge and the petting zoo animals and then I asked Kathy where the Longhorns were. That was my first mistake.

She herded us up into the hills where the cattle were grazing. They are beautiful animals with massive horns. Then Kathy said, “Hey, you guys have a lot of acres, how about taking a couple of these young bulls, let them graze on your land and gain a couple hundred pounds? They are great grazers and will keep your fields clean.” Yes indeed, we said “Sure, what a great idea!” Now mind you, Dan and I know nothing, absolutely nothing about cattle, particularly fully intact bulls!

Back home, Dan walked the entire fence line to make sure there were no breaks. He found one weak spot where a tree had fallen on it. Not to worry, it was way up the hillside and we convinced ourselves that the bulls would stay down below where the water and food were.

Kathy brought the bulls over and we let them through the gate in the far lower field and Kathy headed for home. Dan and I watched as the bulls slowly walked and looked around – and then they took off, headed for the hills! We watched, puzzled, and then as awareness grew we were looking at each other, slack-jawed as reality set in. Those gosh-darn bulls raced up the hill along the fence line and disappeared toward the one weak spot in the fence.

We hopped in the ATV and took off up the road to find them. We looked ev-

erywhere! We walked the entire fence line. Did we see them? Of course not. Now what?

I went home and started calling all our neighbors to let them know two fully intact bulls were on the lam. When I reached Lin, who lives three miles up at the end of the road, she said, “I’m looking at them right now. They’re at the corner of our property.” Dan and I piled into the ATV and headed to their house, where we saw a whole gang of our friends and neighbors surrounding the two runaways. Unfortunately, despite heroic and repeated efforts to corral the silly beasts, they took off over the hills.

The terrain is steep and treacherous. Looking out and around, I saw two small spots hightailing it over the mountain in the distance toward Trout Creek Road. We raced back down the road and climbed into the truck and headed over to Trout Creek. Did we spy them? Nope. OK, time to regroup and go home.

I called Kathy and told her we lost her bulls within 15 minutes of their arrival. Her response? “Oh, don’t worry, you have lots of good grass and pasture, they will probably be back.” Sparky and I just looked at each other. “Really?”

I called the sheriff’s department to let them know we had two fully intact bulls running free! They laughed.

At 6:30 the next morning, another of our neighbors called to say the bulls seemed to have spent the night in their yard. Dennis told me he had gone to bed forgetting to turn off the radio and the light in their shed and it appeared the bulls enjoyed both the music and the light. He said they were heading over to another neighbor’s empty place and maybe we could get them there.

I yelled to Dan that they were just up the road as I headed for our ATV. I filled a bucket with sweet cob, jumped in the ATV and raced up the road. Sure enough, there they were. But they wanted no part of that sweet cob and just bellowed their



unhappiness over and over and over. And this is where my nurturing cattle herder mentality took over. I was determined that those two escapees would be back in the pasture where they belonged, so I started walking and singing old Marty Robbins cowboy songs, all the while shaking the sweet cob bucket.

At first they wanted nothing to do with it or me. But very slowly, as I crept forward, they started moving down the hillside. I sang every old C&W song I could remember and shook that sweet cob bucket while saying "get along little doggies, get along." I was also wondering where my husband was, not knowing he was already at the bottom of the hill unwilling to say a word lest he spook the cattle.

So, I crashed through the underbrush and down the hillside to the road with those bulls constantly turning their massive horned heads to stare at me. I tried to keep my cool but at the same time wondered: If they charge at me, do I have any chance of outrunning them? Doubtful. Very doubtful.

Our road had never seemed so long as it did walking those bulls home. As we got closer to the gate, Dan ran ahead of me to both open the gate and to block the road to keep them from going any farther.

I led the bulls up the hillside through the field, around the fallen tree and back downhill to the water trough and the fenced pastures that used to house our alpacas. They stopped at the trough and tanked up, as apparently they had not found any water on their travels and were down several gallons.

After the bulls refueled, they quietly walked into the pasture and made themselves comfortable under the shade trees. I honestly think they were happy their wild adventure had come to an end.

The boys have had a couple of weeks now to settle in. There have been no escape attempts, though if they really wanted out of that pasture they could knock the fence down in a single step! But because they have lots of food, water and sweet cob they are content to stay put.

Update: As I sit here Dan is finishing canning all that tuna. We purchased a

huge cooler, set it in the fenced garden, placed the frozen fish in it and let water slowly run over the fish for 24 hours until they thawed. We figure that tuna ended up costing us about twenty dollars a pound. As for the bulls? Dan spent many hours mending and reinforcing fence and thankfully they have remained here quite contently, except for one thing: Every sin-

gle morning those bulls are at the gate staring at the house and bellowing at the top of their bully lungs until we come out with their daily ration of sweet cob.

Right now we have a bit of calm in our lives, but knowing us, that won't last long.

Karen Giebel blogs about life and food at www.thejourneygirl.com up in the back of the beyond in Ferry County, Washington.



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2020 CALENDAR

JOANIE CHRISTIAN
Photography

Coming in November: Two different calendars from award-winning photographer and regular NCM contributor, Joanie Christian. "A Year in the Natural World of Northeast Washington" features scenes from Ferry, Pend Oreille, and Stevens Counties. "Birds of the Inland Northwest" displays the amazing birds of the region. Calendars are 9"x12" and full color, shrink wrapped. Perfect for holiday season gifts! For more information, visit joaniechristianphotography.com or email Joanie at jchristiandesign@gmail.com.

Stanley's (Very) Little Known Animal Facts

By Stanley Carruthers



Cats may've taken over as America's top pet, but in Eastern Washington large populations of dogs may still be found (often in the back of capacious pickup trucks).

Dogs have been domesticated for more than 30,000 years (though after all that time some incorrigibles still disobey simple commands like "sit" and "shake"). All dogs – even Chihuahuas – descend from gray wolves. Dogs, in fact, are more closely related to gray wolves than are coyotes, foxes, jackals, and even some other breeds of wolves (such as Ethiopian and werewolves).

Dog ears come in three types (not counting the ones folded on book pages): erect, semi-erect, and drop, reflecting the saying that "you can tell a man's state by the set of his ears." Dog hearing is four times better than that of humans and dogs have about 200 million scent receptors compared to our measly five million (not to mention having twice our number of legs), so it may be that dogs domesticated us, not the other way around. They've got us well trained. After all, do dogs ever foot the food bill, serve up *our* meals, or throw *us* the Frisbee? Nyet!

Loyalty is a particularly applauded canine trait, however lacking in acumen it is. Odysseus' hunting dog, Argos, waited twenty years for his owner to come home from time-wasting abroad, dying with a poignant tail-wag when Ody finally showed up. Greyfriars Bobby, in Scotland, kept daily vigil by his owner's grave for years until expiring (probably from boredom). And of course, there's the iconically-loyal terrier gazing into the gramophone on the HMV (His Master's Voice) logo. One can't help wondering why such smart animals became so devoted to humans, especially after 30,000 years without a pre-nupt?

Dog breeds are sorted into collective categories such as Hunting Dogs (distinguished by their florescent vests); Sporting Dogs (who used to fight in pits and arenas, now frequent betting parlors); and Service Dogs (who herd/protect livestock, haul sleds, and run on treadmills to turn roasting spits in

fast-food restaurants). Service Dogs also include guide dogs, sniffer dogs, military and police dogs, therapy dogs, rescue dogs, and bartending dogs.

Little known facts about a few of the dog breeds:

Basenjis are bark-less; instead, they yodel. Expert opinion is divided between pinpointing their origins in Africa where they accompanied pygmy hunters, or in Austria where the von Trapp family discovered them in the Alps.

New Guinea Singing Dogs dominated local pop charts for decades but have yet to break through in the West.

"Restless" breeds of dogs include the Ibizan Hound (makes enormous leaps – and is native to the Euro Zone so can leap without a pass-



port), the Canarian Warren Hound (obsessed with rabbits – never sleeps) and the Cirneco dell'Etna (Sicilian, so compelled to dispatch its prey to "swim with the fishes").

The Peruvian Inca Orchid dog is hairless and has delicate petals.

The Xoloitzcuintli, also hairless, is impossible to pronounce but traditionally was deployed to protect the home from evil spirits and guide the soul through the underworld (where hairlessness came in handy).

Saaloos dogs suffer from excessive vowels, as do Laekenois.

The first registered German Shepherd was named Horand van Grafrath, a pet name not seen since. In 1929 German Shepherd Rin Tin Tin got the most Best Actor votes at the Oscars but the Academy gave the prize to the runner-up instead. (It's a dog's life.)

A Giant Schnauzer once grappled with

Godzilla in a little-known dispute over the town of LeRoy, New York.

Bouvier des Flandres and Bouvier des Ardenne dogs gave up their work herding cattle for careers in film.

Almost all Border Collies are descended from a Northumbrian collie named Old Hemp. We're not sure why. Another famous Border Collie, Old Shep, waited around a train station in Benton, Montana for six years after seeing his owner taken away in a coffin. Old Shep was killed by a train in 1942, which just goes to show. (All Border Collies are required to have "Old" in their names.)

A Saint Bernard in France named Barry rescued more than forty lost travelers in the 1800s. There's no record of how many travelers who were not lost were also "rescued" by Barry.

Special Stanley fact: The yearly shedding of a single Samoyed dog, if allowed to accumulate, equals the fur of 37 Chinchilla cats.

Olde English Bulldogges suffer from Twee Name Syndrome, which is why they look so glum. (All Bulldogges are required to have "Olde" in their name.)

Retrievers, Pointers, and Setters suffer from verb-based names, a known cause of CEI (canine existential insecurity).

Terriers, like warblers in the avian world, suffer from there being too many kinds of them.

There are too many kinds of hounds, also. For example: the French White and Black Hound, the Great Anglo-French White and Black Hound, the Great Anglo-French White and Orange Hound, the plain French White and Orange Hound, the Anglo-Francais de Petite Venerie Hound, the French Tricolor Hound, the Great Anglo-French Tricolor Hound, the Grand Bleu de Gascogne Hound, and the Hound of the Baskervilles.

Finally, did you know that Greyhounds were named after a bus company? Greyhound Mick the Miller, in England in 1929, broke the world speed record for dogs and, once retired, earned \$90,000 in stud fees and autographed pinups. As Stanley says, KNOW YOUR ANIMAL FACTS!

Stanley Carruthers has devoted a lifetime to the study of domestic and wild animals.

WHAT'S



MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM!

APPENZERS

Events

Oct 3: First Thursday Art Walk, 5:30-8 pm, downtown Chewelah.

Oct 5: Marcus Cider Fest with pancake breakfast (8-11 am), parade (10:30 am) food, arts & craft vendors, games, classic car show, beer garden, live music. Call 509-684-3771 for more info.

Oct 5: Season Champion Day Race, Northport International Raceway, noon to midnight. Gates open at 10 am. Visit the NIR FB page and website for more information.

Oct 5: Josephine the Volcano in concert, Pend Oreille Playhouse, 236 S. Union, Newport, 7 pm. Visit pendoreilleplayers.org for more info.

Oct 6: Northport Lions Club BINGO at the Northport School Cafeteria, Noon-4. Early Bird, Regular, Fast Pick and Blackout with a \$500 Jackpot. Must be 18 or older to play. A portion of this session's proceeds benefit the Northport Tree of Sharing. Call 509-690-2158 for more info.

Oct 6: George Winston in concert, Cutter Theatre, 302 Park St., Metaline Falls. See ad page 11.

Oct 8: Tools for Running an Effective Nonprofit training, WSU Extension, Colville, 9-4. Visit washingtonnonprofits.org, call 509-675-3791 for more info on this and other trainings throughout the region. See ad page 47.

Oct 11: Wo+Men Making A Difference luncheon, Spokane Falls Community College - Colville Campus, Noon. Call 509-685-6088 for more info. See ad page 47.

Oct 11: Presentation on the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, during the general membership meeting of the Stevens County Historical Society, 700 N Wynne St., Colville, 3 pm. Refreshments provided. See ad page 30.

Oct 11: Light Up Colville & CHS Homecoming Parade, 4 pm. See ad page 8.

Oct 13: Cutter Coffee House Concert, featuring Donovan and friends, along with a "Focus on Fun-

gi" artist reception and book signing, Cutter Theatre, 302 Park St., Metaline Falls. See ad page 11.

Oct 15: One River Nonprofit Network, 12-1:30, for anyone in the region involved in or with an interest in nonprofits. Held at the Hospitality House, 216 South Washington Avenue, Newport. Visit washingtonnonprofits.org, call 509-675-3791.

Oct 15: A lively presentation of "Raising Humans in a Digital World," by author Diana Graber, 6-8 pm at SCC - Colville Center, Rendezvous Theater. Learn how to teach your children to use technology ethically, safely, and wisely. Tickets, \$5 at the door, or reserve in advance by calling 509-936-0157. Adults only. Hosted by Riverwood Community School. Visit www.riverwoodschool.org for more info.

Oct 17: Colville Candidate's Night, focused on the City Mayor and Council races and Colville School District, Colville City Hall, 6 pm. Presented by Colville American Association of University Women (AAUW), Josie Darst, Moderator.

Oct 18: Riverwood Community School's Annual Harvest Festival and Fundraiser, 4 pm - dusk, Yep Kanum Park, Colville. Chili, cornbread, cider, relay races, games, face painting, photo booth, and hay rides, \$25/family or \$7/individual, \$0.50 for each additional ticket. Visit www.riverwoodschool.org for more info.

Oct 18-20, 25-27: Woodland Theatre production of *Women and War*. Through correspondence and monologues the voices of multiple generations of women who've served as wives, nurses, and officers spanning from WWI to Afghanistan are heard. Tickets at Colville Chamber of Commerce or Brownpapertickets.com. Parental guidance advised. See ad page 9.

Oct 19: Open Comp/Memorial Day Race, Northport International Raceway, noon to midnight. Gates open at 10 am. Visit the NIR FB page and website for more information.

Oct 19: Veterans For Peace and Public Policy Forum, "U.S. Militarism pollutes, wastes and drains economy; Instead, Support Youth Environmental Action Leadership," in association

with St'al-sqil-xw, Veterans For Peace Chapter #004, Poor Peoples' Campaign, at the Kettle Falls Public Library, 12-4 pm. Potluck lunch and snacks offered, non-alcohol beverages. Email info@stalsqilxw.org for more info.

Oct 24: Spokane Community College - Colville Center: How to Produce & Publish a Quality Book.

Oct 25: Tech Expo featuring local internet vendors and businesses offering free information about broadband and technology options for your rural business and home, Spokane Community College - Colville Campus. Call 509-684-2588 for more info. See ad page 20.

Oct 25: Annual Kiddie & Pet Costume Parade, 4:30 pm, photo booth, costume contest, and Moonlight Madness in downtown Colville. See ad page 20.

Oct 26: 3rd Annual Witches Ball at the Old Apple Warehouse, Kettle Falls, 1-4 pm, featuring games, prizes, homemade root beer floats, chili, cornbread, costume photo op, and more. See ad page 24.

Oct 26: Kosher Red Hots Klezmer Music, presented by the Betty Skidmore Stage Series, 7 pm, First Congregational United Church of Christ, 205 N. Maple, Colville. See ad page 38.

Oct 26: Light Up The Park in Chewelah, featuring hundreds of lit pumpkins, wish lanterns, food vendors, costume parade, and more. See ad page 5.

Oct 26: Falls Festival (free), with movie, carnival, costume contest, and more Cutter Theatre, 302 Park St., Metaline Falls. See ad page 11.

Oct 31: Halloween.

Nov 1: AAUW Coffee House at the HUB Senior Center, 231 W. Elep, Colville, 7-10 pm, featuring local talent for a good cause. See ad page 20.

Trail & District Arts Council has a packed calendar of events at trail-arts.com.

Music at Northern Ales, 325 W. 3rd Ave., Kettle Falls, northernales.com, 509-738-7382:
4th: Bottom Dollar, 7-10 pm
10th: Sara Brown, 6-8 pm
17th: Justin Johnson, 6-8 pm
18th: AC/DC & Motley Crew Tribute Bands (ticketed

event), 5 pm
25th: Open Mic, 7-10 pm
26th: Bottom Dollar, 7-10 pm
31st: Jim Murphy, 6-8 pm

Music at Republic Brewery, 26 Clark Ave., Republic, republicbrew.com, 509-775-2700.
5th: Bryson Evans, 7-10 pm
9th: North Wind, 7-8 pm
11th & 12th: RBC Oktoberfest
22nd: Jason Eady - seated, ticketed event, 7-8:30 pm
31st: Halloween Bash, Costume Contest, Live Music, Noon-10 pm

Meetings & Opportunities

Oct 9: 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 libraryeventsatncrl.org (Ferry Co.), scrl.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.

The Greater Springdale/Loon Lake Chamber of Commerce, first Thursday of the month, 11 am, Stevens County Fire Protection District 1, Station #7, 52 West Aspen, Springdale. **The Chewelah Chamber of Commerce**, Fridays, 7 am, Chewelah Casino, 2555 Smith Road south of Chewelah off Hwy. 395. **The Colville Chamber of Commerce**, Tuesdays, noon, Eagles Lodge 608 N Wynne Street. Details at www.colville.com. **The Kettle Falls Chamber of Commerce**, first and third Thursdays, 7 pm, Kettle Falls Visitor Center. For info, call 509-738-2300 or visit kfchamber.com. **The Northport Chamber of Commerce** meets the first Wednesday of each month, 6 pm, Northport City Hall, 315 Summit Ave, Northport.

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

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

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.

Colville Piecemakers Quilt Guild, 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6 pm, at the Colville Community Center (HUB), 231 W. Elep, Colville. Visit colvillepiecemakers.webs.com.

MORE LISTINGS & DETAILS AT NCMONTHLY.COM

The Northport Times

NORTHPORT - OCTOBER 2019: This time of year is most commonly referred to as "Squirrel Time." Everyone is canning, filling cellars, storing goods, putting up hay, and collecting wood for the winter. The whole community is bustling with energetic fervor. All are preparing for the upcoming winter season. Harvests have been plentiful, supplying many potlucks and community picnics. With the bounty, lightheartedness has increased to such an extent that social gatherings have lasted well in to the early morning light. Some folk have been seen going home after the noon whistle the next day.

A new event is planned in Marcus, Wash., this October. This will be an annual event called "Ciderfest." The plan is to produce at least 100 gal. of cider, or more depending on the apples and the manpower available. It may take as many as 25 people all day to run the presses. Come join the fun! It will be an all day event on the first Saturday of October. Music, food, games and all the cider you can drink!
—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

Lari Basilio Goes the Distance

To say Lari Basilio is one of the best guitarists I've ever heard simply doesn't do justice



to her art. I say "art" because it's not just her gorgeous, perfect-pocket finger-picking or her

soaring lead lines. In fact, it's way beyond anything technical as the Brazilian master takes world-class chops and makes real soul-moving art out of it all, first and foremost.

Far More, an album of perfect grooves, never once compromises soul for technique or flashy displays (though there are plenty of those to be had). Everything sits perfectly in a jazz-rock-pop fusion mix that has heart-charging Latin rhythms blasting effortlessly from the arrangements.

With album-opener "Glimpse of Light" featuring the likes of Joe Satriani, you get a sense of Basilio's talent as she goes toe-to-toe with the San Francisco guitar-god over impossibly funky hard-rock grooves. A real standout is the retooling of Michael Jackson's "Man in the Mirror," leading off with some of the most

jaw-dropping syncopated finger-picking in recent memory.

With Nathan East on bass and Vinny Caliuta on drums, the sound and solidity of the rhythm section is absolutely unbeatable as Basilio soars on "Not Alone." The tasty, two-fisted "Violet" somehow channels Steve Lukather and his best friend, Eddie Van Halen, in terms of tone and rock-riffage before Basilio wraps up the album with the stirring, restrained "Sempere Comigo."

There has been no shortage of shred-guitar albums over the last 30+ years, with metal-fusion hopefuls recording every guitar trick they know. What distinguishes Lari Basilio as an upper-echelon guitarist is that she's not showing off her tricks. She is making incredibly beautiful music.

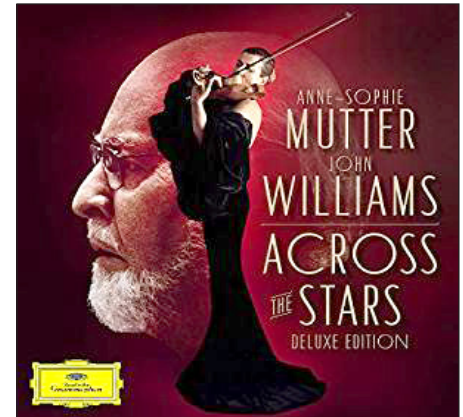
Williams & Mutter: Mining Modern Classics

If there is a singular, stand-out orchestral composer across the 20th and 21st centuries, it has to be John Williams. While some music snobs will turn their noses up at Williams' iconic film work, the fact is, his compositions are incredibly well-conceived and would stand on their own with or without the likes of Han Solo or Indiana Jones being on screen.

Like any great film director, Williams has incorporated a solid twist to the proceedings on *Across the Stars*. With uber-violinist Mutter in the featured role, the venerable has

arranged many of his most famous themes (and a few less-known works) to showcase Mutter's virtuosity, and the results are fantastic. For example, the Mutter-Williams collaboration truly shines on "Donnybrook Fair" and "The Duel" (from *The Adventures of Tintin*).

To say that this is a fantastic way to re-explore some of Williams' great works is an understatement. At 87 years young, he remains as vital a musical force as ever, and with the The Recording Arts Orchestra of Los Angeles and Mutter as his accomplices,



he creates an album that is as dynamic and cinematic as you could expect.

This is not to ignore that Anne-Sophie Mutter is an absolute rock-star on her instrument, laying down gripping, absolutely arresting violin parts with utter note-perfect confidence and abandon. The other thing this album does is make you wonder what other experiments and partnerships Williams has up his sleeve. We can only hope there are many more of these works to come.

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A Good Read

Reviews by Loren Cruden

Golden State, by Ben H. Winters

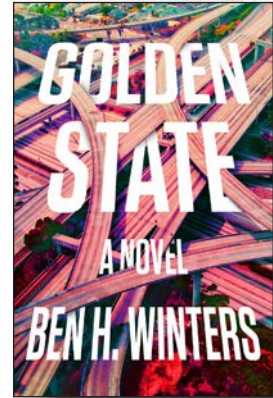
A slew of writers have scored with dystopian novels in recent years, but my go-to in this genre is Ben H. Winters, who wrote the award-winning *Underground Airlines* and the endearing *Last Policeman* trilogy. Winters' novels – sometimes allegorical, always unnervingly close to home in their almost-ordinariness – are page-turners, but what I particularly like about them are his characters and humor: people thinking and behaving like people we know (as in the dystopian movie *Bushwick*).

Winters' newest novel, *Golden State*, mainly set in what used to be Los Angeles, is about a near-future society grounded on reverence for literal fact, "...the fierce defense of what is Objectively So." Lying is a crime. Our main character, Laszlo Ratesic, is a veteran officer of the Speculative Service, "...that elite corps of law enforcement officials who are solely empowered, and uniquely qualified, to detect and destroy the stuff of lies...." George Orwell would've loved this book.

Ratesic is assigned a recruit, Aysa Paige, to mentor, which he resents. "I wish I was alone. I wish I could stop, alone, at Donut Sam's...." Ratesic is grumpy except when chasing liars,

eating greasy food, or having odd moments of sentiment. Ms. Paige is unflaggingly keen – a Speculator prodigy. The career codger and the bright young star: what happens when they begin to doubt the system? "I know she is feeling what I am feeling, the world reeling, the sky becoming suffused with the thick truthless air. We are off the Record."

To say more would be a spoiler. Readers of this timely satire will not quickly shake off its atmosphere and impact. From "This is how fast the truth can change – one hard kick from a heavy boot and all is erased" to "...across all space and time, in whatever universe I may stumble into, the smell and feel of being in a bar remains the same," Winters holds the mirror to a not altogether improbable trajectory.



Indian Horse, by Richard Wagamese

Having been a fan of ice hockey in my younger years, I was quite taken by the late Richard Wagamese's clearly personal and up-close evocations of the sport in his final novel, *Indian Horse*, published in 2018. Wagamese was Canadian, one of the best-known Indigenous writers in North America.

The first section of *Indian Horse* follows the young protagonist, Saul Indian Horse, an Ojibwa, as he and his family flee into the northern Ontario wilderness, trying to evade authorities who scoop up Indian children with the goal of confining and de-Indianing them in Christian boarding schools. Inevitably Saul gets scooped.

This part of the story takes place in the late 1950s and '60s. The school is classically bad: abusive, traumatic, humiliating. But one of the priests introduces young Saul to ice hockey. The boy turns out to have the drive and uncanny knack of a born hockey star. Playing with the team opens him to a heretofore absent sense of belonging. "...the older boys skated to the boards and leaned there. I dawdled behind them, unsure of what to do. But as I drew near they made a spot for me among them. We stood there like stallions home from the range."

Hockey becomes Saul's passport out of personal isolation but takes him into the wider world of racial isolation. It is an old story; Wagamese sometimes tells it in newly moving ways and sometimes in plain, well-worn ones. "I was tired of my life, really tired, and I lost my ability to hold things together."

Along with beautiful passages about Ojibwa land-based traditions are terrific hockey bits: "[The Indian community's] people loved the game. It might be thirty below with a wind whipping across the surface of the rink and stinging their eyes, but they would stand there and stamp their feet and lean closer to each other like penguins."

This coming of age/vision quest story is built around the possibility of needing to first go backward in order to make peace with one's self and move forward.

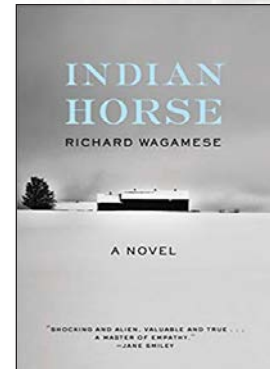
Other recommendations from the W shelves:

M.O. Walsh – *My Sunshine Away*

G. Willow Wilson – *The Bird King*

Tara Westover – *Educated*

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



Living in NE WA: Lessons Learned

Tech in the Country?

By J. Merrill Baker

We thought living on a mountain would keep our lives simple. That was idealistic. The fact that I can get a text reminder on my phone that a package has been delivered to our post office is helpful, but the texts are usually a day earlier than my reality. We use our computer, book readers and DVD player. But the cell phone? It has become the camera of choice, although I still can't seem to manage to upload photos onto the computer easily. Do you need a 12-year-old for that now too?

I eventually taught myself to set the date on our DVD/VHS player. It is a *refurbished* DVD/VHS combo. After all, don't we still own like 500 VHS videos? Our smart TV reminds me that it is not hooked up to a cable, or the internet. And there is an irritating message on my computer about joining "one drive" and establishing yet another account. *I just got used to the last version of Windows.*

Our phone is even synced up via bluetooth with our car, where I have been startled when my active conversation suddenly switches to the cab of the car while I am outside within shouting distance, surprise! Himself bringing the car around is suddenly needing to wing it in a conversation he hadn't started. I love surprises. Him ... not so much.

We've needed the maps to navigate the city. More so, the camera! A young man was pulling out of his parking space into

the small lot of the grocery store and hit us. He seemed angry with us and we immediately checked for damages (none thankfully) and I was taking pictures right away while trying to calm him. I had the strangest feeling he was going to try to use the situation to get some kind of compensation, as if he were the victim but obviously, with photos, it would be clear that he had pulled right out into our car. Yay camera!

It's pretty invasive when your tech nags you. I don't want yet another Wi-Fi-connected electronic device. I think I have to feed these things batteries, or change their frequencies, and learn what a cyborg is. Well, according to Wiki, "cyborg" comes from two words put together in 1960: "cybernetic" and "organism." Somehow I suspect that Silicon Valley has already teamed up with the military to develop a viable cybernetic warrior version, a Darth Vader. After all, 1960 was not that long ago. Then they decided to make something marketable and useful for the common person, something more friendly like Alexa. (It is more useful than a wisecracking robotic floor vac.)

Maybe Silicon Valley has been *too* creative with doling out such impressive technology. There is something about to surpass "virtual" reality which I have seen in helmets, but next is something called "augmented" or "mixed" reality, a bit more technically difficult, according

to experts interviewed by writer Alex Fisher in an article for *Smithsonian Magazine*, April 2018.

"Then I would say that in 30 years people will be beginning to get used to the idea that you can have artificial consciousness," says Kevin Kelly in the article. "Yet we're already there in a sense; it's already begun and we don't even recognize it. The first part of it has already been completed, the sense that three billion people are online, so it has begun."

These tech wizards in Silicon Valley are creating artificial-intelligence-operated gizmos, hopefully the kind that serve humankind (and not up for dinner!).

Yes, even my solar pathway lights take batteries, go figure? But I did get one of those battery chargers made to re-charge regular alkaline batteries along with the newer rechargeable batteries. I like options, so I even bought a solar battery re-charger for about \$25. Now we only need sunshine, and time. Next up is a wood-fired re-charger. Amazingly, I discovered one that has a smokeless wood fire, can boil a liter of water in 4½ minutes, and has two USB ports to recharge items like phones, Kindle readers and small tablets. It even has a small coffee press to go along with it, no batteries needed!

The advertising from my insurance company wants me to agree to have a little GPS thingy in the glove box, to possibly lower my rates. It would gather locations, speeds and a variety of information. No thank you. For all I know, it would notice the stretch on my two-mile driveway where I remove the restrictive, chest-flattening, neck-rubbing seat belt, and raise my insurance rate!

I have thought about a solar and battery powered gate opener for those winter days, so I wouldn't need to climb out of the car, in the snow, on a hill. There will probably be an app for that soon...

ONWARD!

J. Merrill Baker, technically an off-grid ruralite!

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Mountain Meandering

Connecting

Photo & Text by Patricia Ediger

For me, connection is a basic underlying motivation. Connection to others and to the natural world. It defines my identity, my purpose, my finding meaning.

In nature, the birds flock together, the fish in the streams and oceans swim as one, according to their species, mammals on land or water gather in their pride, herd or pod – all finding safety in numbers, a proximity that helps to keep them alive, a relationship that keeps them from extinction.

I've noticed that trees and other plants never seem to grow just singly but always in multitudes. The stars and planets in the heavens above us, too, appear clustered far and wide beyond our ability to count. All in sync, interconnected and interdependent.

I think about our connectedness as humans and how this has unlimited possibilities and expressions. I consider all the methods we have invented and worked with to improve our abilities to connect, such as advancing our modes of transportation from horse and donkey to ships, trains, cars and jets that allow us to travel faster, not just for food and work and efficiency, but also for gathering together, for opportunities to be with family and friends.

People have endured great difficulty and danger and delay in travel by wagon trains to bus stations and airports in their attempts to share meaningful family bonding. We see the development of speech and writing to understand one another and find community and

closeness. Hieroglyphics, letter writing, mail service, telegraph, telephones, computers and the internet, Facetime and Skype, modes of social media that have allowed us to connect and communicate in increasingly broader and more immediate ways.

It seems clear to me that we were not meant to be alone and that none of us on this earth and in this universe are. Isolation, I don't think, is ever a long-term healthy state of being. Tribe, community and culture shape us, identify us. Our quality and quantity of social engagement needs vary greatly too, I've noticed. Some folks need a daily or even constant supply of human interaction, while others need far less. Hence the terms extrovert and introvert, I assume. Many even find their interconnectedness in the solitude of nature for soul and spirit.

Myself, I have a need for both – quality time with other people, friends and family, plus a good dose of solitude, enjoying the outdoor beauty of nature and the wild things. My husband and I have some differences in our "social vs. solitude" quotas, but we generally do quite well in our adaptation to each other's needs.

Case in point: We recently traveled several hours to meet one of my husband's brothers, whom we hadn't seen in over four years. A visit was long overdue. Meeting a little over halfway in Leavenworth, Washington, we spent seven hours together, getting caught up with one another over food, drinks and strolling through the parks surrounding the quaint town. Our hearts filled by this fellowship, we parted ways. My husband and I journeyed back through the state, finding a quiet secluded

spot near Waterville, a deserted campground at Jameson Lake. Alone, we found ourselves in awe as the sun sank low behind the western cliffs and the half-waxed moon and evening stars began to shine brightly, their reflections cast upon the lake's still waters.

After setting up our sleeping arrangement in the back of our SUV, we climbed up on the hood, leaning back against the windshield, to share a bottle of red wine. We listened to the sounds of crickets and frogs, and waterfowl making faint splashes in the water. This connection filled our souls with joy and contentment, likely made more meaningful by the renewing of relationship we had shared with his brother that day.

Later, we watched the Milky Way show itself as the waxing moon set, now just starlight lighting up the lake in front of us. We woke up with the dawn to the sounds of meadowlark songs, the quacking of families of red-necked grebes and American coots and the croak of a great blue heron as it took flight. Morning sunshine slowly crept over the mountain, warming us and energizing us for the day. We left feeling thankful for it all. Thankful for family, for friends, for community, and for this beautiful earth we inhabit.

May our every effort towards relationship and attachment to one another and the life around us be richly rewarded. May we draw close and learn just how interdependent we actually are.

Patricia Ediger is a freelance photographer specializing in wildlife, nature, and landscape photography. See her work at her gallery at the Old Apple Warehouse, Kettle Falls, WA and at patriciaedigerphotography.com.

Green Blanket Feet Walks Through

Marsha McInnis begins the telling of this story:

My early childhood was spent in Richland, Washington. We lived near Indian Country and it was a normal part of our life. Every summer when the local tribes would gather for traditional dances in the neighborhood grocery store parking lot, my brother, sister and I would rush to see and admire their clothing, headdresses and dancing. We knew of the Yakima and Umatilla Nations, this was our normal

When we were children, our mother mentioned that we had a distant relative who was Nez Perce and that her name was Princess Green Flower. If we asked for details she would tell us that's all she knew. I always thought that it was an interesting idea, having Indian blood, but didn't think much more about it.

One day many years later, family was gathered round the kitchen table talking about who Princess Green Flower might have been. No one knew anything about her. It dawned on me that maybe there was more to be learned. I wanted to know who Princess Green Flower was or if she even existed. That began a relentless search that started with not even a verifiable name.

I called the Nez Perce Tribe in Idaho to ask about Princess Green Flower. They said that is not a name that a Nez Perce would have. The mystery deepened – maybe it was just folklore, a family rumor, and there never was such a person. Yet something still gnawed at me to keep looking.

I volunteer to help facilitate mental health family support groups and have done so for years. A couple who attended the groups just happened to talk about genealogy before one of the meetings. This generous couple offered to try to solve the mystery.

Their search came back with a result within 30 minutes. I was shocked. She WAS real! Her name was Sophie "Green Blanket Feet" Edwards and she was my great-great-grandmother. She was not Nez

Perce but belonged to the Sinixt, or the Arrow Lakes Tribe. She was born in 1834 and died in 1888.

They not only found this information, they also sent a copy of the *North Columbia Monthly* magazine. In it, an article [June 2016, page 31] about blankets by Tina Wynecoop told a heartbreaking story about a native woman named Green Blanket Feet and her search for her two kidnapped children. One of the children was my great-grandfather, Robert Pelkey Jr. He and his sister were taken from their mother by their father and raised in St.

about a 3-hour drive northeast from Yakima.

The entire day we were consistently running 15 minutes behind, which added to my anxiety. As each minute passed by, I became even more nervous until finally excitement took over as we parked the car at the restaurant.

My newly-discovered cousin walked up to us with a wide grin. We instantly bonded. It was such a peaceful feeling that a missing part of my life was now whole. What a sweet moment, full of hugs and greetings. As we walked into the banquet

room, I threw my hands in the air and declared, "A thousand miles!" What a thrill to finally meet everyone.

We introduced ourselves and shared how we were related, completing the family circle. Our common ancestor was Green Blanket Feet. My cousin facilitated the evening as we ate, talked, laughed, and felt overwhelming joy.

As a beautiful gift, a notebook was compiled with family history, including my great-grandfather, great-aunt and grandfather. A table was set up with family photo albums and a multitude of old photographs.

The doors of history opened stories of hardship, loss, strength, family and children.

After our meal, a cousin who spoke Salish fluently translated a story recorded by her great-grandmother telling the sad and amazing tale of Green Blanket Feet, a woman who sacrificed so much to find her children and return to her homeland. I felt so proud to be a part of this moment, our heritage, the language, the gift of sharing the story, so sacred, so sad. Now it is our story to tell our children and grandchildren. May it live on forever.

A young man had entered and he sat next to me during dinner. He and the storyteller cousin seemed to know each other. After the story ended, some of the women walked up to a corner of the table bringing bags of small gifts. My newly found cousin was standing nearby and to her sur-



Illustration by Eileen Delehanty Parkes, who also wrote articles on Green Blanket Feet in the June and July 2012 editions of this magazine.

Louis, Missouri.

I called the *North Columbia Monthly* and spoke with the publisher, who knows the author. I told him I wanted to pay my respects to my family. He relayed my contact information to Tina, she called, and the door was opened wide. Then it was an instant decision to travel to Spokane to meet the family I had never known.

After weeks of careful planning, a friend of mine and I headed to Yakima to pick up my sister. We would drive to Spokane for our grand meeting at a dinner, and later go to Kettle Falls to meet up with my brother and his son and spend time with our new-found family and place of our ancestors.

The Dinner

I woke up that morning at my sister's home knowing a life-changing event was going to happen at 5 p.m. at the Kalispel 1898 Public House Restaurant in Spokane,

Her Lineage, *as told by Marsha McInnis & Tina Wynecoop*

prise the gifts were placed at her feet. The young man stood up and spoke in Salish, which was followed by a song, so soulful, beyond any experience I have ever known. I was overwhelmed with emotion, so incredible, so excited to witness this moment.

(In her article accompanying this one, Tina Wyncoop tells more about the meaning of the ceremony and the people involved.)

The ceremony was honoring my cousin for her life's work and her dedication to the Columbia River and as the person to bring the descendants of the kidnapped children home. She was honored with the tribal name of our common ancestor, *Qwn'qwinxn*, Sophie Green Blanket Feet. My friend, sister and I huddled in our own small circle and wept. That night we were given beautiful baskets, beaded necklaces and a banquet room full of love.

The Gathering

The next day we headed north to the Kettle Falls Historical Center. This is where a smaller group of our family would

spend time getting to know each other. My brother flew in from Las Vegas and his son from Portland, Oregon. We all assembled in the tiny parking area to figure out our day. First on our list was to visit the center, a small well-done museum focused on the Kettle Falls fishery and the history of the indigenous people who resided there, our ancestors.

We then strolled to St. Paul's Mission, then over to take in a grand view of the Columbia River. We admired the sharpening stone and imagined what it must have been like in another era.

Final on the day's itinerary was a picnic by the Columbia – sandwiches, folding chairs, sharing about our lives, taking pictures, sitting in the lap of the river, fresh pine-scented air ... could it get any better than this?

The third day was especially poignant. We visited the Pia Mission and it started to rain – appropriate weather knowing the church held mass primarily for funerals. The cemetery blended in with the surrounding meadows and forest. It was an eerily quiet place filled with history. The

gathering ended midday after another picnic by the river.

For the first time in my life I felt I belonged. This insatiable appetite to know the truth led to a most fulfilling life-changing reward. I knew at last I had found my home. Now everything is truly normal.

And here, Tina Wynecoop carries the story forward:

She returned to her family at Kettle Falls on the Columbia River from her unsuccessful journey to reunite with her little children, Kitty and Robert Jr. They were stolen from her by their non-Indian father who told her, "I don't want you no more." On her arrival home her people saw that her feet were wrapped for protection in strips torn from a green Hudson's Bay Company trade blanket. From then on, Sophie Edwards was called "Green Blanket Feet" (*q^wnq^win'xñ*) by her people. Hers was a song of lamentation.

The experience of her journey was written large in the hearts of her family. Oral

...continued on page 34



Gathered at the Sharpening Stone at the overlook of the site of the falls on the Columbia River, from left to right, Nancy Michel, Patti Bailey, Peggy Rahman, Tina and Judge Wynecoop, Susan Harris, Marsha McInnis, David and Mark Michael, and Joyce Kohler.

Green Blanket Feet, continued...

tradition has kept her journey and memory alive through five generations of her descendants. It seems unparalleled in the human history of the Upper Columbia River. It is one of the river's many songs, first sad – then sweet:

*The sound of water tells the story well,
in the sheen of river stone.
A song is prevalent,
faithful to continuance,
the purity is a nuance,
the memory, this certain way.*

~Elizabeth Woody (Wasco),
from *Luminaries of the Humble*

It took her descendants over a century to find each other and reunite in her name, thus bringing closure to the painful familial breach of deception and misinformation.

Able One (sipi'tsa', 1815-1889) and her husband, Shadow-top (ekitminous, 1809-1854), had beautiful, capable daughters, including Sophie Edwards, who was wooed by and married to Robert Pelkey, a white soldier stationed at nearby Fort Colville. Their offspring were very young (with a third yet to be born) when the father/soldier absconded with them without telling their mother. He took them to Fort Benton on the Missouri River. His intention was to have them raised by his non-Indian family in the east.

As I reported in the June 2016 edition of *North Columbia Monthly*: "At Fort Benton, on the Missouri River, Sophie, who had followed them on horseback all the way from the Columbia River, arrived just as the boat they were on was loosed from its moorings. Her children disappeared from view and from her life forever.

"With a broken heart she began her return trip to her people at Marcus by Kettle Falls. Her journey included a lengthy captivity by the Blackfoot tribe. She eventually escaped with the assistance of an elderly woman who had suffered the same fate. Provisions for the long trip home included a green trade blanket. When Sophie Edwards' moccasins were worn to shreds, she bound her feet with strips torn from her green blanket. She later explained, 'When I reached my people, they were all glad to see me. My feet were bare except

for the worn strips of my once fine four-point Hudson Bay blanket. This is why I am called by my tribe Green Blanket Feet' – *quen quenchen*."

It was this 2016 article's description of Sophie's experience that helped genealogists connect Marsha McInnis, Sophie's great-great-granddaughter, with her missing ancestor. The longing to verify connection with the Indian side of her family led Marsha to phone Gabriel Cruden, owner/publisher of *North Columbia Monthly*, with a request to have contact information for the author of the article. Gabriel called me and asked, "Do you recognize the name Pelkey?" How could one forget that name! Sophie Edwards Pelkey is my husband's grandmother's aunt. Her story is unforgettable.

Within two months Marsha, her siblings Susan and David, and David's son Mark journeyed to the shores of the Columbia for the uniting of the family. After it happened, Marsha said, "This means everything to me. This completes my life. I feel like it's every holiday wrapped in this moment."

Through the timeless tradition of "name giving," practiced by the Interior Salish people at important ceremonies of ancestral respect, a person's name can be remembered by succeeding generations. The person newly receiving the name demonstrates the qualities of the deceased ancestor. Green Blanket Feet's loss, courage, bravery, steadfast love, strength, and allegiance to family and homeland were worthy of ceremony.

Unknown to most who would come to the family-uniting dinner in Spokane, such a ceremony was about to take place that evening.

Shelly Boyd, a fluent Salish speaker, translated into English the recorded incidents of Green Blanket Feet's tragic story as told by her niece, Helen Perkins Toulou. Helen is Shelly's great-grandmother.

When finished, Shelly announced that there would be a name giving. Barry Moses (Spokane) led the blessing and sang. Most felt that "embarrassing spontaneous sob-eruption thing," in the words of writer Gayle Forman. Not only were we united as never before, we were then hon-

ored to witness the remarkable ceremony honoring Green Blanket Feet and her great-great-granddaughter Patti Bailey!

According to ethnographer John A. Ross, "During the naming ceremony, people who knew of the deceased whose name was to be bequeathed would stand and provide accounts of that person's particular traits and unique accomplishments and adventures." Gifts to the speakers and relatives recognized them and acknowledged their acceptance of Patti's new name. As she stood, visibly moved, each person in the room came before her and, one by one, took her hand while reciting her new name three times: *q'w'nq'w'inx'n*, *q'w'nq'w'inx'n*, *q'w'nq'w'inx'n*.

The recipient then spoke to all from her grateful heart.

A huckleberry dessert was served, bringing to a close an extraordinary gathering.

Sophie Edwards' presence was felt during the three days of family celebration and recognition. She now has a new song, not the one of lamentation, but "a song ... prevalent, faithful to continuance."

We sing it with her.

The Homecoming

By Susan Harris

This was written as a reflection on the reunion of the Green Blanket Feet descendants in Kettle Falls, Washington, in June 2019. It was a beautiful gathering.

A circle of newly found cousins

Laughing, sharing, crying – ready

To create a new story.

My sister, my brother and I

Are folded into our newly discovered family.

The connective tissue comes through our mother.

She is here in spirit – I feel her breath

In the wind through the pines

Nodding her approval.

Her children have found the missing link

Of our family story. ... A great and sad story.

We have carried it in our bones,

Unknowingly acting it out through generations.

Not quite getting it right

Until, at last, home.

Keeping the Spine Flexible

By Brenda St. John

"You are only as young as your spine is flexible."

~ Joseph Pilates

Many people practice yoga because they think it will make them flexible. And if they practice consistently and with dedication (Yoga Sutra 1.14), it will! With repetitive actions, our bodies become accustomed to moving in certain directions and within a certain range. If that is all we ever do, any freedom we once had to move in other ways can become lost. However, our amazing bodies can be trained to regain that lost freedom by diligent effort and consistent practice.

Where do we begin? In the center, with the spine, of course.

Our central nervous system is located within our brain and spinal cord. Clearly, keeping our spine healthy is important. The spine is made to move in six directions. Part of staying flexible comes from moving in each of these directions every day: forward bending, back bending, side bending to the right and left, and twisting to the right and left.

To move the spine safely, a person should have some understanding of the spine anatomy. The spine has four natural curves. The cervical spine is located at the back of the neck and it is concave in shape. The upper back is called the thoracic spine and its shape is a convex curve. The lumbar spine (the low back) is concave, and the sacral spine, which is basically the sacrum and tailbone, is convex. The two concave sections work in unison with each other, as do the two convex sections.

One of the best yoga positions to maintain a flexible spine is Cat/Cow. You start on your hands and knees, which is called Table Top. To move into Cow Pose, lift your chin and look up while also lifting your sit bones. This creates a dip in the lumbar spine and the back of the neck

(the two concave curves). Then move into Cat Pose by pushing your hands against the floor as you arch your back, spreading your shoulder blades wide, and draw the tip of your tailbone forward. This emphasizes the two convex curves.

To bring this asana to life, move back and forth between Cat and Cow with your breath. As you exhale, move into the arched-back Cat position. As you inhale, lift your chin and your tail. Keep your breathing slow and rhythmic, and coordinate your movements with the breath. Repeat at least 10 times.

The Cat/Cow is a nice warmup with its mini flexions and extensions. To start moving in the other four directions, some gentle side bends and twists can be done from this same Table Top position.

For an easy side bend, walk both feet to the right as far as you comfortably can. Then turn from the waist and look at your feet over your right shoulder. Stay in this position for about five breaths. Then come back to center and repeat on the other side.

You can go into a twist from Table Top by sweeping your right arm out to the side and up overhead. The less you turn your hips, the more twist you will get in the upper spine. A twist is

rotation along an axis, which means there needs to be a fixed point. Think of your hips being stable and feel your upper spine twisting. Then take it the other way: sweep the arm back down and, at floor level, slide the hand across the mat to the left, palm up and fingers leading the way. If your shoulder allows, keep sliding until the right shoulder rests on the mat. Stay here for a few breaths with your right ear on the mat. Then come up and repeat on the other side.

For a full back bend, lie down on your belly. Angle your legs back in a small V shape and rotate the ankles so both feet point straight back. Angle your arms back and place your palms on the mat, about 8 to 10 inches away from each hip. Rest your brow line on the mat. On an inhalation, lift your head, shoulders, and both straight legs. As you lift your head, keep the chin drawn in rather than popping it up. This is one of many versions of Shalabasana, or Locust Pose. As you exhale, lower everything back to the mat. Repeat a few more times, then cross your forearms in front of your chest and rest your head on your arms (Crocodile Pose).

Forward bends are the most challenging of the six directions, mainly due to tight hips or, more specifically, tight hamstrings and/or hip flexor muscles. For a very inflexible person, I recommend lying on your back and hugging your knees to your chest. As you inhale, straighten your elbows and allow your knees to move back. With the exhale, bend the elbows and draw the knees close again. Move with your breath several times. This pose is called Apanasana. For those with more strength, a beginner forward

fold would be Downward Facing Dog. Down Dog, like many other poses listed in

this article, is considered to be a "super pose" because it is accessible to most people and provides many benefits.

Stay healthy! Stay flexible!

Namaste.

Brenda St. John has been teaching yoga classes in Chewelah since 2010 through the Community Colleges of Spokane's Act 2 program.



Chips In The Woods

By Joe Barreca

Most of us are very glad that this year's fire season has been relatively mild. But if you are a member of a firefighting crew like Alan McKee and his Northern Columbia Reforestation team, it's been a tough year financially.

Firefighting pays well, is recognized as necessary, is regulated to provide sustainable working conditions and gets a lot of attention. To stay employed and productive while not fighting fires, McKee's crew pooled resources to equip themselves for forestry management. A lot of their work involves forest restoration and fire protection and often boils down to thinning overstocked forest stands, chipping up those smaller-diameter trees (up to 8 inches) and broadcasting the chips onto the forest floor.

While this might sound like fun in a noisy, macho, go-getter kind of way, it is hard work, needs serious ear protection and wears down your body. The crew is generally young, 20-40 years old. (Of course, at my age, 72, almost everyone seems younger.) The equipment is expensive to own and operate. Most of the projects are either on government land or subsidized through government cost-share arrangements on private land. So, funding can be minimal and difficult to obtain.

Timber markets are reported as down. "In the second half of fiscal 2018 ... shipments swamped the market, plunging

prices by 50 percent ... the outcome is that higher-cost mills in western North America have been curtailing production to contend with below-cost prices" (woodbusiness.ca). This makes timberland owners more reluctant to plow money back into increasing production. In short, it's been hard to stay chipper while chipping.

On the upside, chipping is considered very good for the forest. Most landowners will look at it as fire prevention. Spacing trees 14 feet apart on average, cutting off limbs up to eight feet above the ground and spreading green wood chips does make much less likely that a fire will reach the crowns of the trees and spread rapidly in the wind. And having an open forest floor makes fighting fires much easier.

Chipping provides many other advantages. The chips retain moisture in the ground and promote the growth of soil-enhancing microbes and fungi. The spacing lets big trees accumulate more water and sunlight, which enables them to grow bigger and faster.

Forest ecologist Jay Berube explained to me that, historically, big pine trees were spread thinly over a typical acre and the underbrush was kept in check by fires burning up pine cones and needles every 5 to 10 years. He had his property thinned and the debris chipped three years ago. Before that you could not see through the woods more than a few feet. Now you can see hundreds of feet.

Considering the forest in terms of di-

versity and vitality, Berube noted that mule deer, elk and moose could see a long way and roam easily through a historically open forest. As timber was clear-cut or burned and grew back thicker, smaller white-tailed deer became predominant.

When I first heard about Alan McKee's operation, it was described as chipping up slash piles. I thought this would be a great thing. We have all seen huge slash piles along forest roads and the plumes of dirty smoke from them when they are burned. Slash piles even release carbon into the air while they rot. But when sequestered in the soil, carbon can promote vitality and diversity. It is a valued resource that is wasted in slash piles.

The chipper does have a winch that can drag in material up to eight inches wide. But forest land treatment projects don't deal with slash from commercial logging. This seemed like a big resource issue, so I stopped by some government offices to learn more about forest management.

Mark Simpson from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) agrees that big slash piles left from logging are a wasted resource. NCRS does not deal with commercial logging, although it does support fuels reduction projects. He recounted how a lawsuit to limit smoke from crop residue fires had resulted in NCRS not recommending burning as an alternative. He knows of some landowners hiring contractors with wood-cutting machines

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to recover firewood from the piles. Others make use of the Waste to Energy plant in Spokane. NCRS does allow some slash to be piled in 10-by-15-foot wildlife shelters for porcupines, quail and skunks, among others.

Jessica Walston at Washington's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) identified piles of freshly cut pine as a possible source of pine beetle infestation. The DNR has a program to share half the cost of work associated with wildfire fuels

reduction and forest health that requires a prescription from their forester. Slash generated from the program is required to be removed, hand piled and burned, or "masticated" (brush hog-like treatment), or chipped.

Berube worried that mastication can disturb the soil, so he chose chipping. Burning has its own issues and permits but can be done in a way that adds biochar to the soil. Removal works well for fence posts and firewood. DNR also does permitting for slash piles left by commercial logging and for burning slash.

Both NCRS and DNR often recommend that forest landowners contract a forester

to write a land management plan. DNR has a cost-share program to help with that.

Historically, land was put into a low timber value classification for property tax purposes if trees could be seen on an aerial photo of the property. More recently, guidelines from the Washington State Department of Revenue look for a "copy of the timber management plan for the land, prepared by a forester or a person with adequate knowledge of timber management practices." New landowners need to be aware that county assessors are looking for these plans, though implementation varies.

Nicole Vaillant writes in a National For-

est Service *Science Update* on fuel treatments, "The current level of fuel treatment and beneficial fire is not keeping pace with the level needed to fully create and maintain resilient landscapes, especially in frequent fire rotation areas." This reflects a national attitude that emphasizes a strong response to forest fires once they are started, but neglects preparation and prevention with fuel reduction and controlled burns. A nice wet summer like this might be a good time to feel a little more chipper about chipping in the woods.

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



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Embracing the Seasons of Life

by Linda Bond

When I was in my twenties, I gave little thought to the process of aging in my life. I accepted it intellectually, but emotionally it meant nothing. Because my parents passed at relatively young ages, they were both gone before I was very far into my thirties and I did not watch them age for long. I certainly didn't expect to live past fifty. Imagine my surprise as I neared that magic number and not only did I not die, I was in good health, with no particular end in sight.

I have spent considerable time meditating on the seasonal flow of life in nature. I feel sorry for people living in parts of the country without seasonal changes, or who have a long season with only minor variations in weather. Here in the Inland Northwest, we have four strong, identifiable seasons, each with its own personality.

Appreciating Seasonal Change

With spring each year comes new birth and rebirth; a sense for me of hope for the future. I see shoots poke their heads from the soil, vines begin to twine their way up trellises, early edibles like peas reach for the sun once the nights are no longer too cold for growth. Bees begin their annual search for early pollen, returning to their hives as the temperatures drop at night.

Summer follows, with the warmth needed for things to grow, to offer plenty of nourishment for our fellow creatures and for the just-born generation. With summer comes trees filled with leaves,

expanding their roots, surrounded by burgeoning lawns, bushes, raspberry stalks and flowers. Vegetables begin their climb toward maturity, joining the peas and carrots that have already gone to table. I find it is a time of plenty. Summer is also a time of outdoor activities – boating, swimming, playing sports like tennis, fishing, concerts in the park, fireworks events and barbecues.

In the fall, as temperatures begin to drop and harvests beckon, we enjoy the fruits of our summer labors. If we are fortunate, our tables are full of a variety of home-cooked foods, culminating in the Thanksgiving feast. We've already watched the grinning faces of pumpkins sitting on our porches and walkways, as children, giggling, move from house to house, asking for treats.

And finally, it is time for winter, when snow turns our environment into a winter wonderland. Christmas comes and goes, and we watch the days begin to get just a little bit longer because we have passed the winter solstice. It is time to bundle up for some skiing or sledding, then cuddle before a warm fire, to have a sip of wine and perhaps to read a book or listen to music. For winter is not a time of death so much as a time of sleeping, and we begin to look forward to the next season when, once again, new growth will spring forth to renew our faith in the seasons of life.

Seasons Can Also Bring Hardship

Not all is peaceful and encouraging with the seasons. Spring often brings surging streams and rivers, with water that jumps its banks to flood lowlands. Storms come, with lightning and thunder. Summers sometimes (it seems like often these days) threatens with wildfires. Monsoon-like rainstorms can bring major floods, road washouts and other damage. In the fall, early freezes can harm crops before they are ready to be harvested, and winter ice can turn roads dangerous and take down trees and power lines, throwing us into darkness just when we need the assistance of electricity the most.

The Seasons of Our Lives

And so I sit here, thinking about the spring of my life, when everything was possible and there were no limits. I was fortunate. The summer of my life brought a feeling of more responsibility, but I knew I could count on my strength, good eyesight and general health to help me succeed in my work. When fall arrived (at about the age of sixty or so) I began to appreciate the special benefits that come along with age. I could get discounts at restaurants, my public transit pass was less costly, and I even reached the age to receive Social Security. That meant I could cut back on work hours and still put food on the table.

At the age of 72, I wonder if I am in my winter years. If so, it is a mild season so far. I look forward to seeing what life has still to offer. A hot drink, feet up, with a good book sounds more and more appealing as the days go by. If I am fortunate, the years will be kind, but at least I know they should be interesting.

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

It All Happens on the Porch

By Michelle Lancaster

My first vivid memory of a front porch is of the day I met my husband. I tried calling him several times, looking to hire on to his dairy farm, but I learned then that dairy farmers are notorious for not answering the phone or returning calls. They are out in the barn working or in the house eating or sleeping with not much time in between.

The friends that told me about the job advised me to drive out there and knock on the door. I was really unsure about this, being a serious introvert and conservative about respecting people's privacy. Thankfully, I overcame my shyness, knocked on the door, and met Jay. He said, "Why don't we sit on the front porch and talk."

He looked a bit tired and I could tell he was sad (I would later learn that his wife had passed away about six months prior), yet we struck up a conversation easily and visited for a few minutes. Those few minutes led to the next 15 years (and counting!) of our lives together. I can still vividly see that October 3rd day in my mind, sitting on wooden chairs, visiting in the comfort of the shade of the porch.

Never before had I thought much about the function of a porch. My home growing up did not have a well-defined porch and there was not a lot of talk about porches. Then we moved to Maryland, just barely south of the Mason-Dixon line, and the iconic porch came into view. Chestertown, the town we lived in, contained two sections of town – the waterfront area with expansive homes and wrap-around porches and the uptown district with tall narrow homes and small porches.

The porches I remember are the small ones. Families would spend most of the year on such porches. Locals told us that generations of families would live in one house, consolidating incomes to be able to afford the home. Porches provided a little bit of fresh air and a quiet atmosphere. They were also a social area, as residents would wave to and visit with people passing by. I enjoyed getting to see a glimmer of what the past must have been like, when porches were the equivalent of today's Facebook.

Many think of a porch as a luxury space, in that a porch can be seen as "wasted" square-footage on a home. I heartily disagree.

In our current home, we have both a front and back porch. The front porch works well for brief visits – even in rain, people can hang out on the front stoop in a comfortable spot to gab. Benches on the front are a good spot for people to drop off or pick up items when we are not home. The front porch is also the

perfect place to decorate with fall pumpkins and corn stalks or winter Christmas lights that brighten the long, dark winter. Our front porch defines us.

The back porch is our refuge. Large enough to host a dinner party, the back porch more often is used as a quiet breakfast nook where we can overlook the pasture. From the recesses of the porch, we can hide in plain view of the wildlife. Turkeys walk by pecking at bugs and deer munch on leaves as they meander by with their young. They rarely notice us, unless we make noises at them. The back porch also works for hanging laundry to dry, carding dusty wool, putting on work boots, and sheltering our protective dog.

Whether on a farm or in a town, a multi-use porch can stir up all sorts of pleasant memories.

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

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Comradery in Denali

Article & Photos by Joanie Christian

In the far northern reaches of our continent, in the heart of the Alaskan wilderness, lies Denali National Park. It is remote and wild, a subarctic ecosystem of more than six million acres, larger than the state of Massachusetts. With just a single road going through the park, visitors experience a sense of having left civilization behind, the unspoiled and vast wilderness a jaw-dropping exposure to what our now developed landscape must have been like long ago.

In 2017 I saw an amazing video of a sow grizzly and two cubs walking down a road in a snowstorm and learned the footage had been taken during the Denali Road Lottery. I did a little sleuthing to learn more.

In the 1990s, the park encountered numerous challenges with managing crowds and wildlife and authorities closed the park to people in their own cars. Visitors now can travel on buses to about mile 30 of the 92-mile park road. However, park managers still wanted to allow a chance for some visitors to see the park in their own vehicles, and so the Denali Road Lottery was born.

After the limited visitor season closes each year, the park is opened for four days to lottery winners who can drive, with passengers, through the entire park in their own vehicles for a day. The park sells lottery tickets in the spring for \$15 each and winners are drawn in June. Odds of being drawn vary each year, depending on the number of tickets purchased, but are usual-

ly about 1 in 8. In 2018, we bought tickets, and to our surprise my name was drawn.

The 2018 trip was truly incredible and I so longed to go back, thinking it would be amazing to experience the park with my nature-loving girlfriends. I shared the idea with three friends, who were instantly game for the adventure. We bought tickets with the plan that we would all go together if any of us were drawn. And two of us won. We would have TWO days in the park!

We were stoked and began planning. Then one of the four got a new job and sadly could no longer go. Vickie suggested inviting a friend, who was giddy with excitement at the prospect. Denali had been on her bucket list for a long time. Vickie, Patty, Carlahn and I were the nature-loving shutterbugs who would make the journey to Denali together.

We scheduled a meeting about a month before the trip for everyone to get acquainted, but Carlahn broke her leg the day before. She needed surgery the following week and was crushed that the injury might keep her from the trip. She met with us anyway, and we all offered to help her if her doctor allowed her to go.

The four of us, with very different backgrounds, were beginning to form a tight bond and friendship that would morph in unexpected ways in the weeks to come. Carlahn's surgery went well and her doctor gave her the thumbs-up. She began calling us her "tiny village," knowing she would be

dependent on us to make it all happen.

Soon we were on our way with a mountain of luggage, six cameras, three tripods, numerous lenses and one temperamental scooter, the all-important piece of equipment for our non-weight-bearing friend.

Up North

I am not fond of tiny plane seats, but something I do love about air travel is that you get a sense of being part of a much bigger world than the little bubbles we live and work in. Each of us had different tales to tell about interesting people we met on the plane. We stayed in Fairbanks that night and would make the 2 ½-hour trek to the park the next day.

We awoke to beautiful weather. The birch covering the landscape were dropping their leaves, but it was still spectacular. We made a few stops in Fairbanks before heading to Denali. The previous year I learned that supplies near the park are extremely limited after the park season ends, and so we bought a cooler and stocked it with groceries. The Fairbanks farmers market was a fun find, with items such as foods made with reindeer sausage, jewelry made from antlers and birch bark, low bush cranberries, and handknit items from musk ox yarn.

As we shopped, we learned a little more about our "tiny village": who the power shoppers were, who the social butterflies were, everyone's quirks. We visited Cream-





er's Field in Fairbanks, a migratory waterfowl wildlife refuge. We quickly developed a routine for getting Carlahn in and out of the car and dealing with the persnickety scooter.

We arrived at the park, picked up our lottery day passes, and then explored the first ungated 15 miles of the park. The next day we would explore the remaining 77 miles on a gravel park road. Meanwhile, though, that 15 miles open to the public happens to contain a 6-mile stretch with the highest moose activity in the entire park. Signs warn not to leave the roadway due to bull moose being in rut. There we had our first moose encounters – two cow moose and a calf grazing on the tundra, and eventually crossing the road between cars.

More signs, these about sled dogs in training, were posted along the highway. Due to harsh conditions in winter, the park is patrolled by dog sled, and summer training helps keep them fit.

We checked in and agreed to meet the next morning at 5 a.m. Lottery winners can enter starting at 6, and we wanted to make the most of our day. At 5 a.m., the group was raring to go, albeit a bit sleepy.

Toward the Interior

I was familiar with the park road, so I drove, leaving the others free to fully experience the wonder of the park. At the gate, a park ranger congratulated us and gave us the rundown on rules and safety. We were in the first group to go through.

We were quickly distracted and mesmerized by the sight of the sunrise in one direction and the waning moon in the other direction, fog and mist shrouding the surreal scenes. We stopped for some photos, with the tripods coming out due to low light conditions. It was a time-consuming process, and we learned we would need to be quicker and more discerning about when to get all that gear out.

As the sun rose, the landscape started taking form. Partly clear skies led to ex-

citement that we might see “the mountain.” Within Denali stands the tallest mountain in North America. This massive accumulation of rock, ice and snow is the central point of the Alaska mountain range, separating the coastal climate of south-central Alaska and the drier and colder climate of the interior. It also geographically separates several Athabascan tribal homelands, Ahtna and Dena'ina on the coastal side and the Koyukon, Tanana and Upper Kuskokwimi

the 20%.

We began seeing wildlife almost immediately after the sun rose: a spruce grouse and some willow ptarmigan first. Early in the day, a sow grizzly and cub appeared, grazing on the mountainside. As we ascended a ridge, a hawk rode an air draft, floating motionless. As we got closer to the Alaska mountain range, we spotted another sow grizzly with two cubs in the tundra at the base of the mountains. These grizzlies were



tribes within the interior.

From time immemorial, each tribe had its own name for the mountain, with “Denali” or “Deenaalee” being the most common, all translations meaning “the high one.” Later, gold prospectors along the Yukon River called the mountain “Densmore Mount” or “Densmore Peak.” Another gold prospector named it “Mount McKinley” after president-elect William McKinley, who he admired, and the name became more popular following McKinley’s assassination in 1901. After decades of efforts by many to restore the Athabascan name, the mountain was officially changed back to “Denali” on the eve of the National Park Service’s 100th anniversary in 2015.

Nearly 80% of the time, Denali is shrouded in cloud cover. We were hoping to be in

blond, with a darker stripe down the back, but still with the telltale hump of a grizzly. The backdrop of the mountain range behind them was simply stunning.

All the grizzlies we were spotting were busy eating. Winter was coming and they needed to bulk up. They must survive an entire year on the food they eat during the 5-7 months they aren’t hibernating. Sadly, grizzly cubs have only a 1 in 7 chance of making it to their 2nd birthday. If they make it that far, grizzlies are generally long lived.

The park road is narrow, but generally better than the average huckleberry road. Where we were, however, it was especially narrow and it had a steep drop-off. Heavy summer rainfall had caused landslides and rockslides and areas were marked to avoid due to unstable soil, which was a little un-

Comradery in Denali, continued...

nervous.

As the day progressed, our group was getting to know each other more. We learned how to park to give Carlahn the best view, and ways to help her be able to experience the park like the rest of us.

As we drove to Wonder Lake, near the end of the park road, we were in the lucky 20% and could see most of Denali Mountain, with only the tip obscured by clouds. It was indeed massive, dominating the landscape.

Coming back, Patty spotted a large bull moose in the afternoon sun. It wasn't long before a line of cars hugged the roadside for glimpses of the massive moose, which was

think he was less than amused. The weather was drizzly – sunrise wasn't visible that morning. At the second gate, we were informed that a fresh snowfall would delay the opening of the park, but for only about 40 minutes.

The scenes that greeted us were jaw-dropping. It was like we were seeing an entirely different park – it had transformed overnight. Snow covered the landscape and mountain. Dall sheep grazed on the mountainsides, and two rams stood along the ridge silhouetted by the early morning light.

As time went by, the walls came down within our tiny village. Each of the group had recently experienced a different difficult trial in life. Health challenges. Unexpected transitions and losses. Authentic, transparent and supportive conversations occurred as we traversed the winter wonderland, a strange but comforting juxtaposition.

We came across a grizzly sow with her two cubs foraging in a snowstorm

right off the road, so close that everyone remained in cars. They rooted in the snow with their noses, looking for food. They crossed the road in front of us and traversed the steep hillside, the snowfall immersing them in a real-life painting. It is a scene I will not forget, and an experience that each of us realized we had been privileged to witness.

At Wonder Lake, we saw trumpeter swans in the shallows near the shore, using their feet to stir up mud to bring food to the surface. It was a gorgeous scene with the backdrop of autumnal foliage and smooth lake surface accentuating the striking swans.

We watched a grizzly bear walking along the tundra in the distance. We still had not seen a bull caribou but then came around a corner to find two large bulls in front

of a snowy mountainside. It couldn't have been more beautiful, and we were beyond thrilled to see and photograph them. While photographing the caribou, we could see cars lined up in the valley below, observing yet another grizzly. We were astounded at how much wildlife can be seen in this park.

Coming out of the gate and entering the bull moose rut area, we saw five large bull moose in a span of about 10 minutes. One was bedded down in the distance, its antlers on the ground to support its head.

The last bull we saw walked right out in front of us, and we all screamed as he stepped onto the road. He stopped about 15 feet in front of our car, looking at us for a few seconds, before sauntering off the road and eventually disappearing into the tundra. He was massive and spectacular. It was an encounter that thrilled us all, the last parting gift from the incredible park that is Denali.

The Gain

We gathered for dinner and talked about our experiences. Our second lottery day had surpassed our first one, a feat we thought impossible. Carlahn tearfully said it was one of the best days of her life. I think each of us felt the same way. When I asked what was their favorite part of the trip, everyone answered "the comradery." And knowing all the other stuff we saw, that is really saying something.

Our tiny village is a group of very diverse women who will now be lifelong friends. As Carlahn later said, our tiny village was a safe place in a crazy world. That is my hope. We can't change other people, but we can start with ourselves, and model that for others. While that may seem small in the grand scheme of things, I happen to believe that is what makes all the difference.

On this journey, may all our trials in life be met with the same honesty, respect, grace, love, acceptance and humor we shared on this trip. And may the beauty, majesty and unspoiled wildness of Denali forever remain.

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



now approaching the road. No longer safe, almost everyone returned to their cars. But we witnessed what was likely the type of human behavior that led to the park limiting visitors to bus travel back in the '90s.

We arrived back at our hotel exhausted but exhilarated. It had been a full day, and we couldn't imagine a day to top this one. We slept in the next day, then explored the area south of the park, seeing beautiful scenery and a couple more moose, one of which ran in front of us as we drove. It's easy to see why there are so many auto collisions with moose in Alaska.

Back Inside the Gates

We were up at the crack of dawn for our second lottery day too. Loaded on caffeine, our group joked around with the rather stoic ranger at the gate that morning, but I





Tonics, Nutritives and Jazzy Combos

By Faye Stewart

The information presented in these articles is based on tradition and personal experience and is not meant to be in any way prescriptive or a substitute for consultation with licensed healthcare providers.

Let's continue our exploration of health-helpful herbs.

The botanicals-market trend in modern times has starred a succession of herbal antibiotics, adaptogens, antioxidants and alternatives such as ginseng (star of the '70s), goldenseal (star of the '80s), echinacea (star of the '90s) and ginkgo (star of the new millennium as baby-boomers get old). These types of plants are the ninjas of the herb realm, sliding in to suddenly impact what's going on in the body – the kind of remedy modern people, accustomed to quick-fix drugs, appreciate.

Tonic and nutritive herbs in comparison seem old-fashioned: They affect change slowly and take patience and perseverance – possessing virtues rather than superpowers. Using them is like moderate dieting instead of fast-and-binge: They contribute to the work that helps support consistent health.

Tonics sometimes take months to begin to show results. They're long-haul allies, strengthening from the ground up – ideal for addressing those chronic health issues frustrating to conventional medicine, which orients to the acute and is very good at responding to it.

Nutritive herbs are those especially rich in vitamins and minerals. Thus tonics and nutritives work well in tandem and can be used long-term.

Before we look at specific beneficial nutritive and tonic herbs, here's a list of some herbs I suggest you avoid using *for extended periods* due to side effects, loss of effect, unpleasant change of effect or cumulative toxicity:

juniper berries, cubeb berries, celery seeds, buchu lvs., senna pods, cascara sagrada, aloes, mandrake rt., wahoo (yes, this is a real herb), culvers rt., fringe tree, toadflax, scarlet pimpernel, chaparral, poke rt., blue flag, gotu kola, bugleweed, shepherd's purse, ephedra, red ginseng, licorice rt., horehound, comfrey lvs., crampbark, horsetail, hyssop, kava-kava, linden fl., passionflower, rhubarb rt., rue, sage, tansy, thyme, uva ursi, valerian rt., reishi mushrooms and echinacea rt.

Nutritive herbs are more like foods than supplements. Their vitamins and minerals are integrated with – not extracted from – the plant's totality, and so are more easily absorbed and processed by the body. Like eating spinach rather than taking iron pills.

For a nutritive plant to be nutritious, however, it needs to have grown in a healthy habitat (nutritive seaweeds these days, for instance, may be contaminated from ocean pollution), been harvested at the appropriate time, and used or preserved in an efficacious manner. These herbs – most of which are best used fresh – can be juiced, infused/decocted, cooked, and eaten in salads and sandwiches:

Carotene (vitamin A is naturally manufactured by the body from

carotene) is found in dandelion greens, yellow dock rt., rose hips, alfalfa lvs., parsley, violet lvs., watercress, spearmint lvs. and raspberry lvs.

B vitamins (other than B12) are found in watercress, dandelion lvs., rose hips, alfalfa lvs., parsley, fenugreek seeds, raspberry lvs. and catnip lvs.

Vitamin C is abundant in rose hips, watercress, parsley, dandelion greens, violet lvs., red clover fl., nettle lvs., alfalfa lvs., coltsfoot lvs., plantain lvs., strawberry lvs., yellow dock rt., chickweed, blackberry lvs., catnip lvs., spearmint lvs. and boneset.

Vitamin E herbs include dandelion greens, watercress, alfalfa lvs., rose hips and raspberry lvs.

Vitamin K is found in nettle lvs. and alfalfa lvs.

Calcium-rich herbs: oat straw, alfalfa lvs., raspberry lvs., red clover fl., borage, nettle lvs., parsley, watercress, cleavers, coltsfoot lvs., plantain lvs., chamomile fl., dandelion greens, yellow dock rt. and rose hips.

Phosphorus is found in parsley, dandelion greens, watercress, yellow dock rt., calendula fl., chickweed, rose hips, nettle lvs., alfalfa lvs. and raspberry lvs.

Magnesium is found in watercress, alfalfa lvs., parsley, mullein lvs. and dandelions.

Sodium herbs include dandelion and watercress.

Potassium-rich herbs include chamomile fl., parsley, plantain lvs., coltsfoot lvs., watercress, nettle lvs., alfalfa lvs., yarrow fl., borage, eyebright lvs., fennel seeds, mullein lvs., peppermint lvs. and dandelions.

Sulfur is found in nettle lvs., plantain lvs., mullein lvs., parsley, eyebright tops, coltsfoot lvs., watercress, dill and fennel.

Copper herbs include watercress, alfalfa lvs., parsley, nettle lvs. and chickweed.

Iodine is found in watercress and parsley.

Iron-rich herbs are nettle lvs., yellow dock rt., dandelion rt., alfalfa lvs., chickweed, burdock rt., mullein lvs., parsley, watercress and fennel.

Manganese is found in alfalfa lvs., parsley and watercress.

Zinc herbs: watercress and coltsfoot.

Silicon is found in dandelion and nettles.

Fluorine – watercress

(Note: Yellow dock should always be decocted/cooked rather than eaten raw.)

Tonic herbs are those that, used judiciously over time, are considered beneficial for certain organs, systems or general health. Partaking of tonic herbs follows a rhythm of duration and rest, taking a tonic for some months and then stopping for a few weeks to give the body a chance to find balanced function without the herb's input.

You can also take a seasonal approach to tonics. For instance, in spring enjoying nutrient tonics and fresh greens; in summer perhaps looking to muscle, bone and connective-tissue tonics; in autumn tending to lymph and endocrine systems, and in winter turn-

Green Medicine

ing to tonics for the immune and nervous systems. Finding natural rhythms for your herbal use may in itself serve as a kind of tonic, a healing attention. We'll be mentioning a number of tonic herbs as these articles go along.

In the previous article we introduced "simples" (single-herb remedies) and noted how knowledge gained from using simples is vital to the art of making effective combinations. For example, if you create a combination to treat your cough by just cobbling together a bunch of herbs listed as pertaining to respiratory issues, your combination will likely turn out less than effective. Why? Because a respiratory herb that works for moist coughs won't be much help for dry coughs, and so on. Each herb has its distinct kind of action within its general category. Experience with simples (and an in-depth reference text) will help you work out which of the many herbs in a category are the ones appropriate for your particular situation.

Another aspect to consider when making such choices has to do with individual affinities. Each person responds differently to various herbs, as they do to various foods (or various people, for that matter). Plants, like people, are more than the sum of their constituent parts. As you get to know simples and begin to put together combinations, discover which herbs work especially well with one another – for you.

When formulating a combination, first choose the "specific," the primary herb around which the others will orbit. A specific is just that, an herb specifically equipped to help out with a particular sit-

uation in a particular way. Like a football quarterback, the specific calls the play.

This herb should comprise three-quarters of the combination. Then add assistant herbs in appropriate ratios. These might include a demulcent herb to buffer a potentially irritant specific in a diuretic formula, for instance, or an antispasmodic herb to buffer a very strong-acting or bitter specific. You'll also want a stimulant herb such as ginger to catalyze the formula, and a relevant tonic and adjunct herb or two to support the specific. Sometimes one herb might fulfill several of these roles, as in a music group where some members play more than one instrument. And, like putting together a good band, the goal is harmony, not cacophony.

Sometimes, rather than use a combination you may want to go with a succession of simples, shifting from one to the next as need dictates, for instance as you move from an acute phase to one of recovery and rebuilding strength.

Some Chinese herbal formulas have a mind-boggling number of ingredients, but these have been worked out over thousands of years. So don't fret if your own combinations seem minimal in comparison. It's not size or number that matters, so go ahead with your solos, duets, trios, quartets and sleek, jazzy ensembles.

Next month we venture into herbs for menstruation and menopause.

Faye Stewart has gathered, gardened and enjoyed working with herbs for decades. She ran a medicinal herb business for 15 years.

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In Memoriam

By Gabriele von Trapp

The first time I laid my eyes on the Columbia River, I found myself captivated by its immensity. Sitting on a sandy stretch at Two Rivers and Fort Spokane I gazed out at the vastness in awe. The ancestral cliffs at the river's edge flaunted the graceful handiwork of the heaving waters flowing for millennia. I felt transported into a history as old as the world.

My mother passed in April of 2000 and I have held her remains ever since. Her wish was that I scatter her ashes in the Pacific but just before her death she changed her mind. She did not live long enough to share her final wishes with me. I was torn as to what to do and waited for the right opportunity to find me.

Holding her remains for 19 years was both a blessing and a burden. There was never an optimal time or perfect place to lay her to rest. On many occasions I would second-guess my idea and I always surmised that I was not yet ready to let her

go. I was an only child and our bond was intense.

The first year after her death I was afraid to keep her in the house because I did not want my children to stumble across the container and open it accidentally. I kept the package in an outbuilding in a safe and dry location.

A year later, I had sold my home and was preparing to move. I had help cleaning the property including several outbuildings. When the trailer was full and rolling down the drive on the way to the dump, I happened to step outside and spotted a familiar shape in the back of the bed. It was my mother's ashes! I screamed hysterically and ran after the driver, begging him to stop, which he finally did. I was almost too late. I had nightmares for several years thinking what could have happened if I hadn't stepped outside before the driver left.

Whenever I moved I had to find a new and private place for my mother's remains. Being traumatized by the thought that she

could have been taken to a landfill, I decided to keep her ashes close, in a small dresser next to my bed. I'm not sure my husband appreciated knowing she was there. Several years ago he suggested it was time to make a final decision and get on with putting my mother to rest. I ignored his suggestion. This was my decision and mine alone. It was deeply personal and I was still waiting for a suitable opportunity.

I considered spreading her ashes on a new property I had moved to in Springdale, but I imagined the turmoil I would feel should I not remain there. I did not want a new occupant to unknowingly desecrate her resting place. I was deeply bewildered and grieved as I contemplated for years as to what to do. I continued to store the ashes in the little dresser for two more home relocations.

Over time I accepted the fact that I might die before releasing my mother's remains. I was able to find some resolve in the notion.

Several weeks ago, a friend invited me

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out on her houseboat. The weather was hot and the idea sounded refreshing. In asking directions to where her boat was moored, I was startled to learn that my destination was the Two Rivers Marina by Fort Spokane. The marina was just adjacent to the beach I had visited 19 years before. I knew deep in my heart, in that moment, that the river was inviting me to accept certainty and finality. My friend and her husband were willing to assist.

As we pattered out of the marina I was again enthralled and awed by the beauty of the landscape. With open throttle we crossed smoothly from the Spokane River to the Columbia and into the current, all the while searching for a perfect location in the vast distances. I gazed north toward the Selkirk Mountains silhouetted by the azure sky and I felt enraptured by the heavenliness I beheld. The clouds were abundant and woolly and the scene reminded me of a Maxfield Parrish painting. Appropriately, the atmosphere and colors were rarified.

We approached a small bay with a rock outcropping and I knew in my heart it was the perfect location. The time had come.

I opened the 19-year-old box and removed the bag containing my mother's ashes. It felt surprisingly heavy and dense. I was not afraid to look upon and feel the chalky, mineralized crystals. They felt exceptionally familiar. Without hesitation I released them slowly into the gray-green glistening water as we drifted with the gentle current. The ashes slid smoothly from my hand and fell silently just below the shimmering surface. They lingered longer than I had anticipated, in a ghostly cloud, as if to steal one last look and whisper a final goodbye.

We slowly drifted away and soon the captain motored to the shore.

As we approached the beach, a blue-gray heron took flight with its graceful wings silently lifting her elongated body over a sandy bank and slowly over the river. It was a solemn and sustaining moment, a chris-

tening of the event within eternity.

Once banked, I jumped from the boat onto the beach. I didn't know what to do with myself in that moment, so I began to search out something special. I found myself looking at the scattering of stones for a shape to commemorate the occasion. There it was, a perfect small stone shaped like a heart. It called to me and I baptized it in the river.

When I left for home later that day, I chose to take highway 25 north through Fruitland and Hunters, a drive I had taken 19 years before. As I drove the inclining road, I looked back over my shoulder and immediately spotted the cove and outcropping I had just left. Holding my stone in the heart of my hand, it occurred to me in that silent and vulnerable moment that the river had released 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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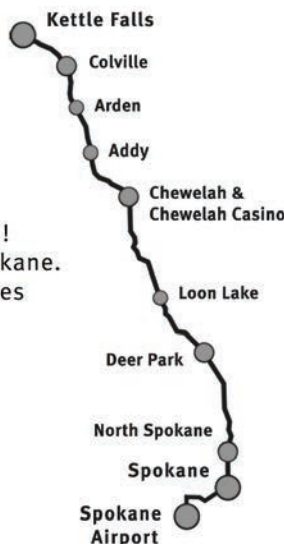


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Woulda, Coulda, Shoulda

By Becky Dubell

I woke up to rain in Colville on the day I wanted to ride my Can-Am motorcycle AntMan and explore Loon Lake and Jump Off Joe back roads. I have been driving Hwy 395 to Spokane for over 36 years and have only been to Luke's (the old barbecue restaurant) at Loon Lake and have not visited either body of water.

Should I jump on AntMan and try to outdistance the rain? I could because I have the gear to keep myself dry. My thinking head won out – I would take the car. I may be crazy at times but I sure ain't stupid. Warm and dry? You betcha! Well it turns out the should would have been a blast because the only rain was in Colville! Just another instance as to why I don't get paid for thinking!

But after taking the turn off the highway to Loon Lake I was glad that AntMan stayed at home. If that neighborhood is any indication, the communities are quiet, and AntMan is very loud and obnoxious.

I found the public road and stayed on it around the lake, staying out of the neighborhoods. Speed limit of 25 m.p.h. Saw deer, of course. Wide variety of homes from small cabins to large fancy homes. Wood fence with a few years on it that looked to be made of small fallen trees. A U-Haul truck – lucky homeowner is going to have a fantastic view of the lake.

Was on paved roads and skinny, steep dirt roads with very big potholes that AntMan might have had a problem with.

Ferns that reminded me of living in Sitka. Found the public boat launch at the end of the lake where I watched boats being hauled out to be "put away for the season" which the owners claimed was "not much fun." (FYI, at the boat launch is a very clean outhouse!) All said and done, the wandering roads were a relaxing way to spend the morning.

After a good visit with my family in Springdale (delicious bean soup for lunch), headed home by way of East Jump Off Joe Road. Found a sign that was just begging to have its picture taken. On AntMan I would have been whipping around right then (traffic permitting, of course) but in the car I had to go a half mile down the road to get turned around. My comment was, "Do ya think?!" Is this a sign that should be obeyed? I know I would and I could get paid for thinking this time!

My goals when I travel are to find good local food (look for the full parking lot or head to family), cool signs that are just asking to have their picture taken, and new country. All goals had been met this day so I was one happy camper, even if



AntMan had to stay home. Maybe next time he can come, if Mother Nature will cooperate. I have been given directions on how to get from Colville to Springdale staying off the highway. Sounds like a good trip to go get lost on.

Thanx for joining me on this little jaunt. I also thank you very much for your kind words and comments on how much you enjoy reading our articles in the *North Columbia Monthly*.

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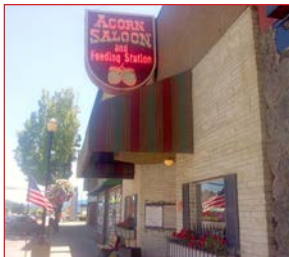
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