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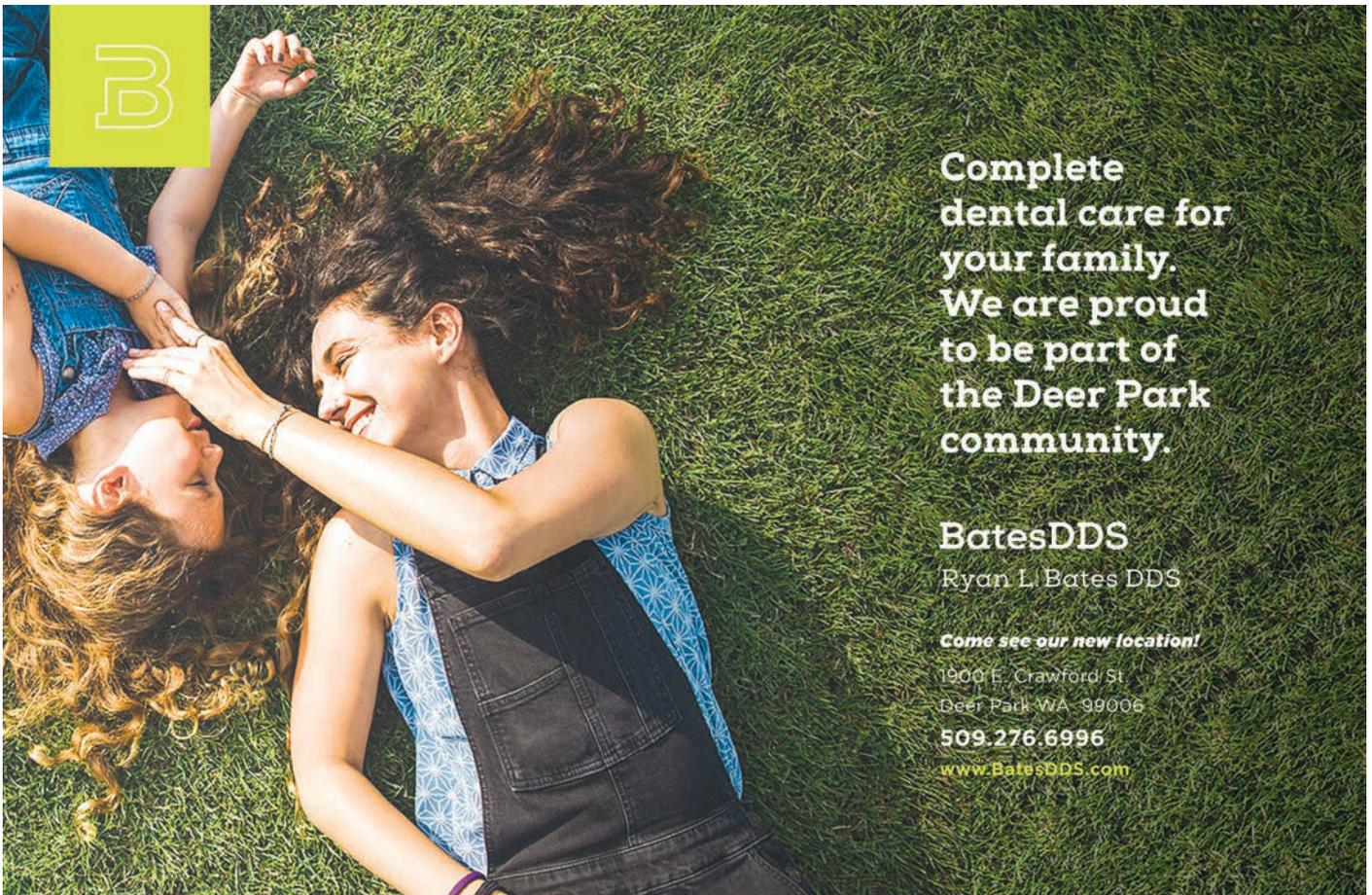


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**JULY 2019  
ISSUE DEADLINES**

**AD SPACE RESERVATIONS:**

*Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>*

**WHAT'S HAPPENING LISTINGS:**

*Friday, June 21<sup>st</sup>*



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- JOHN ODELL, [WordsOfWords.com](http://WordsOfWords.com)



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# From the Publisher's Desk

By Gabriel Cruden

As part of my work with Washington Nonprofits, I moderated a panel discussion about rural nonprofit challenges and inspiration at our annual state conference in Bellevue last month. One of the drivers for this session was the thought that urban nonprofit folks could benefit from a deeper understanding of how the rural nonprofit world works. But, to my surprise, when I asked the audience, "Who is from rural Washington?" more than three-fourths of the people raised their hands.

We had a rich and ranging conversation and, at the end, I asked everyone to write down a key takeaway from the session. I also asked our panelists to share their takeaways, and one that stood out to me in particular was a panelist's realization and affirmation that *she was not alone*.

As I reflect on this, I recall going to my first conference where everyone had my same job description, and I experienced that feeling of excitement, collegiality, and ease of being in the company of people who speak the same work language and soup of acronyms, that understand the struggles and successes, and that get exactly what it means to do the work.

Taking that thought further, I consider how, if I were in an urban setting, I could more readily self-select who I interact with, there being a large enough population pool to find those with similar world views and ways of being. Whereas, in the country, there are far fewer people and so I end up interacting with just about everyone. And since there are many different backgrounds

and interests and reasons for being here represented, rural living offers me a wealth of exposure to differences. And I celebrate that. Both personally and with this magazine.

And I also recognize how that experience can be isolating and lonely-feeling.

Which is part of why, again, both person-

ally and with this magazine, I seek to bring forth what we have in common, affirming that as a foundation for understanding and respect – the ground from which I hope kindness and care can find fertile root. And in that common ground, I believe, is also community, no matter our differences.

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# Choosing Generosity

By Christine Wilson

I was slow to the party when it came to reading and appreciating the *Monthly*. Therefore, it is fitting that I am slow to the celebration of its 25<sup>th</sup> year. However, let the celebration continue.

As a child, I heard two repeated phrases from the adults that always sounded like old-speak to me. One was about their “achin’ sacral ileacs.” And the other was a complaint that the older you got, the faster time went.

I thought as a child they both sounded ridiculous, especially about time. Time is time and how could that change? I did not know at that point about the Theory of Relativity and Einstein’s references to time going too fast if you are sitting with a sweetheart and time going too slowly in other circumstances. I could have seen evidence in my own life: car rides versus playing cribbage with my brother. However, I was not into connecting dots quite yet, another testament to youth.

Eventually I had an achin’ sacral ileac of my own and started noticing the speeding up of time. So, here we are, 25 years after this wonderful literary celebration of all things North Columbia was started. My, how time flies when you are getting older, as those long-passed Swedes and Germans would say at my family reunions. At this point, I am all about connecting dots, although the effort is more complicated than the days of those literal sheets of dotted papers. Now, it seems in this met-

aphorical sense of dot connecting, a lot of the numbers are missing and we are all guessing about which lines to draw where.

I have courting letters from 1903 between my father’s parents. My grandfather was bemoaning the likelihood that my grandmother was not going to be saving his letters because she would be using the paper for making dress patterns. Since my grandfather had a trait similar to mine, which is to say he saved everything, I also have letters between him and my great grandmother. In one of them, his mother is making a judgment that one of her neighbors in Marcus (apologies to any descendants of the woman she was judging) had the audacity to buy dresses instead of sewing them.

Ninety-one years later, the *North Columbia Monthly* was started. The pages are full of information, activities and lifestyle that would be so foreign to those Marcus residents. When the *Monthly* began was probably the first year our children had a computer. I’d bought one as a surprise for them and was setting it up in the mid-afternoon, so they could find it in our living room after school.

Once I got it turned on and booted up (a word my horse-riding ancestors would have taken to mean something quite different), I discovered porn had been uploaded to it. I imagined a young employee of the computer store messing around in the back room and (I hope)

inadvertently moving that computer to the sale display. I was deleting files as fast as I could, hampered by my novice status at computer science. I looked out the window and could see the kids walking down the block, almost home from school. Now, there’s something my great grandparents would not have had to deal with.

Fast forward another 25 years and it feels like more has changed than in that previous 91. The world is digitalized, we can buy so much more paper than my great grandparents would ever have imagined needing, and we need less of it than even our 1994 selves could have imagined being necessary. And paper needs are only a tiny bit of what has changed.

What I think has not evolved much since my grandparents’ era, and definitely not since the *Monthly* was established, is human nature. We still have the capacity for the same glorious, brilliant, creative and generous openheartedness we did in 1994, 1903 and all those years before even then. We also have the same capacity for being grumpy, selfish and toxically judgmental. It is a choice for each of us in each moment, now as it was then.

The reason I started my *Monthly* column and named it “Random Acts of Community” is because I was noticing my mind drifting increasingly to the nasty side of human nature. I had seen a woman miss a chance to teach her son

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# Random Acts of Community

about kindness. When she saw an older man getting out of his car, she ran quickly into a bank, shoving her son in ahead. The older man's back was hunched and he was struggling to negotiate stepping up onto the walkway and along the icy sidewalk. Once he finally made it to the heavy doors, she and her son were inside and of no help to him at all.

At that point, all my nastiest judgments were coming out about that woman and about her son's future understanding of selflessness. Within a few minutes of the gentleman entering the bank, a banker opened the door, helped him back outside, and walked over to his car. I had not noticed the tiny head of a person waiting in the passenger seat. The banker was helping her with a transaction so she would not have to get out of her car. Head-blowing-up emoji would have been perfect in that moment, but they did not exist yet, or at least not in my sphere of life. I had to settle for real-life irritation.

Then it occurred to me: I have a choice between focusing on feeling hateful toward selfish deeds or focusing on the kindness and generosity I might miss if I stay forlorn about the negative side of humans. So, I chose to pick the celebrations of kindness and community. As with a lot of writing, I was using it to heal myself.

Many things have changed since the first *Monthly* was published, but that mixture of humanity remains the same, in my view. We all have the same need for love, security, and the pursuit of happiness.

We still get our feelings hurt, get annoyed, and need to learn more about expressing feelings appropriately and in real time. I can get disappointed in people but, for the most part, tuning in to the kindness of neighbors, family and strangers is my favorite antidote.

On a Friday in May, our house's nearly 100-year-old plumbing decided to stop draining water from the kitchen sink. After a noble but failed attempt at DIY repair work, an R-Rate plumber came to the rescue. He said he had been getting ready to leave work, coming back Monday, but thought it would be a bummer not to have a kitchen sink for the weekend.

I'm sure he got something out of it for

himself, hopefully some extra pay and some satisfaction of a successful rescue. I think it is fine to benefit personally from what we do for others. We are part of the community, after all. One of my favorite supervisors from way-back-when said we are better off when we admit that benefit, otherwise we get self-righteous, resentful or something worse. It's another one of

those balance moments.

Let's all create another 25-plus years of the *Monthly* And let's keep promoting our individual communities' efforts to foster kindness and generosity.

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

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# Composing Compost, *by Joe Barreca*

I could pick it out on the aerial photo, a little brown square next to I-90 by the Fishtrap exit. It looked small compared to the miles and miles of wheat fields and scablands around Sprague, Washington. But when I got there, it seemed anything but small. I was researching and sometimes just plain searching for compost.

Barr-Tech is the biggest composting facility in northeast Washington, processing 350 tons of compost each workday. As part of a contract with the City of Spokane, green landscaping material, mostly branches and leaves, some wood in need of recycling, biosolids, food and paper waste arrive at the facility in enclosed semi trailers that are weighed and dumped one after the other.

Windrows of steaming compost tower above huge loaders and other equipment, stretching out of sight. The spacious modern office is solar powered. I met with manager Scott Deatherage and salesman Mike Brown to learn how it worked.

Have you looked at bags of compost and potting soil lately? Gourmet ingredients have arrived: mycorrhizal fungi, perlite, kelp meal, biochar, steer manure, sphagnum peat moss, mushroom compost... But you won't find those at Barr-Tech. They have two varieties: BT+, which includes the "green" yard waste mixed with biosolids, food and paper waste, and BT Green, which is just green yard waste. BT Green can be used on certified organic farms. BT+ cannot.

Buying compost at Barr-Tech costs \$35-\$45/cubic yard. At that price, I'm okay with adding my own gourmet ingredients.

That can be as simple as stacking a bunch of yard waste and waiting a year or so, or as complicated as layering leaves, branches, soil, grass clippings, etc., and adding yarrow blossoms, stinging nettle, valerian flowers and oak bark in specific places as prescribed by Rudolf Steiner, father of biodynamic farming.

Biodynamic researcher Ehrenfried

Pfeiffer pioneered composting municipal waste in Oakland, California, in 1950. It worked incredibly well with bacteria multiplying 300 million times within two or three days but, as documented in *Secrets of the Soil* by Tompkins and Bird, chemical companies opposed its use as fertilizer and the process was stopped until closer to this century.

Just finding organic material not contaminated by chemicals is considered a big issue. Scott Deatherage reminded me that any crop, lawn or other waste source that has been treated with a chemical ending in "cide" will kill bacteria. Even chemicals marketed as fertilizer, especially ammonia, Deatherage says, will destroy microbes. Composting depends on microbes, although Barr-Tech does not need to add any. Just truck in a fresh load of tree limbs and they are ready to rip, pretty much literally.

The heart of the operation is the grinder. Everything that comes into the yard



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is stripped of any actual garbage such as plastic bottles and bags and run through the grinder. From there it is either mixed with other material to create BT+ or used as-is to make BT Green. During grinding it is hydrated to 65% humidity and then moved to windrows aligned along the aerating system, which is the backbone and lungs of the operation.

For an aerobic composting system, a balance of air, water and temperature needs to be maintained. The piles naturally heat up as bacteria go to work. The amount of nitrogen-rich material needs to be below 3% of the carbon mass to limit the temperature rise. Piles need to rise above 132° to kill seeds and some harmful organisms. But they need to stay below 160° or the bacteria themselves will die.

Covering the piles with already composted material insulates them from the winter cold. The aerating fans suck air into the piles for cooling. The steamy air is exhausted through a filter of large wood chips to absorb smells. I will testify that the plant smells good to a farmer and there are no neighbors to complain.

That was probably not the case in early operations at other sites. Now the industry is highly regulated by Washington State statutes similar to those governing biosolids. All the material is tested regularly for heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants. Records are submitted to the

State Department of Ecology and the local health department annually and to the US Composting Council (USCC) Seal of Testing Assurance program monthly.

New windrows of compost are left alone for a week and then remixed and moved to a new row. After another week, that windrow is taken off the aerator and left to finish over the course of 42 days. After the piles have finished working, the large undigested chips are separated from the pile with a rotating filter and the fine particle compost is stockpiled until sold.

It might seem that a facility that can produce 100,000 tons of compost annually would be an overwhelming supply, but the numbers don't say that. The recommended coverage on cropland is 10 tons per acre for two consecutive years. Many farms in the Columbia Basin and Palouse are 1,000 acres. So, 10 farms using 10,000 tons each could use all the compost produced. In practice, only 60% of it is used for agriculture. The other 40% is used for landscaping, often for highway landscaping. That square on the aerial photo was not misleading.

To understand the pros and cons of compost on a big farm, I talked to Lamar Hege. His family uses Barr-Tech compost on their 800 acres of alfalfa and grass hay near Deer Park. He pointed out that one truckload of chemical fertilizer contains as much nitrogen as 30 semi loads of com-

post. But he prefers the compost. He read an article in *Progressive Forage Grower Magazine* showing that compost enriches soil long after synthetic fertilizer and even manure have lost their impact. So, he bought equipment specifically for spreading compost and tills in five tons per acre before seeding. Obviously, transportation is a big drawback but not insurmountable. Typically, customers are within 50 miles of Sprague.

What I learned from my foray into big compost is that it is not a panacea but it is an option and a starting point. The bacteria are there and a lot of nutrients for "higher" organisms such as protozoa, fungi, nematodes, mites and worms to develop.

You can add gourmet ingredients such as manure, grass clippings and biochar to speed up creation of a complete fertile biome. You can also build your own piles. Grinding, moisture, temperature, and turning speed up the process. If you want fungi, using compostable material as mulch will help them develop in place. Moving compost slows the growth of fungi that are crucial to root growth.

What stuck with me is the realization that despite all the organic material I passed through in a hundred miles of farmland driving to Sprague, the most abundant source of organic matter untainted by chemicals was the city of Spokane.



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# Region Has Double State Average for Maternal Smoking

According to the Washington State Department of Health Center for Health Statistics, when compared to the state rate of 6.4%, Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Ferry, have **over double the state rate of maternal tobacco users**. Pend Oreille County is the highest at 15.97%, Stevens County is at 14.6%, and Ferry County is at 12.7%. More statistics can be found

at [countyhealthinsights.org/](http://countyhealthinsights.org/).

Some of the dangers of using tobacco products to the developing baby include:

- Premature birth, low birth weight, and stillbirth.
- Poor feeding and irritability.
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

In an effort to inform expectant mothers on the dangers of smoking while pregnant, Northeast Tri-County Health District will be running *Done My Way - Heather* ads in area newspapers throughout the months of May and June to offer pregnant women education, tools and resources to support their efforts to stop using tobacco products while pregnant.

*Done My Way* is an informational campaign developed by Spokane Regional Health District that supports people in their attempts to stop smoking and encourages their use of cessation methods.

In addition to offering education, tools, and resources, their website [srhd.org/done-my-way](http://srhd.org/done-my-way) shares testimonials from local people of all walks of life as they make their journey toward a tobacco free life. *Done My Way - Heather* is one of them. Her story, of smoking heavily then finding out she was pregnant, is one of hope, encouragement, determination, and practical advice. Heather's message provides encouragement to pregnant women to think about the future that they are giving to their child and who they want their child to be.

**“ME NOT SMOKING IS A GOOD INFLUENCE FOR MY DAUGHTER.”**

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Watch how Heather stopped smoking her way:  
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This page paid for by Northeast Tri County Health District with grant funding support from the Spokane Regional Health District.

## History in the Palm of a Hand

By Eileen Delehanty Pearkes

Twenty-two years ago, I stepped out the door of my writing studio in Nelson, B.C., and looked up at the imposing mountains that surround the water of the Kootenay River. It was autumn. The shadows across the forested flanks were long and dramatic, as were my thoughts.

I had just finished reading a copy of a typewritten 1985 report, mail-ordered from a central government library in Victoria, B.C. I had learned for the first time about the Sinixt, the Lakes Tribe, the indigenous people whose territory once stretched across boundaries from Kettle Falls north to the high mountains of Revelstoke.

Standing in the cool air, I knew then that I had stumbled onto something important. The mountains looking back at me echoed, with their powerful presence and beauty, the significance of everything I had just read.

No local residents that I had asked were aware of this history. I had been puzzling over the lack of any mention of tribal history in museums or books around the region. Before that day, I had no more than a vague idea of where Kettle Falls was. I did not understand how the Columbia River had to cross a boundary imposed in 1846.

In early May of this year, the highest court in British Columbia released its decision on a case involving the Sinixt and their aboriginal right to hunt in the Canadian portion of their territory. I attended the original court appearance by Rick Desautel – in Castlegar, B.C., back in 2010 – when he was charged. I had listened to him plead “not guilty” to hunting an elk without a B.C. license tag.

Since then, the road for Desautel, his legal team and the Lakes tribe has been a long one. The case has bumped its way through the system. Lawyers prepared for trial, then the trial itself took place in 2016.

The trial judge decided that, despite Desautel’s nationality as an “American” indigenous person, his right to hunt was protected as an aboriginal person, under Section 35 of the *Canadian* constitution. The B.C. government immediately appealed the decision. How could an American have Canadian aboriginal rights?

In the past two years, the tribe’s original success at trial has been affirmed twice, including now by the Court of Appeal of B.C.

Two weeks before the recent decision, a photo from a friend popped up on my phone. He lives just east of Nelson, on a delta flooded regularly by the rising Kootenay River prior to dams. He had been digging up lawn in his yard to create a vegetable garden when a piece of flat, greenish stone rose up out of the dirt. History had arrived in the palm of his hand.

At first glance, the stone looked like an arrow or spear point. When I zoomed in on the image, I could see how it had been worked on both sides, and that it was shaped more like a raindrop than an arrowhead. It did not have a “stem,” commonly used to attach points to a shaft. I am no archaeologist, but I saw a scraper, a small tool for removing sharp fish scales or the flesh from a hide.

The odds of such history reaching this man’s palm were long. Although Sinixt people used the flood plain seasonally, the great bulk of stone tools had long since been collected by settlers and stowed away. Finding a stone tool is a great rarity. Had this man’s palm been chosen to receive such a message that day? Did the timing of the tool being unearthed have any connection to the soon-to-be-released court decision?

*Probably not*, some would say. *Maybe*, a few might venture.

Standing in my kitchen two weeks after that photo arrived, reading the Court of Appeal’s reasons for judgment written by Madam Justice D. Smith, I tilted from a

*probably not* to a *maybe* leaning toward a certainty that the land seems to know truth we often can’t register. In paragraph 62, Justice D. Smith says: “Imposing a requirement that Indigenous peoples may only hold Aboriginal rights in Canada if they occupy the same geographical area in which their ancestors exercised those rights, ignores the Aboriginal perspective, the realities of colonization, and does little towards achieving the ultimate goal of reconciliation.”



By many of those living south of the line, Canada is viewed in a largely positive way – a place where health care is available to all and peaceful perspectives dominate. As an American living north of the boundary for 34 years, I know that the truth is more complex. The Sinixt and other “Canadian” tribes have had to fight in court for

inherent rights enjoyed by non-indigenous people to access or care for resources, and to lead healthy, constructive lives.

The latest decision, affirming that rights can cross boundaries, pulled me back to the moment 22 years ago when I emerged from my office filled with wonder. What is the human history of this land, these mountains surrounding the abundant waters of the Columbia River? What is our relationship to that story? What does the land itself have to say about its inhabitants across time?

*Eileen Delehanty Pearkes is the author of The Geography of Memory, one woman’s account of personal discovery of the story of the Sinixt. The recent B.C. Court of Appeal decision can be found at: <https://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/jdb-txt/ca/19/01/2019BCCA0151.htm>*

# The Promise of Summer

Article & Photo by Joanie Christian

For a kid, the arrival of summer was an eagerly awaited yearly milestone. A sudden end to the structured routine of early mornings, homework, tests and afterschool activities, the last day of school ushered us into the magical season. While the school year was largely predictable, summer held the promise of unknown possibilities yet to unfold.

For me, this meant adventures in the great outdoors, reconnecting with people that weren't part of my daily life at school, and meeting new people who expanded my view of the world and blessed my life in unexpected ways.

Living out in the country, I rode the school bus. The tradition on the last day of school was a water balloon fight on the way home, all sanctioned by the bus driver, who good-naturedly wore protective gear on that day, grinning as the bus load of children gleefully released pent-up energy to celebrate the rite of passage into summer.

After that last day of school, everyone

had widely different summer adventures, which always led to interesting stories when we reconvened in the fall. Some went to summer camp or on a family vacation. Others hung out at the city pool, browning in the sun long before sunscreen became the norm. If you had access to a truck and multiple "floaties," floating down the Colville or Kettle rivers in inner tubes was a prized activity.

I finally experienced "floating the Kettle" much later in life, but spent many summer hours in my childhood at area lakes and rivers. Shorts, swimsuits and bare feet were my outfit of choice while I swam, suntanned, fished, explored, photographed and daydreamed. Northeast Washington was a beautiful place full of opportunities during childhood summers.

Through family connections, I was introduced to Judy, a girl my age who was visiting her grandparents from Connecticut. This was the era when everyone had pen pals, and we did that, writing to each other after that summer. Her grandparents

owned and lived in a schoolhouse at the Crystal Falls property and Judy's parents brought their Airstream trailer all the way from Connecticut to camp on the property for a few weeks every summer.

I was very lucky to be included in this yearly tradition. The family treated me as one of their own, and I became part of their summer adventures; playing games, stories by the campfire, and a daily hike down the backside of the falls for a swim in the invigorating pool under the falls. The property has since been sold and the schoolhouse boarded up, but every time I pass by it a happy nostalgia comes over me.

Certain foods come to mind when I think of summer. Strawberries. Raspberries. Huckleberries. Fresh corn on the cob. When I was little, these luscious and flavorful morsels seemed to magically appear on my plate. As I got older, my ignorant bliss came to an abrupt end when I was included in the picking, cleaning and prep activities that came before the "magic."

But as the years passed I came to enjoy the annual ritual of the picking. The scouting for the first berries in hopes of being at

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the right place at the right time before our favorite patch is picked out. The scenery, the birds calling, and the smell of the air while picking huckleberries on the mountain. The blessed lack of cell service. The purple hands and bum of my jeans from sitting on the ground to pick in a really great patch.

My kids affectionately poke fun at my over-the-top huckleberry picking, but, like me, they love the magic when those amazing berries hit the dessert plate or appear in the pancakes.

I learned from my local botany-expert friends that we have six different huckleberry species locally, each with its own look, size and flavor. If your summer pickings aren't what you hoped for, you can scout for new patches in the fall ... huckleberry bushes turn orange in autumn, making it easy to spot large patches to pick from in the following year.

Wild strawberries grow in the mountains of eastern Washington, and my cousin and I spent many hours gathering the pathetically tiny things in hopes of bringing in enough for a shortcake or ice cream. I suspect our parents were glad to have a break from us as we picked. I can still hear the old ice cream maker churning on the porch. We now have one that makes ice cream in about twenty minutes, but the hours of anticipation of that ice cream to churn in the good old days made it taste all the sweeter.

Evenings on the deck sipping iced tea while watching the sun fade were a luxury and fond memory that lingers. Spitting out the seeds while eating watermelon was an evening ritual as well; a juicy, sweet and cool reprieve from the heat of the day.

Summer thunderstorms were a much-anticipated and revered thing of my childhood and continue to mesmerize me to this day. The dramatically beautiful and dark angry clouds, amazing light show, and release from a long, dry, hot spell with torrential rain was a cyclical part of nature that intrigued me. There is nothing like the smell of rain coming after a dry spell. When those first fat raindrops fall, that distinctive smell becomes even stronger.

Later in life, I learned that there is a name for this smell ... petrichor. It is one of my favorite smells. Ever. Nothing compares. Chanel No. 5, irises, frying bacon – all

amazing, but petrichor trumps them all. A catharsis signaling the end of a prolonged period of drought. We all have those chapters in our lives. And petrichor eventually comes, though sometimes it is a long wait. Anxiety rises about wildfires when a thunderstorm is coming, but I still enjoy a really good thunderstorm, while simultaneously praying for no fires.

I no longer have summers off, and the season decidedly isn't as carefree as it once was for me. But I still revel in the sights, smells, tastes and experiences that are uniquely summer, while reflecting upon experiences years ago that stay with me to this day.

*Joanie Christian, a freelance nature photographer, has lived in NE WA for 40+ years. View her work at [joaniechristianphotography.com](http://joaniechristianphotography.com) and follow her paddling adventures at [stillwaterpaddling.com](http://stillwaterpaddling.com).*

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# Going Places

By Loren Cruden

In April I flew off to Scotland to visit my ex-mother-in-law, ex-husband, and ex-community on the Isle of Skye. “Flew off” sounds so breezy and spontaneous, but of course air travel isn’t so simple for humans. Especially when members of subspecies *homosecuritus* are involved. At the Spokane airport I was singled out to have my hands painted with a chemical revealing whether or not I’d been messing with explosives.

I thought, *really?* Maybe there’d been a recent spate of senior-citizen travel misbehavior. Though, from the perspective of someone who sometimes mixes up her gate number with her seat number and forgets where in the economy lot her car is parked, it seemed unlikely. We oldies are too busy just trying not to tip over while getting our shoes off and on at checkpoints.

The senior citizen behind me in the boarding queue anxiously asked how to know which seating group she was in. She’d never flown before – and was connecting in Seattle for her London destination, a connection she might miss due to our delay in Spokane. (Out of the six flights involved in my journey, only one departed on time.) I guided her through the fine points on her boarding card, and thought, *Good luck with the rest of the air-travel mysteries you’ll encounter, Sister.*

My travel progressed from Spokane to Seattle and onward, arriving in Iceland about a decade later. (With the eight-hour time-zone change, it feels like I’m getting older while traveling east, but unfortunately not getting younger while returning west.)

Keflavik Airport – though not large or well-arranged – has amazing bathrooms. Each individual cubicle contains not only a toilet but also a space-age sink, roomy counter and big mirror, everything immaculately white, like a travel lab or conveniences provided for a holy afterlife. And the sink faucets not only dispense water, they also (robustly) blast hot air to dry your hands. The unexpected air blast from the faucet so disconcerted me that I flung my hands up, spattering water all over the mirror (which I cleaned up with toilet paper).

In-flight announcements on Icelandair refer to customers as “dear passengers,” as in “Dear passengers, today our duty-free cart is offering special Icelandic Easter eggs to take home for your family’s delight.” Being called “dear” over and over during the flight was a charming contrast to having my hands examined for blasting powder. But I didn’t succumb to buying the special eggs.

Arriving in Glasgow, I was asked by the passport control officer what the purpose of my visit was. After I mentioned my ex-mother-in-law, the officer – in her louche “Weegie” accent – followed up with, “So how *is* the auld dear these days, Hen?” Clearly, I was back in Scotland.

After some days of visiting said ex-mother-in-law in Glasgow, I headed north to Skye. Construction was going on at the Queen

Street train station and its ticket office had been moved to an adjacent street, where I purchased a surprisingly cheap roundtrip ticket to Mallaig, from where I’d catch the ferry to Skye. My train’s platform was on the station’s lower level, necessitating muscling my rollerbag down two flights of stairs. At the bottom, relieved at having arrived at the platform on time, I frowned at my ticket, which listed a *different* time for departure and, even worse, a *different* destination: Balloch, not Mallaig! The ticket agent must’ve misheard me.

Up the double flight of stairs I surged like a valiantly dying salmon, heaving my luggage and bumping into the people going down. I couldn’t exit the station without passing through a ticket turnstile, and though I tried, the stile wouldn’t turn. Time was running out. I flagged down a platform guard, who opened a side gate for me, and away I trundled at top speed out of the station and down the road to the ticket office.

It was getting a little stressful. Rushing and queueing and crowds. Wrestling my bag through turnstiles and up and down steep stairs. Trundling at top speed, rollerbag roaring behind me on the pavement like a distempered pet.

Armed with a new, much more expensive but correct ticket, I speed-lurched back to the station. The platform number for this train would not be posted on the station board until five minutes before the train departed. I stood with a multitude of other passengers, all of us staring up at the board like Israelites waiting for Moses to come down the mountain with his tablets.

When the number appeared, we charged for the turnstiles. Glimpsing me amid the stampeding herd, the platform guard who’d helped me before beckoned, whisking open the side gate. I wondered if there was a sign on it I hadn’t noticed the first time through, perhaps reading *Turnstile-challenged Incompetents Only*.

Once reaching Skye, my days were heavenly. The return to Glasgow went okay other than my tripping and falling over someone’s rollerbag on the way out of the train station, helped up by two kind women who fussed over me in the middle of the racing stream of Glaswegian commuters. (“Ye sure yer aw-right, Hen?”)

A few days later, it was back to the airport and the journey home, which, like the trip over, involved four airports. Let it be said that, while I don’t *like* airports, I do have a lot of experience with them, and some – such as Glasgow, Spokane, Dublin, and Savannah, Georgia – are easier to deal with than others (such as London Heathrow). Nonetheless, in Glasgow this time my flight was delayed a long while. First because the plane was late arriving; second because the check-in computers crashed, and third because something mechanical on the plane was broken.

All was eventually sorted and we took off on Icelandair where, once again, I became a “dear passenger” and watched Icelandic crime movies – like Scandinavian crime shows only set in a weirder landscape.

Arriving at Keflavik Airport, I was alarmed at the crowds

“...it feels like I’m getting older while traveling east, but unfortunately not getting younger while returning west.”

within. It looked like a middle class refugee crisis, complete with rollerbags. Everywhere, people: standing or slumped on the floor – wall to wall people throughout the terminal, wall to wall queues. No explanation. I struggled through the press, attaining the gate for my Seattle connection. There were no chairs at the gate, just an unfurnished hall solidly packed with people, some in a queue for Chicago, some for Washington D.C., some for Seattle. Never mind trying to get to the wondrous airport bathrooms or food court; maintaining my spot in the queue-pack was paramount. All flights were overbooked.

Periodically, there were announcements offering 600, then 700 euros plus lodging, meals, and transport for anyone willing to give up their seat on a plane that day. I remained unmoved.

Well, not quite unmoved. A layover in Iceland would've been cool and 700 euros (about 780 US dollars) is nothing to sneeze at. But I'd caught a bad cold in Scotland, so actually *was* sneezing and needed to get home. I ended up standing in the pack-queue for almost two hours, stoic as various never-explained delays ensued. The boarding process, when at last it began, involved passing through a door into another, much smaller, hall where the now tightly condensed queue-pack waited a long time before being repacked onto seat-less buses and conveyed to the plane.

Unpacking ourselves from the bus, we streamed across the tarmac through tumultuous Icelandic rain and wind, up the steps and inside. Who could've imagined the relief felt at cramming one's tall self into the torture device known as an economy airplane seat? Oh bliss, oh joy. And that seat was mine for the next eight hours.

Or almost mine. It was an aisle seat. Next to me, in the middle seat, was a young German even taller than me, and a great deal wider. His hefty legs were too big to fit forward; one of them slanted like a log across my leg-space. His torso was so large the armrest between us had to be kept lifted out of the way. He overflowed into my seat, pressing against me.

At first this bothered me: by far too intrusive, uncomfortable and intimate. After a while, I let the reaction go. He wasn't trying to be intrusive or intimate. It became like being leaned on by a large, warm, slightly rank dog. Like, say, my daughter-in-law's mastiff. In my mind, my seat-mate became "Bernie." On the other side of him, another young but smaller guy slumped comatose against the window.

Underway at last, a welcome announcement came on saying that our in-flight food service was about to begin. Meals are not complementary on Icelandair, but hot and cold food items are available for purchase. The cart rattled out into the aisle; I got out my debit card, stomach excitedly growling. Then, "Dear passengers," came the enchantingly earnest voice, "we are so, so sorry – so verry, verry sorry! A mistake was made at Keflavik and NO FOOD was loaded onto the plane. Dear passengers, we are so sorry! Only tea and coffee are available."

I found a couple mints in my purse.

Many hours later, as we finally neared Seattle, flight attendants distributed landing cards. German Boy/Bernie had trouble filling his out. Every once in a while he'd deeply sigh, like an ocean

surge compacting my shoulder, and I'd pause my Icelandic crime movie or look up from my Scandinavian crime novel and help him. Like my daughter-in-law's dog, the kid (an exchange student from Berlin) had a naturally sweet personality, but despite my help he went through *four* landing cards before completing one without mistakes.

In Seattle I cleared customs, exhausted, hungry, sick, needing to move fast to make my Spokane connection. Informed by a security person that, because this flight had been booked as a separate ticket, I had to go all the way to the main terminal to get a boarding card, then pass through security again before going to my gate, I said, "You can't be serious." Though of course she was.

And of course this required taking several of Sea-Tac's wee trains, much rapid trundling down concourses, and the usual rigmarole through security. Reaching my gate breathless, food-less, loo-less, sleepless, with one flight to go and, after that, a two-hour midnight drive home, I thought: *This is how Dorothy must've felt just before clicking her ruby-shoed heels together three times and saying, "There's no place...."*

Loren Cruden writes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, available at [www.LorenBooks.com](http://www.LorenBooks.com), and provides Home Pet Care in the north Stevens County area.



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## Western Rattlesnakes

Article and Photo by J. Foster Fanning

Have you ever been out there in the dry brush on a hot day and heard that distinct buzz of a rattlesnake? I'll tell you what, it gets your attention. All told, I've had a dozen or more rattlesnake encounters, and not once has one struck at me. I accidentally stood once on a cottonmouth viper, which was quite disturbed at my blundering and struck my wading boots, but that's another story.

I know of three validated rattlesnake bites here in the highlands and have heard tell of a few others. One of the bites I know of happened to our Highlands Fire Camp cook, Nellie, over near Loomis. After a hot summer's day, Nellie walked out to her car, which was parked on the hot, sunlit lot, and as she opened the door the unseen snake under the car struck without warning, biting Nellie's bare lower calf. This was near the end of fire season so I didn't really get to talk with

Nellie until the next fire season. She told me the bite was very painful and difficult for the first week or two afterward, but when the inflammation subsided she indicated that the arthritis that had bothered her for years was gone.

A different friend had a much dissimilar experience. He is several years younger than me and in much better shape, but he came close to dying from the snakebite, which happened when he sat on a cluster of large stones along a bank of the Kettle River just after a swim. Like Nellie, he didn't hear or see the snake. It simply struck out from where it was shading between the rocks and bit the back of his leg. My friend just sort of blew it off, saying the snake barely nicked him and, unlike Nellie, he didn't seek treatment. When his leg swelled up dramatically the next day and the pain became searing, he was in the ER and in rough shape.

The third rattlesnake bite I know of occurred when a person fully aware of the snake's presence was attempting to kill it with a shovel. Long story short, the snake got inside the reach of the shovel and bit the shoveler. Lesson learned: Don't mess with rattlesnakes.

Keep in mind that rattlesnakes do not always rattle before they strike, nor do they always strike after they rattle.

Out of the dozen or so species of snakes native to Washington state, only the Western rattlesnake, *Crotalus viridis*, is venomous. Not found in western Washington, the West-

ern rattlesnakes are generally encountered near their dens. They typically have a very limited range and are often found among rocks in areas with good exposure to the sun.

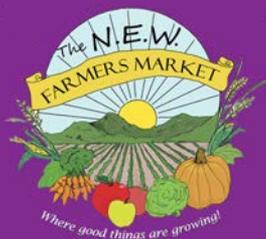
Usually, if we cross paths with them in the spring as the temperatures are warming, or fall when temperatures are cooling, we may find them active at dusk and dawn as they move between hibernation spots and sunning platforms just outside the den.

These rattlesnakes vary from juveniles of twelve to eighteen inches to large adults up to four feet in length. Western rattlesnakes can be identified by the wide triangular head, a diamond-shaped pattern of scales on the back and, of course, a rattle at the end of the tail. The overall color of the snake varies depending on habitat, from grey to greenish-brown, and is not a good species indicator.

The rattlesnakes encountered in eastern Washington typically display fear of people and slip away, rattling meekly if at all. Often they stay put and remain quiet when approached. Generally, the docile behavior is more typical during cooler times of day or night, or when damp conditions prevail. Rattlesnakes can be more edgy or even aggressive when exposed on hot days.

One of the smaller rattlesnakes I encountered a few years ago appeared during a rock climb with a few buddies. I was lead as we scrambled up a deep, open crack in an otherwise smooth cliff face. The crack was full of moss-covered boulders wedged between

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*Western rattlesnake on Barnaby Island, Lake Roosevelt.*

the rock walls and was fairly moist and cool compared to the high heat of the day.

As I raised myself up to eye level with one mid-slope boulder, I found myself eye-to-eye with a coiled rattlesnake about four feet from my head. Yep, within striking distance.

I froze, and the sweat glands opened. But the snake didn't move. It appeared to be looking over my left shoulder and the flick of the forked tongue was its only movement. When the guys below me called out to ask what was going on, I didn't respond for fear of startling the snake. Instead, I slowly backed down, out of range. Then I caught a deep breath and shared the news.

There was another nearby route in the same crack to scramble and, as we made our ascent, the snake never moved, never flinched. But everyone reported taking note of that flicking forked tongue, which is the way a snake takes in smells. Several hours later, as we exited the climbing area, coming down the same route, the snake was coiled in the same manner, on the same rock, apparently unmoved.

So, what could have happened if I had been bit (besides tumbling off the cliff)? Rattlesnake bite symptoms generally include nausea/vomiting; rapid heartbeat; feelings of panic; paralysis; numbness; breathing problems, and blurred vision.

Hopefully my buddies would have known the following first aid tips for venomous snake bites: Keep the patient calm; if they need to be moved, do so slowly and with frequent rest; try to keep the wound below heart level; do not use a tourniquet; do not cut the wound and/or attempt to suck the poison out; do not apply ice to the wound; do not administer food or drink (especially alcohol); remove any clothing or items that may constrict a swelling limb.

If you encounter what you think is a rattlesnake in the wild, do not approach it. For identification purposes note the shape of the head and tail, as well as any markings and colors.

If the snake has been killed, do not pick it up. Some snakes can still bite for several hours after they die, just from reflex. And, as the field book says, "Always seek medical attention for any snake bite, especially if you suspect it to be from a venomous snake."

Rattlesnakes do not prey on humans; they will not likely bite a human unless they feel threatened. Rattlesnake venom is rarely delivered in a quantity fatal to humans and rattlesnakes cannot spit venom. Most victims of snakebite make a complete recovery, with no lasting effects. However, what is that old saying? "An ounce of prevention is worth a

pound of cure."

When in snake country in the summer, try to avoid areas where snakes hide, such as under rocks and logs. Do not harass or threaten snakes. We often use what we call "snake sticks" to tap and probe ahead of us when walking in snake country (hiking poles work well). And when you are really concerned, wear long pants and boots to minimize contact with wildlife.

Have I ever killed rattlesnakes? Yep. On a few occasions. One happened at our cabin up the Kettle River when my then ten-year-old son went dashing off the porch. I heard a noise like he had stepped on the charged head of the garden hose, saw him take a flying leap, saw what I thought was the garden hose snap up after him and then heard his distinct call of "SNAKE!" It was a 12-button rattler and nearly four feet long.

I've got a good recipe for rattlesnake soup if you're interested. Now there's a good reason to skip the sandals, lace up the boots and head out there. But remember, stay safe. ...

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

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This brochure was funded in part by US Department of Health and Human Services Grant #6 FPHPA 106023.

# Country Challenges - and Rewards

By Karen Giebel

It is not always easy living up here in what I fondly refer to as “the back of the beyond” in Ferry County. We live 12 miles from the nearest grocery store, so we rarely run to town for a loaf of bread. If I am missing a key ingredient for dinner, I change plans, make do, or do without.

If we do venture to town, our trips are multi-purpose and may include stops at the post office, hardware store and feed store. If we can't find a part for a broken piece of equipment, it means heading over either Sherman Pass or Wauconda Pass to the nearest big box store, which is a minimum of 130 miles round trip. And excuse me while I digress for a moment to ask, but why do water pipes only burst on Sundays when the stores here are closed?

I needed hand surgery back in February and the specialist, of course, was in Spokane Valley, which required several trips for follow-up care. Each of those trips involved six hours of drive time. So why do we live here?

This morning I stepped out onto the front porch at 5:30 a.m. to see that the goldfinches were already busy having their breakfast of Nyger seed from the four feeders I have placed for them under the 20-foot-tall lilac bush. The swallows were chit-chattering as they swooped overhead snatching insects from the air. The calliope hummingbirds are no longer skittish around me but hover right in front of my face, making me laugh out loud. It's never a bad thing to start your day off with a laugh! Speaking of lilac bushes, someone many years ago had the foresight to plant six of them, all different colors, in our yard so that every May our air is scented with their cloyingly sweet aroma. Thank you to the planter. They give me such joy and provide shelter for my bird friends.

Stepping out of the shower each morning, I look out the back window and often see four whitetail deer browsing on the hill. I watch them as they grow and change color. Soon their fawns will arrive.

Right now, our small orchard consisting of four apple trees, two pear trees, four plum trees, two peach trees, and two cherry trees are in full blossom! It is such a gorgeous sight not just for the two of us, but for anyone driving our dirt road. We eagerly anticipate the fruit these trees will bear. I am already counting my canning jars. They will provide more fruit than we can possibly eat. But we happily share with friends, neighbors and our local food pantry.

Yes, the joy we get from nature not only balances out some of the inconveniences of living so remotely but tips the scales in favor of our rural life. My husband looks at me in amazement when I tell him I know the location of five bald eagle nests, eight osprey nests and a great blue heron rookery.

“How do you know all that?” he says. It's easy, because while he is driving the truck I am in the passenger seat looking and looking and looking. “Look” is such a small word but has such great impact. It's awesome what you can see and feel if you just “look”! I still stop and stare when I see the eagles riding the thermals overhead. I remember so well when these magnificent birds were endangered.

In my previous life, I lived within walking distance of three

huge grocery stores, a mall, a park with a swimming pool and an ice skating rink. Convenient, yes, but no one knew my name. Now, we go into town and our local shopkeepers say “Hi Karen, how are you today?”

Not only do they know my name, they know I like to cook and sew, and they ask what projects I have going on this week. That rural living friendliness is worth its weight in gold, in my opinion. We are blessed with an eclectic group of friends here. From friends who live off grid without indoor plumbing to retired business executives, heavy equipment operators, ranchers, teachers, nurses and more, all of them bring to our friendship their true unique unpretentious selves.

We have found that people living out here in the country help each other with no questions asked. When our alpacas escaped from the pasture, a neighbor hopped the fence to our house and helped us round them up safely. If there is a downed tree blocking the road, all it takes is a phone call and whomever is home grabs a chainsaw and takes care of it. If there is an illness in the family, casseroles and cakes seem to magically appear.

Yes, country life has its challenges, or opportunities, depending on your point of view, but I think the rewards are great and I wouldn't have it any other way. Now, if you'll excuse me, the serviceberry bush out back is full of beautiful evening grosbeaks that require my admiration. I'm not absolutely certain, but I don't think you'll see that in the city!

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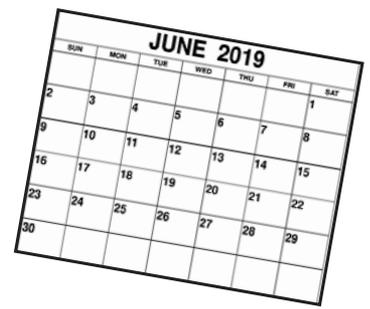
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# WHAT'S



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# APPREZENZ

## Events

**May 31-June 1:** Town & Country Days in downtown Kettle Falls, featuring live music, dancing, beer garden, food and craft vendors, parade, 3 on 3 slam jam, car show, duck drop, Grumpy Grouch Fun Run, and more.

**June 1:** Curlew Barrel Derby Days, in Curlew. Call 509 779-4634 for more info.

**June 1:** Pie and Book Sale at Kettle Falls Library, 9-2.

**June 1:** Bingo at the Camas Valley Grange in Springdale. Doors open at 5, games start at 6 - blackout prize. Food available for purchase, kids (with supervision) welcome. Proceeds benefit the grange. Call 509-258-7105 or 509-290-8974 for more info.

**June 2:** 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Onion Creek Bargain Fair, in the park next to the Onion Creek General Store, 2191 Onion Creek Rd., 10-3. Free admission.

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

**June 2:** 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. Call 509-690-2158 for more info.

**June 6:** First Thursday Art Walk, 5:30-8 pm, downtown Chewelah.

**June 7:** Wildland Firefighter Foundation fundraiser at Northern Ales in Kettle falls, 6-10 pm, featuring cornhole tourney, 50/50 raffle, silent auction, and live music by the Northern Aliens.

**June 7-9:** Prospectors Days in Republic. Visit prospectorsdays.com for more info.

**June 8-9:** Flea Market at the Camas Valley Grange in Springdale, 9-4. Call 50-258-4268 for more info.

**June 8-9:** Vintage Trailer Rally in Republic. Call 509-690-1528 for more info.

**June 8, 16 & 29:** Northport Raceway race days. Visit facebook.com/groups/8614388563/ for more info.

**June 8 & 22:** Republic Eagle Track Raceway race days. Visit eagletrackraceway.com for more info.

**June 9:** Fossils Five Brass Quintet at the Keller House Porch, N. 700 Wynne St., Colville, 1:30 pm, free admission. See ad page 5.

**June 9:** Culpepper & Merriweather Circus in Arden, 686 Old Arden Hwy, 2 pm and 4:30 pm. See ad page 26.

**June 9:** Dances of Universal Peace, simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural dances, 2-5 pm at UCC Church, lower level, 2<sup>nd</sup> and Maple, Colville. Donations appreciated. Potluck following. Call 509-684-1590 for more info.

**June 14-15:** Pro-West Rodeo, Northeast Washington Fairgrounds, Colville, featuring parade, dance, food booths and vendors, live music, rodeo events, beer garden, and more. See ad page 36.

**June 14-16, 21-23:** "Coming to America, a new Vaudeville," at the Pend Oreille Playhouse, 236 S Union Ave., Newport, 7 pm, 3 pm on Sundays. Tickets at www.pendoreille-players.org or at the door.

**June 14-22:** Columbia River Canoe Journey 2019 with ceremonial launches at Grand Coulee Dam and Arrow Lakes on June 14 and converging on Kettle Falls on June 22 for the salmon ceremony. Visit www.ucut.org for more info.

**June 15:** Old West Community Potluck and Dance at the Murphy Mansion, 410 Columbia Ave., Northport, 6:30 - 11 pm with music by Tipich Travelers and Murphy's Law. Suggested \$5 donation, \$10/family.

**June 15:** Father's Day Brunch at the Camas Valley Grange in Springdale, 10-1, \$5 each (add \$2 for all you can eat pancakes!). Call 50-290-8974 for more info.

**June 15-16:** Pedal a four-seated railrider along the North Pend Oreille River. See ad page 29.

**June 16:** Father's Day.

**June 20:** Taste of Chewelah, presented by Chewelah Arts Guild, featuring 10 eateries, silent art auction, desserts, musicians, and art exhibits. See ad page 15.

**June 22:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Habitat for Humanity "A Day in the Park" at Yep Kanum Park, Colville, featuring craft vendors (9-5), car show, kid activities, info booths, live music (3-7 pm), and more.

**June 28:** 2019 Stonerose Fossils Center Annual Auction, Republic. Call 509 775-2295 for more info.

**June 28-29:** Get Out Fest on the Ferry County Rail Trail. Visit [getoutfest.com](http://getoutfest.com) for more info.

**Cutter Theatre**, calendar of events, 302 Park Street, Metaline Falls, 509-446-4108. Details available at [cuttertheatre.com](http://cuttertheatre.com). See ad page 4.  
1<sup>st</sup>: Health & Wellness Expo, 8-Noon  
15<sup>th</sup>: Kevin Hekmatpanah Cello Concert, 2 pm

**Trail & District Arts Council** calendar of events. Details available at [trail-arts.com](http://trail-arts.com).  
May 31-June 1<sup>st</sup>: JL Crowe Players present Romeo & Juliet, 7-9 pm

6<sup>th</sup>: Derek Edwards - Alls I'm Saying, 7:30-9:45 pm  
8<sup>th</sup>: Studio Labelle Dance, In Wonderland, 6:30 pm  
13<sup>th</sup>: Music in the Park, 7-8 pm  
15<sup>th</sup>: Dancing Divas & Dads 2019, 6:30-8:30 pm  
20<sup>th</sup>: Music in the Park, 7-8 pm  
22<sup>nd</sup>: The Comic Strippers (19+ only), 8-10 pm  
27<sup>th</sup>: Music in the Park, 7-8 pm

**Music at Northern Ales**, 325 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Kettle Falls, [northernales.com](http://northernales.com), 509-738-7382:  
7<sup>th</sup>: Wildland Firefighter Fundraiser, 6-10 pm  
14<sup>th</sup>: Murphy's Law, 7-10 pm  
21<sup>st</sup>: Open Mic, 7-10 pm

**Music at Republic Brewery**, 26 Clark Ave., Republic, [republicbrew.com](http://republicbrew.com), 509-775-2700.  
6<sup>th</sup>: Travelin' McCoury's w/ Scratchdog Stringband opening (ticketed event), 7-10 pm  
15<sup>th</sup>: Will West & The Friendly Strangers, 7-10 pm  
22<sup>nd</sup>: The Blake Noble Band (ticketed event), 7-10 pm  
27<sup>th</sup>: The Lowest Pair, 7-10 pm

## Meetings & Opportunities

**June 12:** Northeast Washington Genealogy Society meeting, 1 pm, LDS Church basement, Juniper Street in Colville, entry at the back of the building. Visit [newgs.org](http://newgs.org) for more info. All visitors are welcome.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## The Northport Times

**NORTHPORT - JUNE 2019:** Business is booming in Northport again as several enterprising individuals have chosen to operate their companies from our town. Most notably is the establishment of a coffee roasting and grinding business. Many of the boarding houses, hotels and the smelter have secured coffee contracts to ensure the time-saving ability to brew coffee quickly. The prices are fair enough that even the general public can enjoy this luxury.

Miss Nellie Olsen has been very upset by some apparent vandalism at the Hardware General Store. It seems that some young hooligans chose to amuse themselves by using axes to chop down the hitching rails and posts in front of her store. She feels that the boys responsible for the destruction should be made to re-build the hitching rails.

Someone picked up something on the baseball ground Sunday when the boys were playing, that glittered like a diamond, and holding it up asked if anyone had lost a diamond. They all came to the conclusion it was the stone recently lost by Dr. Travis, and that gentleman, not having a pocket in his baseball pants, told him to bring it to his store later in the evening, as there was a \$5 reward awaiting him there, but before it was delivered, the diamond was discovered to be a piece of common glass.

Mrs. Ward informs us that their vegetables are growing nicely and they have been eating them from their own garden for a month or more.

—Viola Murphy

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# LISTEN UP

Reviews by Michael Pickett

## Dévah Quartet: Progressive Strings from Canada

Stumbling onto great music online is like stumbling upon leaves in a forest. You get such a massive amount of material that it is sometimes hard for one thing to break through over another. Sometimes that breakthrough comes in unexpected ways, like raving over how great *Exit ... Stage Left* was on a Rush fanpage with a female cellist from Toronto.

So in meeting Liza McLellan of the Dévah Quartet online, and hearing their fantastic version of Rush's "2112 Overture/Temples of Syrinx," I had to know if this unique, organic progressive string quartet had any original material. Turns out they do.

The blistering, expansive sounds on

their self-titled debut are beyond arresting. If you can imagine violins, cellos and violas through guitar-pedals over the top of rock drums, then you're on the right track. But that still doesn't paint the true full picture that pieces like the ballistic "Tell Me How You Really Feel" or the huge, cinematic "I'm Far Away" do via a good set of speakers.

This is exactly what progressive

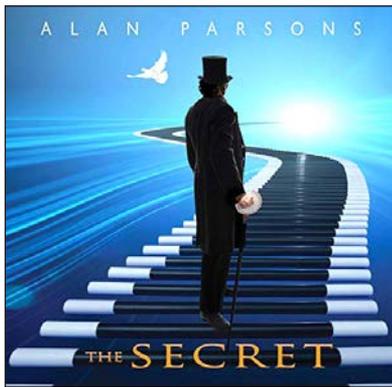
music should be: entering new territory. While guys like Eddie Jobson or Robby Steinhardt brought classical and jazz-tinged violin work into rock, this is a wholly different sound palette as this string group turns traditional guitar gigs into something utterly unique. And then factor in the rich, occasional vocal harmonies – you have a force to be reckoned with from the Great White North.



## Alan Parsons' Top Secret

Having made his way into Abbey Road Studios with the Beatles and then helping to craft Pink Floyd's seminal *Dark Side of the Moon*, Alan Parsons is no stranger to unusual paths in artistry.

Spending much of the '70s and '80s helming The Alan Parsons Project, the engineer/recording artist created some



of the better – if unusual – pop and rock of the last three decades. Now, with *The Secret*, Parsons returns after a fifteen-year absence from making albums.

He enlisted a fleet of guest artists for this album, from legendary ex-Foreigner front man Lou Gramm to former Genesis guitarist

Steve Hackett, world-class drummer Vinny Colaiuta, and many more. While Parsons weaves jaw-dropping orchestral works in "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" and "One Note Symphony," the real warmth of this album is the return of Parsons' iconic arranging on pieces like "The Limelight Fades Away" and "As Lights Fall," which could easily be companions to Parsons classics like "Eye in the Sky" and "Days Are Numbers."

If anything is missing here, it is the one-of-a-kind vocals of Eric Woolfson and Chris Rainbow, but only just a bit. *The Secret* is as well-crafted as anything Alan Parsons has made before, and encapsulates the wistful notes of an aging magician, fondly looking back on the magic he has made ... but with plenty of tricks still up his sleeve.

In a musical marketplace that too often suffers from a certain formulaic sameness, Parsons counteracts with strokes of studio genius.

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**Norman Pillen**

# A Good Read

Reviews by Loren Cruden

## *The Lesser Bohemians*, by Eimear McBride

Many Irish writers – notably James Joyce – blithely tinkered with the boundaries of literary style. Now Eimear McBride is at it, first in her debut, *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing*, then in her follow-up novel, *The Lesser Bohemians*.

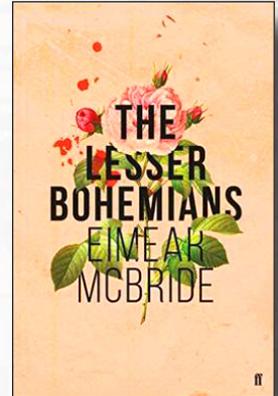
The latter is set in London in the 1990s and its voice is that of an eighteen-year-old Irish girl diving into the daunting world of adult urban experience. McBride's jazzy syntax jukes along in partial sentences and made-up words, a lyrical shorthand stream of consciousness that somehow always makes intuitive sense. "Damp on the footpath in my furtive skin I slant at passers-by slipping in through Kentish Town."

The story takes place over a year as our virginal protagonist attends drama school and falls for an older man – an actor. We tag along inside the acute mind, ardent heart and jittery sensuality of the protagonist as she slips and slides, mimics and messes up, pushes into and sometimes beyond the jigsaw of social gamesmanship. "And I wish that I was someone else, a girl with words behind her face, not this one done up like a stone in herself."

Everything dances to the love affair's tune, tilting back and

forth from romantic to crushing, sexy to ridiculous. The protagonist (few characters until the book's second half have names) epitomizes scared, impetuous, grandiose youth ("I will remember this because, even though this morning's not much of his life, it's very much of mine. Whatever happens, nothing will be the same again and nothing will be like it again."). Her lover provides the foil of age's jaded perspective and persistent folly ("I'm watching you, he says like he knows and he does know, well. And although he's too old for kissing on trains, he's considering it").

Once the reader acclimates, McBride's style seems natural and necessary. But some of her characters – oh my. Also true to Irish literature there are some very, very bad parents in this story; be warned.



## *Island*, by Alistair MacLeod

In Scotland I knew a young man, born and raised on Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia ("New Scotland"), whose parents had emigrated to Canada from the Outer Hebrides. But there that young man was, back in his parents' homeland along with a sister and brother, all three seamlessly fitting in; it was hard to believe they hadn't been born there.

This same feeling is present in Cape Breton writer Alistair MacLeod's collection of short stories, originally published between 1968 and 1999. His Nova Scotia fishermen and miners could well be Hebridean fishermen and crofters of that era. The stories chronicle social upheavals during which traditional ways of life came under great pressure or collapsed.

The stories, narrated mainly by young men or boys, are about what happens in the break-up of rural continuities. "And I realize now that the older people of my past are more complicated than perhaps I had ever thought. ... They are all so different. But yet they have somehow endured and given me the only life they know for all these eighteen years. Their lives flowing into mine and mine from out of theirs."

The storytelling is simply done – like lying in bed with your ear against someone's chest while they talk about their day, land and seascapes forming behind your closed eyes: lamp-lit kitchens with coal stoves, cold floors, misty harbors, salt smells, green rocky hills, hard wind, hardy kids, men spitting tobacco juice, women ever getting something done, then doing it again

the next day. Where Dublin is physically and psychologically closer than Toronto or Detroit. Stories about anguish, strength, connection, disconnection, decency and desperation.

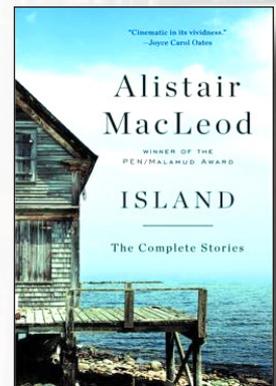
Walter Mosley once wrote, "History is what is left after all living memory is erased." Underlying MacLeod's stories and their indelible template of home is a powerful sense of the author's own memories and love of place.

Where everything won is hard-won and what is most often lost is community's living future – the young.

"The car moves forward into the night. Its headlights seek out and follow the beckoning white line which seems to lift and draw us forward, upward and inward, forever into the vastness of the dark."

Another recommendation from the M shelves:

Ian McEwan – *Machines Like Me*



Loren Cruden writes fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, available at [www.LorenBooks.com](http://www.LorenBooks.com), and provides Home Pet Care in the north Stevens County area.



# Mountain Meandering

## A Beautiful Life

*Photo & Text by Patricia Ediger*

When so much life is bursting forth all around us during springtime, it can seem surreal to have the loss of a loved one occur at the same time. Indeed, it is the circle of life, yet isn't it so much easier to embrace the coming rather than the going?

My beloved horse of 35 years, Diamond, a beautiful grey Polish Arabian, came to his end this week. I have cared for him for 25 of those years. He had no pasture mates, but we bonded in a special way, he and I. We shared a special trust, a subtle communication. We rode the trails up and down our mountain, waded in the shallows of the Columbia River and otherwise spent countless hours together, enjoying the beauty of these mountains all around.

He endured 25 winters up here, with deep snow and icy roads, but snug under a blanket or in a barn when he wanted to be warm. Then he would come bursting with joy and energy out of his corral when springtime came around, running with white mane and tail flying, going from place to place to find that perfect grass to nibble. My heart would always thrill to see him run, so free, so happy.

When you care for another being for so long, I think your souls and spirits knit together. Many a time when I've needed a cry, I would seek him out for a long horse hug, my face buried in his mane, his peaceful presence and horsey smell bringing me comfort.

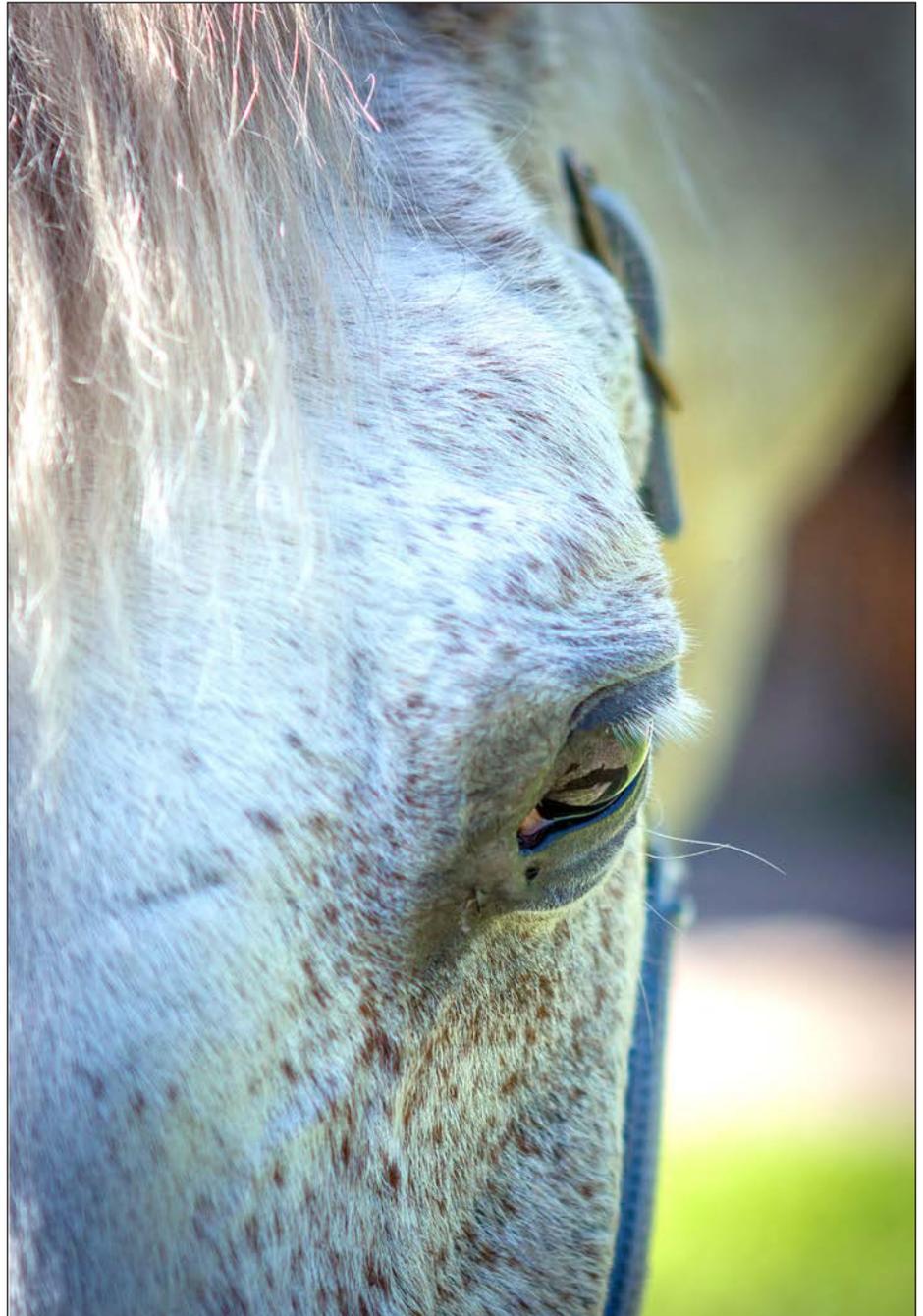
Caring for a horse long-term is sure to bring times of stress, sickness and injury. I have always been comforted by a proverb that says, "A righteous man cares for the life of his beast." This has given me reassurance that indeed my prayer is heard by the Creator of all things and that I can entrust life and care into those hands

when situations are out of my own control.

Our last day together was a glorious day. Sunshine, green grass, birds singing, cool breezes brushing against us as we passed the time away beneath a tree. Especially in his weakness and weariness, he wanted to be near me, to be held, and he looked at me as if to say, help me go.

I am so thankful for these moments, for

all the moments we shared these many years. Letting go is hard, whether it's our human or our beast. I will miss his greeting each morning and evening, his running up to the gate. I will miss the sight of him, the smell of him, his presence. He went down easy, finally, and in peace. I entrust him once again, for eternity into those loving, caring hands of God. I am so thankful for his life, a beautiful life.



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## Along the Mountain Path: Practical Considerations

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



Yoga, I believe, is a tool for life. I have found that it can help with emotional stabilization, self-image and love. It teaches us to focus the mind and set intentions without attachment to outcome. It helps us to build self-confidence, and to face our fears.

I also think yoga helps us to develop compassion for ourselves and for others. It is traditionally seen as a path toward enlightenment. As Rodney Yee says, "This stuff will make you happy!" All that aside, yoga is a terrific way to take care of your back, knees, shoulders and neck. It is basic therapy for life!

Summer is an active time. We are out in the garden and on the trails. We hike and bike, and many people travel. All of this takes a toll on the body. Legs get tight and sore, our knees may ache, tight muscles in the legs pull on the pelvis and cause back discomfort. Fortunately, we have yoga skills to help with all of this and more.

Many activities tighten the hamstring muscles on the back of our thighs. Tight hamstrings pull on the pelvis, disturbing the natural curvature of the spine and causing low back strain. Taking the time to stretch these muscles will offset the tightness and keep the pelvis and spine free. Uttanasana, Trikonasana, Parvakonasana and Downward Facing Dog all stretch the hamstrings. An easy effective way to open these strong muscles just takes about five minutes.

Place the short end of your mat against a wall, and roll it away from the wall to make a lumbar support. Sit on the floor between the roll and wall, as close as you can manage with your knees bent and your feet on the floor next to the wall.

Lie back, with the roll to support your natural lumbar curve. Take one leg up the wall, keeping the other foot on the floor. Reach through the extended heel, flexing your foot, and contract the quadriceps on the front of the thigh. Stay for 2 minutes breathing freely, and then change legs. This is excellent hamstring maintenance. It is also good practice to stand up and exhale into Uttanasana (forward fold) occasionally when you have been walking, biking or working in the garden.

Strap press is an excellent way to keep the transverse abdominal wall strong and active to support your lumbar spine. It can be done three times a week for maintenance, or to get out of pain. Lie on your back with knees bent, feet on the ground, and put a strap under your lumbar curve. Bend your arms and place your head in your hands to keep your upper chest open and your head on the floor. Draw the knees up so the thighs are perpendicular to the floor and extend the lower legs out. With an exhale, draw the navel to the back and press the back on the floor to pin the strap. (Your tail bone will lift up.)

Keep the knees in line with the hips (don't let them move up toward the chest!). Keep the strap pressed, exhaling three times, then touch one toe with an exhale and then the other, three times on each side. Finally, flex the feet and extend each leg, one at a

time, touching the heel to the floor with a strong exhale. Keep the strap pressed the whole time.

Downward Facing Dog is a great shoulder opener. Rolling through to Upward Facing Dog pose is even better! You can also lie on a rolled blanket or mat with your arms out 90 degrees to open the front chest. Eagle Pose opens the upper back. All upper body and shoulder openers will free your neck. Remember, it is the neck/shoulder girdle.

Viparita Karani, with your buttocks on a bolster, or simple Legs Up the Wall are great for reversing the blood flow in the legs and refreshing them after hours on your feet. You need to stay for a full five minutes to really get the benefit of inversion.

This summer, as you walk upon your path, let your yoga keep you easy and free in your body, and joyful in your soul.

Namaste.

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

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# The Power of Words, *by Linda Bond*

It has been said often that a picture is worth a thousand words. And yet we have numerous examples in history of short phrases that stirred whole populations to action. From the short speeches of Winston Churchill to our own Franklin D. Roosevelt who rallied us during World War II with his assertion that, “We have nothing to fear but fear itself,” the fate of the world has at times been shaped by a few carefully chosen words spoken at the right time.

But those are not the only kind of words that have power. There are words of peace as well as war. There are words of giving as well as taking, and of forgiveness or greed. Upon reflection, I found that, for me, these words evoke emotions by calling up cultural and/or personal associations. In other words, they cause me to feel.

## *Emotionally-Charged Language*

If you’ve ever overheard a serious argument, you’ve likely heard words like “angry,” “disgusted” and a few expletives thrown in for good measure. Sometimes people accuse each other of being “crazy” or “selfish” or even being a “monster.” In my experience, attacking someone’s character is a sure way to stimulate a reaction, whether planned or not.

Appealing to a person’s fears or prejudices is another way to cause a reaction. I see a lot of this in politics and business these days. I think the media has come to adopt this language over the past few years in order to engage audience interest. It seems that plain, everyday words are no longer sufficient to describe a situation.

Even weather broadcasters now talk about weather patterns that are “threatening” to “assault” the region, or hail that is expected to “pummel” the city, and storms that are going to “slam” into the Midwest or the South. I wonder, have we gone too far?

## *Propaganda and the Persuasive Language of Marketing*

The Google dictionary defines propaganda as the spreading of ideas, information or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause or a person. While it has been used politically, it is also used extensively by the advertising industry. Reading further, I found there are seven basic kinds of propaganda:

- Bandwagon propaganda – appeals to our need/desire to fit in and join with others.
- Card-stacking propaganda – leaving out facts so the item (product) looks better than it is.
- Plain folks propaganda – appealing to our desire to see how something fits “real” people.
- Testimonial propaganda – using experts or celebrities to endorse a service or product.
- Glittering generalities propaganda – using catchy phrases (“what you deserve”) to appeal to the customer.



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# Backyard Philosopher

- Name-calling propaganda – negative statements about “the other guy” to sell a product, cause or person. This is common in the political arena.
- Transfer propaganda – taking advantage of negative events affecting competitors (such as soft drinks) to sell your own product (such as juices).

All of these can be used in marketing, advertising, political processes and related areas. It's no wonder that something in our gut tells us when we're being lied to – especially if we are suspicious by nature. Then again, we could call it caution. There's nothing wrong with using our ability to reason when listening to anyone who might have a hidden motive for persuading us to do something, think something or buy something.

## Power for Good

So, I've talked about the negative use of words that have a powerful influence on our emotions, but what about positive effects? Can this same language be used for good? I am of the opinion that the answer is “yes,” but we have to be careful. I don't think people are always aware of their true motives and must guard against misuse of any language that will have a strong pull on the emotions of others.

For instance, is it really fair to play on the guilt of others to get money out of them for a good cause? Or how about fear? Should

people be made to fear the outcome of a situation in order to get their vote? Such moral issues may be better left to the individual to decide. But I think it also behooves all of us to be aware of the tactics that might be used on us to supersede our better judgment.

As for the good that can be done – applying the power of words beneficially – some of us count on psychologists to help us explore our hidden feelings so we can grow and let go of painful blocks to our happiness. I surmise that we might hope we can count on a political candidate or two to tell us the truth about issues. And that we would like scientists and other experts to be straight with us about what we can expect of the future. Again, I think we have to take responsibility for testing what others are saying before we make important decisions.

## Personal Responsibility

I have a responsibility to weigh my words carefully; to make sure I understand how a particular phrase, or even the tone of my speech, may affect others. We all have the power to help or to hurt. By being careful with our word usage, perhaps we can feel good about the effect we have on others. And that, I believe, will help us all.

*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](mailto:lindathewriter@gmail.com).*

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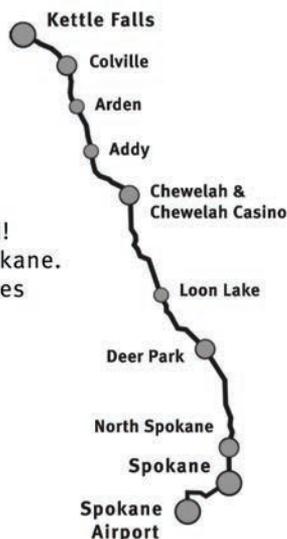


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## The Ultimate Farm Crop: Happiness

By Michelle Lancaster

I often dream about living about 100 years ago. I think about life on a farm in a time when most people lived on farms and understood nature's cycles and demands. When most grew a garden and harvested food using traditions passed down from their ancestors and knowledge was willingly shared around. Living near to family, and with neighbors as close as family, working on projects together throughout the year.

I would love to go back to a time when farmers earned a value for their products closer to break-even or profitable. Milk was \$17/cwt (\$1.46/gallon) in the 1970s, yet farmers are getting less than \$15/cwt (\$1.29/gallon) today. That's a negative value for inflation!

A love of animals and the lifestyle keeps us tied to the land, even when economics says we should stop. Our farm now feeds most of each cow's milk to their calves, since the milk has no commercial value. We make a few dollars by selling meat or breeding stock, two farm products that are still legal for now.

Quite different than the olden days that people often reminisce about – days when a cow provided milk for a whole neighborhood. Maybe they had the right idea back then: one cow per neighborhood instead of confined feeding operations sending milk through multiple transportation stops before arriving in a supermarket in a disposable container, contributing to a huge amount of pollution. Instead, one cow could change the lifestyle of numerous people, promoting community and the work of our own hands.

Wool used to be another valued farm product, but many farmers are turning to hair sheep because the cost of shearing (a nominal fee, considering how hard the shearers work) is higher than the value of the wool. Unless you are a hand-spinner, there's almost no commercial value in growing wool. How is that environmentally beneficial, to have to throw away or breed away from one of nature's most bountiful fibers? Baffles me. ... So, we raise a few sheep for our own fiber needs and beg for

buyers of a few meat lambs, hoping to sell them above cost. This is no way to get rich, but enough to justify keeping our farm animals these days.

Instead of pining for a life in the past, however, I try to ask what I can take from the good bits of the olden days to apply to life on the farm today and to make life on the homestead simpler.

Obtaining a bachelor's degree in history seems irrelevant to many who ask me what I majored in, but I find history to be very helpful for a modern farmer wanting to learn the old ways. They think I should have majored in animal sciences, but I am thankful I did not – for much of modern animal husbandry technique is not how I would care to raise my animals. Instead, I get to learn from those who “do” – both modern and historical figures who offer hands-on practical advice.

***“Some of the best information, I think, comes from old farming textbooks.”***

Some of the best information, I think, comes from old farming textbooks. Pre-antibiotic-era textbooks talk about prevention in detail, because the instant cures did not yet exist.

Dairy manuals show how to properly churn and rinse butter for long-lasting quality, information that was helpful in 1911 when the book was written and in a time when most made their butter at home instead of buying it in the store. *Morrison's Feeds and Feedings* gives me information on individual grains and suggested proportions to create our own chicken grain mix. Those books are how I learned about rotating calf housing to “clean” soil each year, preparing butter that stays fresh for two weeks, and grinding a grain mix that raises happy hens. We glean all sorts of interesting information from old books, much of which is still perfectly applicable today and not found in modern texts.

We also enjoy reading some modern writers such as the rare, ever-practical Gene Logsdon in *Letters to a Young Farmer*: “Maybe farming isn't an economical pro-

cess that is supposed to make money. What if food production should be an activity that nearly everyone has to be involved in, like cooking or taking a bath?”

My husband, like Gene, often chides me for my propensity to quantify each part of the farm by “how much money it makes” – as if cash value is the most important benefit.

What if he's right? What if the most revolutionary concept is the simplest one? If we all grew a bit of our own food, farmers would become more valued for the labor involved in growing the products that nourish our bodies. Less food might get thrown away. Toxic emissions would decrease and the air might just go back to sparkling clean and fresh-smelling. And, I dare say, I think we would all be a lot happier and satisfied as individuals.

While those ideas may sound idyllic, they work for us. Growing food gives us an appreciation for its value and teaches us to become creative in using all parts of the food we help to grow. We stay home more, opting for a vacation on the back porch instead of driving or flying everywhere. We breathe in the timeless smells of a cow barn and revel in the soft feel of lanolin on the hands. What seems to some like an old-fashioned life is to us the simplest way toward happiness.

I may not be able to go back in time, but I do think I often catch glimpses of those times. When my neighbor plows snow off our road or barter with huckleberries. When my family joins together on the family farm for a weekend of chicken butchering. Gathering in a spinning circle, twisting a yarn in fiber and tales. Watching a miracle every time a cow calves or a ewe lambs and I get to help with the birthing process. Times to cherish as some of the most beloved memories of my life, with the hope of many more to come in the future, a reflection of the past.

*Michelle Lancaster homesteads with her family on Old Dominion Mountain in Colville. She writes at [Spiritedrose.wordpress.com](http://Spiritedrose.wordpress.com).*

# What Comes from Living on a Mountain

By J. Merrill Baker

I live on a mountain. This is what my adult children say to inform others if I am not aware of a “thing,” a saying, a “meme,” or anything they are inculcated with in what I refer to as “social consciousness.” Like Gandhi when asked what he thought of “Western civilization” – he thought it would be a good idea – my usual smiling retort is, “We are no longer fit for society!”

I actually got that remark from a border guard at an Idaho/Canada crossing who had been raised in a city but is now an avid “ruralite.” Like her, I call myself a “reformed suburbanite.” And I notice that our numbers are growing! We should all meet once a month like a recovery group. Maybe a shared pot roast dinner or someone to water someone else’s new orchard while out of town. We will bargain and trade and commiserate, not only at the farmers market in town, but definitely in our neighborhoods. We see so much com-

radery during fire season or snow-apocalypses, but it is only a symptom of a deeper willingness to bond over our shared trials out here. We make our own community, it is built in, right here where we live.

My recent foray into the current modern social construct was to the wedding of my daughter’s youngest daughter, our “bonus” granddaughter whom we acquired, along with her brother, at her age of three. “Bonus” kids to grow your family is very mainstream now, and with the advent of DNA matching and curiosity about ancestry, there remain surprises to uncover. Well, shocks really. I discovered I may be actually related to one of our bonus grandchildren through a series of adventures attributed to *adventurous* relatives, all unbeknownst to us youngsters at the time.

While I may be giggling over some of these revelations, others in the family are coping with feelings of shock and embar-

assment. I maintain that, yes, we are all human, for the most part, and we must persevere and go forward. Besides, my former corporately-employed husband reminds me, “There truly are no secrets.” The truth may set some of us free, while the rest of us are experiencing how the universe gets in your face to remind you that you still have “attitude” to deal with. How we deal with these revelations and what kind of example we can muster to positively influence our own children will be a key to unraveling the human race, I think.

My granddaughter’s wedding was a celebration of love, family and fun, for five days. (It was in Texas, everything is bigger, right?) The landscape was flat there, but green, yet I missed my hills, valleys and mountains. Still, there were longhorn steer and cows and a few calves scattered here and there. It offered enough of a common

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# Living in NE WA: Lessons Learned

reference that it was actually calming.

All kinds of family: new families, blended families, best-friend families, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends. We all enjoyed getting to know each other.

Some of the bachelorette activities revealed more than maybe we mothers and grandmas wished to know, but rest assured, the bride and her cohorts were also in for some surprises. I was reluctant but answered a wayward question with, "We may be older, but we're not dead!" We can laugh at ourselves.

Other activities were instructional, such as axe throwing ... isn't it on every bride's skill list? (We were in Texas, remember...) Maybe it should be. The already-married and remaining bachelors safely played golf. Grandpa whipped the young'uns in this event - experience does count for something!

The bride's siblings and "besties" and families meeting the groom's siblings and "besties" and families and having so much fun with each other was divine. However, I don't envy their dry-cleaning bill after the

bridal party jumped into the pool, bride and groom included. It was expansion on a good scale. We "olders" gathered in semi-quiet corners and shared our stories about kids that we have shared, some of us having never met in person. (Oh! You're THAT grandma!) That blended and broadened our perspectives and filled in blank spaces and made us more whole. Life is good. We are blessed beyond measure.

If we really are "All One" and quantum string theory and genetics have a lot more in common than we realize, we may yet discover DNA beyond Adam and Eve. We may have come full circle, home to *Homo Sapiens Universalis*, galactic humans that travel the wide endless spaces visiting their families. Maybe living out here, a bit more rural in nature, reminds us somehow of those imagined homes we migrated from in the stars.

I'm reminded of lyrics from "Woodstock": "We are stardust, we are golden, and we've got to get ourselves back to the garden." Joni Mitchell wrote that for her

friends Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, who performed it at Woodstock, fifty years ago this year. What was Woodstock? From Wikipedia: "Woodstock was a music festival held between August 15-18, 1969, which attracted an audience of more than 400,000. Billed as 'An Aquarian Exposition: 3 Days of Peace & Music,' it was held at Max Yasgur's 600-acre dairy farm near White Lake in Bethel, New York, 43 miles southwest of Woodstock."

Oh yes, stardust. They had to get here somehow. They probably had airports with landing pads, like Stonehenge. But here on earth, I walked through airports. The TSA was good to me and courteous and friendly, and while I had to wrangle my way around, even Texas with all its flat land was welcoming and friendly, albeit just long enough to make me very happy to get back to our mountain.

Home is where the heart is, especially when you carry it and share it while you are away. Onward!

*J. Merrill Baker, Bonus grandmother and Bonus Ruralite.*



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# Letting Go

By Gabriele von Trapp

There are times I confound myself. Or rather, my thinking confounds me. I find myself, far too often, reflecting on circumstances that I experienced in the past. Some of these thoughts and reflections happened over 50 years ago! And they still disturb and perturb me.

One reoccurring thought that seizes me involves an experience I endured in fifth grade.

I considered myself a model student and tried my very best in all subjects. My excellent grades confirmed my efforts and I wore them silently like a prize. Writing script and good penmanship exemplified my best efforts and was then a passion, and still is today.

During my fifth-grade year I fractured my wrist and had to wear a cast for six weeks on my dominant hand. This did not stop me from doing my schoolwork but, as I was forced to use my left hand, my writing skills were far from par.

At a later date, the teacher decided to reproach students for their lack of effort when it came to penmanship and present-ing work that was actually readable. In his

frustration he arranged to set up an over-head projector to show examples of unac-ceptable cursive writing.

He laid example after example on the projector and students agreed that some of the assignments were horrendous. The teacher was careful not to show the name of the student whose work he displayed, which was considerate. His message was clearly getting across.

Until the last example. He laid out a sample of work that I had written with my left hand and there, across the screen, was MY NAME! All the students laughed at me and the teacher ripped into the spec-imen, going into great detail about how terrible it was. I was not given an opportu-nity to defend myself and I did not speak up to challenge the teacher. I thought that would be disrespectful. I was devastated and humiliated to say the least.

In high school, one of my favorite sub-jects was art. At 15 years of age, I was striving to become a professional artist. I had several art classes, including drawing, painting, jewelry making and sculpting. My teachers were all very supportive and

confidently arranged for my works to be entered into local art exhibits and con-tests, some of which I won.

I had been working on a large bust of a horse head sculpted in clay. My sculpting teacher arranged for a newspaper reporter to write a story about me, my accomplish-ments, and my unique work, which he did. The reporter also took several photos of me working on my piece.

I did not know when or if the arti-ple would run in the local paper until I showed up for an archery class several weeks later. There were over 20 targets set across the field, one for each student. As we went out to the archery field, students suddenly began laughing and eagerly shooting arrows at the targets. I could not figure out why they were laughing until I got into position and took aim.

There, taped on each bull's-eye, was a newspaper clipping of my story and photo – placed there by the teacher. He encour-aged students to hit the bull's-eye and he was also laughing. I was a shy girl during those years and struggled with my iden-tity, like so many insecure adolescents during these vulnerable years. This was an effrontery to my character, my self-per-ception and my need to feel accepted. I was devastated, humiliated and trauma-tized and ran from class crying.

In my last year of high school, I enrolled in a political issues class. I thoroughly enjoyed considering current affairs, de-bating court rulings, and developing my

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# Inner Landscape

personal world view. On one occasion the students participated in a mock trial. The teacher had an advance script of the trial that predetermined that the defendant was guilty of the crime of which she was accused.

I jumped in as the mother of the defendant and it was my job to persuade the jury, which were also students, with my passionate testimony of her innocence. The goal was to prove that our judicial system was effective once evidence was presented.

I must have given one heck of a testimony because the final ruling was that the defendant was innocent!

The teacher was irked and used the opportunity to emphasize that juries must keep their personal feelings and opinions out of the proceedings and consider only evidence. He stressed that some people may look guilty but are actually innocent and that those who look innocent may actually be guilty and this is a bias. His point was well taken.

He then proceeded to walk through the room and, as an example, said, "If anyone in this room looks guilty of a crime it's this student" – pointing at me! It was an unjust accusation that hit a bull's-eye in my anxiety-driven life and circumstance. I was overwhelmed and shocked.

My mother always told me that it was important that I obey the law because I was not yet a naturalized citizen of America and could be deported back to Germany, without her, if I broke the law. (Clever mother.) I was conscientiously law-abiding to the max and always minded every authority. The idea of deportation put me on edge in many circumstances because I deeply feared the possibility. It was a serious and heavy burden to carry through childhood and adolescence.

A year-and-a-half ago I was faced with a life-changing circumstance that I felt was unjust. The event consumed me and I was plagued with obsessive thinking. My anger was turbo-fueled, resentments abounded untethered, and I carried all into an unknown future. I crucified myself on the cross of self-absorption, self-pity, misery and a trajectory of self-de-

structiveness.

My adult children were privy to my thoughts, feelings and actions. In an effort to be supportive they bought me a little gift, a small copper inscribed bracelet. The inscription reads: "Let that sh-t go"

I wear the bracelet often and glance at it whenever my thoughts negatively dwell

in the past, the present, or the future. It brings a smile to my face, and then I practice letting go.

*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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## Summer Plans

By Becky Dubell

In our neck of the woods you can always find something to do throughout the summer months. There are lakes, trails, roads, rivers, parks, backyards, gardens, orchards, museums and community events, just to name a very few of the “somethings.”

I am wishing that I had thought ahead a little and talked with more people about their favorite places to spend time during our warm season. Speaking of which – did anyone else notice that we went from the 50s and 60s right up to the 80s? I’m thinking (which I don’t get paid to do of course) that the temperate 70s got overlooked.

I guess you could go to any of the lakes around here – Lake Roosevelt/Columbia River, Pend Oreille Lake chain out Tiger highway, Black Lake, or any of the other dozens of lakes around – put on your sunscreen and stick your feet in the water to get cooled off. But be prepared ... the water might still be a little chilly!

Life happened AGAIN!

Most know the saying “Life happens while you are making plans.” Well ... it sure happened to a friend of mine. Lesson to pass on: Wear safety glasses while using a bungee cord or you just may end up with the metal end of the bungee popping you right square in the eyeball, earning you a trip to the emergency room in Spokane for surgery and a second surgery a week later. My friend and I are now very conscious of this safety precaution. His eyesight is coming back and he is looking forward to a full recovery, thank goodness.

*Now back to my article, which has changed a bit since the bungee cord episode.*

My plans for the summer have changed in that I will have one of my famous – at least in my family – “Becky Lists” that will have no set date or time as to when things will happen. Because, as you know ... life happens. Most everything on this list will involve family and friends. My rides on AntMan (my CanAm) will be for just Becky, but at the end of most of them will be family and friends.

Plans are to catch as many of the local community events as possible – Colville

Rodeo, Chewelah Chataqua, fairs in Valley, Springdale, Cusick, Usk, Ione, Republic, Kettle Falls and Colville, Marcus Cider Fest, and any others I can find. (Watch the *North Columbia Monthly* for event listings!)

AntMan will get used a lot more this summer than last riding season. On the way to these events there will be all kinds of historical markers, parks, museums, rivers, lakes, food joints with lots of cars parked in front (good indication of good food), views, etc. In the past I have just zoomed by these in a hurry to get to my destination. But, you know, I have a feeling AntMan will be interested in seeing what I’ve been missing all these years. Maybe I’ll even share some with you. As I’ve said, though, no set time. Might even have to hang on tight cuz AntMan may be switching tracks in mid-ride.

Another safety concern comes to mind

at this point. If AntMan does decide to go somewhere different than what I have told my kids, I’ll have to let them know. As my granddaughter says, “Safety first, Granny BB!”

The only definite dates in my summer plans so far are graduation parties, grandson Brenden and Emma’s wedding, Lexi’s wedding, and the Alaska picnic in the park. The other “definites” are to swing on JJ’s tire swing in the backyard, view the world from my front porch swing, watch my life and family grow, go out and pick cherries, walnuts, apples and plums, and then sit back and watch Jamie harvest four hills of zucchini and try not get clobbered when she goes to put a few in a friend’s unlocked car.

As far as plans you make, I suggest you remember my mantra and have a fun summer: “It is what it is and it will become what I make it.”



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# Lodging Guide

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